



**Elm  
House**

## **Statement of Purpose and Function**

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## 1. Mission Statement

Acorn Education and Care is part of the Outcomes First Group and 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 child 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.

Acorn Education and Care is an organisation who are committed to providing high quality care and delivering positive outcomes for children via a truly multidisciplinary team approach within an open but emotionally secure domestic style environment. As a transparent organisation, we recognise that every child and the care they receive matters.

## 2. Objectives of Elm House

Elm House is a Acorn Education and Care children's residential care home committed to providing care to children on a long/medium/short-term basis depending on the needs of the child. Elm House provides a holistic, safe, stimulating and supportive family environment where children cared for can live, learn and develop.

The home provides a high standard of care, educational support and accommodation for up to three children aged eight to eighteen. We work in partnership with relevant Children's Services departments, and other agencies within a clear and comprehensive policy framework, in line with company policies.

The staff team at Elm House are highly committed to working intensively providing care and support to all young people.

The home endeavours to avoid the negative aspects usually associated with institutional residential living and to create an environment and atmosphere, which reflects many of the positive aspects of a normal family home. All team members at Elm House deliver their care based upon the principles of the PACE model. PACE is a way of thinking, feeling, communicating and behaving that aims to make the child feel safe and form secure attachments. It enables the staff team to see the strengths and positive features that lie underneath more negative and challenging behaviour, and therefore offer each child unconditional acceptance.

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

- To return to live with their family
- To live with foster carers
- To move into supported semi-independent living accommodation
- To move into fully independent living accommodation
- To move into another form of residential placement.

Prior to admission, every effort is made to establish the long-term plans for each child and a Placement Plan is prepared which clearly focuses on his or her individual needs.

If necessary, the Placement Plan can encompass access to counselling, behaviour management, the development of life skills and semi/full independent living packages and anger management. Typically, the objectives of the Placement Plan will concern:

Helping the child to come to terms with any traumatic events in their past  
Modifying those behaviours, which are unacceptable for the child and/or others.  
Developing those life skills which have been inadequately developed in the past.  
Assisting the child to form, maintain and build relationships with other young people and adults and to integrate into social groups.

Progress by the child towards achieving the main objectives of his/her Placement Plan is monitored at formal reviews with representatives of the responsible local authority and others significantly involved in the care and development of the child concerned. Should there be a marked decline in the child's behaviour their Social Worker would be contacted immediately.

At Elm House, we see as very important the role performed by the keyworker. Soon after arrival each child will be allocated one, together with a co-keyworker who can act on the keyworker's behalf when they are not available. The role of the keyworker will include responsibility for:

- Promoting the child's participation in and the ownership of their care programme or semi/full independent package
- Actively putting the care plan as well as any independent package into action
- Ensuring the care plan or independent package is reviewed at appropriate intervals
- Ensuring the main aims of the placement are kept on target
- Ensuring that the child'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 child 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 child to establish, promote and maintain positive links with school, family members (or significant others) and other professionals involved in their care.

### 3. 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 Mapperley and conveniently situated near to Nottingham City Centre, Elm House is ideally suited for children. It affords easy access transportation routes to schools, colleges and key locations across the city of Nottingham.

Every year, the setting's management conducts a detailed Location and Community Suitability Assessment: this assessment is designed to ensure the location of the home and its host community is safe and suitably structured and resourced to serve the needs of the young people who reside at Elm House.

Elm House is a large property with many attractive and practical features, including large sized rooms and creative enclosed gardens. The garden to the rear of the property is large and enclosed to provide a safe and visible recreation area for residents. The garden contains a 10ft trampoline, football posts, basketball hoop and punch bag along with other outdoor games apparatus such as a badminton net and swing ball.

All bedrooms are furnished and equipped to a good standard, and decorated in consultation with the children in the room at the time. Children at Elm House do not share bedrooms unless the placing authority stipulates this as a planned care requirement.

The sitting room includes a T.V. room equipped with Sky TV and large French doors which open up onto a terrace area, which can be used for BBQs, dining or leisure. There is also a games room, which is equipped with a P.C. [with restricted internet access], a table football, and screen projector (for movie nights). There are also a variety of games and books.

The home has a kitchen diner, which provides for a homely, friendly atmosphere conducive in size for preparation and consumption of meals by both staff and children. There are adequate laundry facilities. There are also cellar rooms located beneath the house.

Staff are provided with suitably equipped sleeping accommodation located close to the bedrooms occupied by the children. Elm House operates a waking staff system and when required are able to provide a 1:1 staff to child ratio.

## 4. Responsible Body for Elm House

Our head office is located at:

Westbourne School, Huthwaite Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, 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**

### **Responsible Individual and Head of Care: Donna Carlin**

Donna has been with Acorn Education and Care since 2005 and has managed children's homes within the company. Prior to working for Acorn 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 [ 2013] In her spare time Donna enjoys watching her boys play football in the Notts Young Elizabethan league

### **Registered Manager: Tina Dilley**

Tina has gained extensive experience in the 20 years she has worked within the organisation developing a broad set of skills, knowledge and understanding of young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties by working in a range of different homes. Tina started as a residential worker and worked herself up throughout the years to assistant manager and then to children's home manager. Before working for Acorn Tina was a residential care worker in Birmingham and during that time Elm House was being set up so Elm House is where my career started in residential care in Nottingham. Tina has gained a great deal of experience throughout the years working alongside professional from all sectors. Tina has completed NVQ Level 3 for the Children's and Young People's Workforce. Level 3 in Management and has attended all types of training in relation to the care sector.

## 5. Elm House Team: Staffing Qualifications and Experience – please see separate appendix for staffing qualifications

The staff team comprises a healthy gender and racial balance of staff who have a broad and extensive experience of residential and/or work with children. To ensure the suitability of staff, Acorn Education and Care's Recruitment & Selection criteria ensures that all staff are vetted through the Enhanced DBS system.

## 6. Available Services

### Residential Placements

- Short, Medium and long term residential placements.
- Placements with therapeutic support.

## 7. Who may be referred to Elm House

Elm House is able to accommodate:

- Three children
- Male or Female
- Aged between 8 to 18
- Children with socio-emotional / behavioural difficulties
- Children with mild learning difficulties.

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.

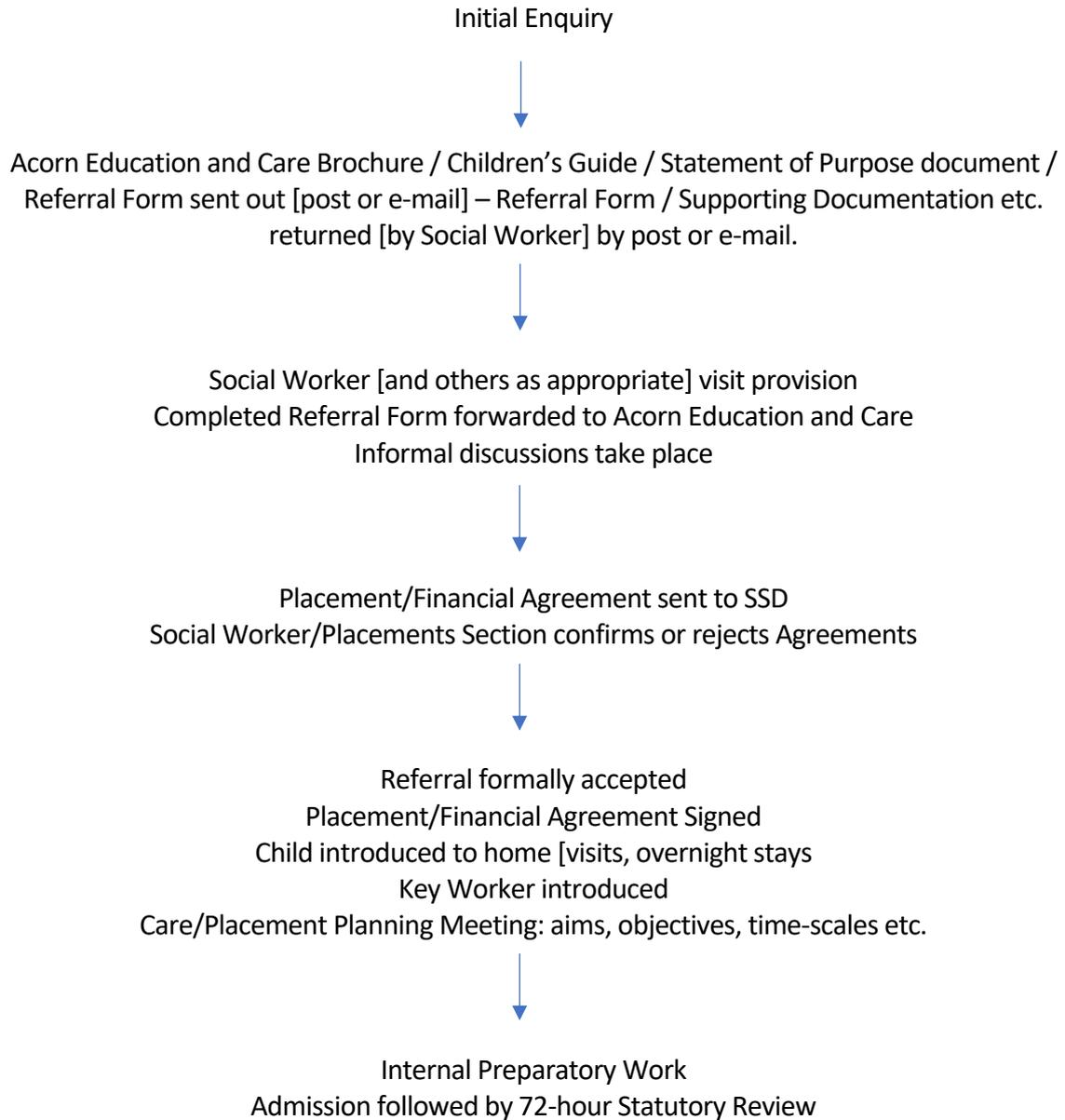
The layout and design of Elm House is such, that the home is able to accommodate a child with mild mobility difficulties. It would not however be suited for children with severe mobility difficulties.

## 8. Admissions Procedure

We always aim to ensure the Admission 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 concerned,

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



## 9. Child Health Care at Elm House

Elm House adopts, and follows, Acorn Education and Care policy & procedural guidelines on the provision of Health Care for every child. 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 and to provide them with the tools and information to make informed decisions about their health.

Upon admission to Elm House, every child has a new patient health check at the GP surgery unless they remain at their previous surgery. All young people within our care are registered with a local GP and have access to a range of other health care facilities, which may include:

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

Health Education is promoted via structured individual key working or group sessions, whichever is thought to be more appropriate in accordance with the feelings of the children.

The Acorn Education and Care 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.

## 10. Education

Acorn Education and Care believes that all children 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. Elm House staff are all involved in proactively implementing the provision of each child's Personal Education Plan [PEP] and EHC plans. Key Workers/Children Home Managers oversee the implementation of PEPs and EHPs and monitor progress against objectives.

Elm 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, educational resources and personal computers etc.

## 11. Educational Services Offered

Mainstream education at comprehensive and junior schools within the catchment areas. In order to maximize educational inclusion and attainment, Elm House will work in a supportive and collaborative manner with all local schools and schools in the surrounding areas [mainstream and special educational]. Also, we will work with our partners in Nottinghamshire County Council Children's Services and City of Nottingham Children's Services in maintaining continuity of education.

For children and young people in between or excluded from Education, Acorn Education and Care also partner with R.E.A.L. education. The R.E.A.L staff support model includes training in the management of behaviour, safeguarding, knowledge of special educational needs and risk management as well as access to specialists such as psychologists and advisory teachers.

This approach means R.E.A.L are in contrast to many alternative providers as they address personal development and emotional wellbeing in tandem with re-engagement in learning. They do not simply offer one approach; we provide a continuum of opportunities that enable progress towards re-inclusion

## 12. Unauthorised Absence from the Home / Missing from Care

Elm 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 and Risk Assessment.

Any child that is away from a Acorn Education and Care home is made welcome upon return – the principal aim will be to work with child to find out why he, or she, felt the need to leave his or her home without consulting or seeking permission from staff. It is expected that the child will be seen by his or her social worker or a person who is independent of the home following their return and where appropriate, changes to Placement / Risk Assessment are recommended and agreed with appropriate people, including the child/child.

Any reports from a child that indicates he or she went missing in response to being abused will be immediately reported to the appropriate Social Worker, commissioning authority and OFSTED. Appropriate measures will be made to protect the child/child.

Elm House observes missing from care protocols developed and implemented jointly by Nottinghamshire County Council Children and Young People's Department, City of Nottingham Children's Service and Nottinghamshire Police.

Also, we will work with the local Police in progressive and collaborative to ensure an effective and balanced approach to managing matters pertaining to unauthorised absence and missing from care episodes, with particular regard to the proper and sensitive use of Police resources and positive relationships.

Our approach to managing incidents involving young people considered to be Missing from Care is guided by our Missing from Care policy, a copy of which can be obtained upon request.

### 13. Complaints, Comments and Compliments

Elm House takes seriously all representations and complaints and manages them sensitively and as close as possible to the originating point, ensuring that the child's best interests are kept centre stage. We endeavour to ensure that all children, staff, and parents are aware of, and understand Acorn Education and Care's 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.

Elm House is committed to the operation of an effective Complaints & Compliments procedure, designed to keep paramount the needs of all, irrespective of age, race, gender and disability.

Any complaints received will be taken seriously, with particular attention paid to the needs, feelings and sensitivities of the child/children concerned.

All children at Elm House are able, and have the absolute right, to complain over the service and/or treatment they receive.

Others who are able to invoke the Complaints policy include:

- Children's Services staff
- Parents
- Persons with parental responsibility
- Foster Carers
- Any person that has a sufficient interest in the welfare of the child

The address and telephone numbers of our local Children's Services, relevant advocacy services and Ofsted are included in the Elm House Children's Welcome Pack.

Elm House operates an Annual Continuous [service] Improvement Plan - CIP: the contents of our annual CIP is heavily influenced by feedback from stakeholders, including Complaints, Compliments, regulatory inspection findings & judgments, monthly Regulation 44, and quarterly 45, findings & reports and general feedback from those with an interest in the development and quality of the services we provide.

**A copy of our Annual CIP can be obtained upon request.**

## 14. Staff Responsibilities

Upon Admission, Elm House staff will ensure that the child is made aware of how to make complaints and compliments.

Also, Elm House staff will:

- Upon admission, provide the child with a Complaints Booklet.
- Ensure the child has free access to a supply of Complaints Forms.
- Ensure that if the child has difficulty in reading, writing or understanding the form, he / she has the procedures verbally explained by an appropriate adult.
- Ensure the child's Social Worker has given him/her the respective Children's Services Complaints Leaflet.
- Upon Admission, the child is given OFSTED's contact details and advised of how to make an external complaint.
- Ensure Parents / Carer's / Social Services staff, are informed about the Acorn Education and Care Complaints Procedure.
- Ensure complaints are recorded on the home's Central Complaints Record, which is routinely inspected by OFSTED and available to social care workers. A copy of the complaint will be placed on the child's file and sent to social worker.

## 15. Children's Rights

Children have the right to complain to their social workers, any Acorn Education and Care staff member, OFSTED, NYAS Advocacy Services, Child Line or the Police.

Children have the right to complain about anything that is of concern to them.

Children who are assaulted have the right to inform the Police and instigate criminal/Safeguarding proceedings.

## 16. Other issues

Any complaint that concerns assault or abuse MUST be addressed in accordance with the Acorn Education and Care Safeguarding procedure.

## 17. Dealing with complaints – Initial Procedures

Where a member of staff receives a complaint, they will adhere to the following procedure:

Where the complaint is about abuse this MUST be immediately referred to the Home's manager and the Acorn Education and Care designated Safeguarding Lead. The Acorn Education and Care Safeguarding procedure MUST be followed.

Where a member of staff receives a complaint, they must record the complaint on a Complaints Form and place a copy on the child's file – this must happen on the same day the complaint is made.

Any written complaint from the child must be attached to the complaints form.

A copy of the complaints form should be sent to Acorn Education and Care Head and an additional copy should be sent to the child's social worker.

The Children's Home Manager should seek to resolve the complaint by way of an informal investigation.

Details of the investigation, resolution or the decision to refer the matter to the Corporate Team for formal investigation due to seriousness, should be recorded on the Complaints Form.

The complaint should be investigated within 7 days and the complainant should receive written notification of the outcome within 10 days.

Parents, the child's social worker and the Home's staff must also be made aware of the outcome.

All complaints should be recorded in the home's central Complaints Log and the Acorn Education and Care central log, which is located at Acorn Education and Care's Head office.

## 18. Complaints: Internal Referral Procedure

Where a complaint remains unresolved and as a result is referred to the Corporate Team, the following should be observed:

- The Registered Manager will forward details of the complaint to the child's parent/carers and where appropriate, OFSTED
- The Registered Manager will seek the support of the child's social worker to resolve the complaint.
- The Manager in consultation with their line Manager may appoint an independent person to consider the complaint.
- The Registered Manager will acknowledge the complaint by sending the complainant an explanation of the procedure and offer him/her assistance and guidance on where further guidance can be obtained.
- The Registered Manager will accept and record any oral complaints in writing.
- The independent person and/or Registered Manager, will consider the complaint and respond within 14 days of receipt of the complaint.
- The response will be addressed to the person making the complaint, and where different, the person on whose behalf the complaint was being made. The response will, inter alia, set out what options are available to the complainant should s/he remain dissatisfied.
- Arrangements will be made so that where a complainant remains dissatisfied and requests within 28 days that the complaint be reviewed, a panel is constituted by the responsible authority.
- Parents, social workers, and care staff will be informed of the outcome of the complaint.

## 19. Compliments

A compliment is an expression of gratitude or thanks made by a service user, his/her carers or others of significance involved the care or welfare of the child concerned, Typically, a compliment will concern the quality of service received, or a particular member of staff.

When a compliment is received it will:

- Be acknowledged
- Be passed on to the staff member involved and their managers, so that credit can be given where credit is due
- Be entered into the staff members personal file
- All complaints and compliments will be recorded and included in the home's compliments book.

*20. The arrangements made for promoting appropriate behaviour and for the control, restraint, and discipline of children.*

Elm House, in line with Acorn Education and Care policy, seeks to promote, within a clearly defined policy framework, positive relationships between adults [care staff] and children.

None of the disciplinary measures prohibited under Regulation 8 of the Children's Act 1989 are permitted at Elm House. All staff at the home 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. In addition, appropriate [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 (MAPA@ - the management of actual and potential aggression) is used only in specified circumstances i.e. to prevent likely injury to a child or to others, or likely serious damage to property. All Acorn Education and Care staff are trained in the use of Physical Intervention techniques, which include Redirection, De-escalation, 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.

MAPA@ [Positive Options] is endorsed by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities [BILD]. Acorn Education and Care is an Approved Training [ATC] Centre for MAPA@ and BILD Silver Members.

Elm house will operate in conjunction with each child the opportunity to have and take part in reward / incentive schemes in recognition of and reinforce appropriate positive behaviour.

The involvement of police in the running of Elm House is guided by our Police Involvement Policy: a copy can be obtained upon request: our guiding principle to avoid, where and appropriate, the criminalising of children; we seek to work positively with our local police officers.

## 21. Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy

### 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. Our Safeguarding procedures are consistent with the local policies and procedures agreed by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board [LCSB]

Acorn Education and Care is a Section 11 Children Act 2004 compliant service.

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"

## 22. Policy Objectives

Our Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy aims to:

- Provide clear and specific guidelines to enable staff to deal with child protection issues effectively.
- Set high internal standards to ensure that the children cared for by Acorn Education and Care are well protected
- Ensure Acorn Education and Care credibility, as a professional care organization, remains high and seeks to ensure that commissioning officers 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 Child Protection Emergency.

## 23. Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy

At Elm House, everything we do is geared to the protection, happiness and development of children. Our Safeguarding 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 Education and Care policy framework and management approach is designed to minimise the risk of child abuse. However, we recognise that there is always a chance that a child located in the safest of environments may fall victim to abuse. At Acorn Education and Care, no child protection issue is ignored. Our response to any allegation, or suspicion, is child-centred, transparent, swift and affirmative.

Copies of the Acorn Education and Care Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy are available upon request.

### 24. Bullying

Elm House is committed to providing a residential environment where children can live safely, without the fear of oppressive behaviour from staff or peers through any form of bullying or intimidation.

Acorn Education and Care provides all staff and children in its 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 Education and Care 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 to agree an action plan to deal with the bullying; this may include reviewing the appropriateness, and compatibility, of placements.
- Identify, and action, positive alternatives for both victim and perpetrator to develop those skills necessary for positive relationships.
- Keep a written record of all incidents and actions taken.

Acorn Education and Care believes bullying and oppressive behaviour has no place within its homes, in any shape or form. We are committed to an equality of service that demands a safe and caring environment for all service users.

### 25. Facilities Provided by Elm House

- Three children's Bedrooms
- Family bathroom
- Downstairs toilet and wash basins
- Communal Lounge and separate sitting room
- Kitchen / Dining Room
- Staff Office / workstation
- Gardens

### 26. Fire Precautions Adopted within Elm House

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

Fire precautions are conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Children's Homes Regulations 1991 – No 1506. Elm House has appropriate fire equipment, smoke alarms and heat detectors, which are regularly tested and serviced by a designated Fire Safety Officer.

All staff and children at Elm House are familiar with all aspects of the fire policy and procedures. Regular fire drills are conducted at the home, with the outcome and results continuously monitored and recorded within a logbook. Fire drills are undertaken to identify, clarify and resolve any issues or problems with regard to the fire safety policy. The Fire Safety procedure is clearly located at key locations within the home.

### 27. Elm House Training / Support

The Acorn Education and Care Team is responsible for overall operation and resourcing of Elm House and ensures that the company's core values are adhered to on a day-to-day basis.

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

- Health & Safety
- Food Hygiene
- Safeguarding / Child Protection /CSE/Terrorism Act
- First Aid
- Control & Restraint [MAPA]
- Specialist techniques in working with children where appropriate

All staff receive supervision and training and are required to hold or be pursuing NVQ Level 3 Caring for Children and Children or Level 3 Diploma for the Children and Children's Workforce [as a minimum]. Managers must hold or be pursuing the Diploma in Social Work or NVQ level 4 or Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Children's Services (England) [ which is the replacement qualification for NVQ level 4 in Children's Care, Learning and Development and NVQ L4 Leadership and Management for Care Services (LMCS). This qualification confers occupational competence to work in a management role.

Each child has a designated keyworker. Elm House is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All Acorn Education and Care staff are committed to providing for the children in our care high quality, user-friendly care & support services. Children benefit from Acorn Education and Care's commitment to a 'small homes' policy, and a high staff to child ratio: this ensures that children get the focused care and attention they need and deserve.

### 28. Day-To-Day Arrangements

Elm 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 should be cared for in a positive, non-discriminatory environment. Shortly after admission, each resident has a Placement Plan [where behaviour constitutes a key issue the Placement Plan may incorporate a Behaviour Management Plan], Health Plan and Risk Assessment formulated for them which aims to develop the child, keep him or her safe and foster a relationship based on equality, trust, equal value, dignity and respect.

Wherever possible Risk Assessments are formulated ahead of admission and reviewed as soon as possible thereafter. Where appropriate, plans are shared with the child concerned. All plans are shared with, and ratified by Case Managers.

Elm House seeks to provide a safe and accepting environment where issues of loss and separation will be addressed and expression of feelings encouraged in a positive and appropriate manner. In line with Acorn Education and Care policy, Elm House aims to deal with issues and meet needs associated with:

- Education & Leisure
- Health, Hygiene and Self Care
- Behavioural Issues
- Child Protection Issues

- Sex Education
- Interpersonal Skills & Socially acceptable behaviour
- Family contact
- Self Esteem/Confidence
- Skills/Emotional maturity
- Eating Disorders, substance abuse, self-harm.

Key day-to-day living arrangements include:

- Main meals are taken together, in a family style atmosphere, and special dietary needs are catered for.
- Children have their own bedroom key with lockable spaces for personal possessions.
- Communal, as well as individual leisure/recreational activities, are made available and actively encouraged.
- Elm House is well equipped with a variety of games and equipment, e.g. games, DVDs, books, music, crafts and other resources.

Whilst living at Elm House all children receive the following allowances:

- Pocket money
- Clothing and toiletries Money
- Personal allowances for activities/interests
- Birthday and Christmas Money

### 29. Child Participation and Involvement

At Elm House, Children are encouraged and supported in self-expression. They are encouraged and helped to recognise their rights and responsibilities. In support of the above, children are encouraged to participate in regular House Meetings. House Meetings are convened to encourage 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, Placement and Risk Management Plans.

For children that struggle to participate to engage in group processes [although they will receive ongoing support and encouragement], regular one-to-one Key Work sessions allow them to feed into the Home's decision-making processes. Through whatever channel, Elm House 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 the home.

### 30. 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 three days of admission. Internal reviews are held monthly to ensure the Plan remains up to date and relevant. Also, the Plan is reviewed at all other case review meetings, most notably, LAC Statutory Reviews.

Who can attend an internal Placement Review?

- The Child.
- The Parents [unless they are prevented from doing so by any court orders or Safeguarding arrangements].
- The Independent Reviewing Officer / The resident's Social Worker.
- The resident's keyworker.
- Teachers, Doctors, & Psychologists.
- Independent visitor, race advisor, interpreter and other family members.

External Care Plan Reviews

In addition to the arrangements at Elm House for internal reviews, there are arrangements led by the child's social worker for external reviews. Typically, arrangements for external reviews will comprise:

- Core Group Meetings
- Statutory [Looked After Child] Reviews
- Inter-agency meetings

Staff at Elm House will co-operate with, 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.

### 31. The role and responsibilities of Elm House Residential Childcare Workers [RCCWs]

Elm House's Residential Childcare Workers are responsible for providing, and promoting, the provision of various developmental aspects in the life of the child, which includes their health, physical needs, emotional security, social experience, sleep, clothing, and diet. Furthermore, all Residential Childcare Workers, and supporting residential staff, will ensure that they:

- Develop, and sustain, a manner of living, which encourages within each child a sense of stability, security, worth and responsibility.
- Positively promote and encourage awareness within each child of intellectual, religious, and cultural matters.

- Develop and maintain a sound professional and nurturing relationship with the child, based on the principals of mutual respect, and regular/meaningful consultation. RCCWs will ensure that this principle is maintained even though there may be specific periods where the behaviour of the child may be deemed as unacceptable.
- Promote and encourage the understanding, acceptance, and practice of acceptable forms of behaviour among ALL children residing at the home.
- Develop an understanding of the individual needs of each child, whilst encouraging the exchange of views and opinions between the staff and child.

### 32. Family & Multi-Agency Liaison

Elm House work with external agencies, bodies and establishments, in the spirit of partnership with a view to:

- Maintaining, supporting and actively encouraging regular and consistent contact with the child's family, friends, as well as significant others. This is achieved through telephone calls, letters; home visits in addition to visits to see the child within Elm House.
- Maintaining and encouraging regular access to, and contact with, the child's Social Worker, ensuring any issues, or concerns, can be discussed between the child 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. Particular attention is paid to the attendance levels.
- Also, staff will look to actively promote action programmes to help the child 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 Elm House locality ensuring a balanced and structured programme geared toward the ongoing development of the child.
- 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.
- Working collaboratively with commissioning social workers to achieve the best outcomes for the children and children in our care.

### 33. Opportunities for Leisure, Recreational & Social Activities

There are a wide range of leisure, recreational, and social activities that are available for the children residing at Elm House. The home is deliberately located in close proximity to key community resources. Our staff team ensures that every child is encouraged to participate in communal and group activities of their choice.

All Elm House staff recognise the benefit to children of participation in leisure, recreational, and social activities and will, seek to ensure that residents have a range of activities and pursuits from

which to choose. Notwithstanding the above, we recognize that a child is entitled to time when she or is doing nothing in particular.

Within Greater Nottingham, 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, ab-sailing, fishing, ice skating etc.

Each child at Elm House can be involved in completing a weekly Personal Activity Planner that sets out the child's 'plan' for the week ahead. This ensures that both children and staff are able to form a picture of the week ahead ensuring balance and variety.

### 34. Arrangements for Pursuing Cultural Identity and Religious Observance

In the interests of maintaining the balanced development of the child and in keeping with Equality and Diversity good practice, all Elm House staff ensure that every child 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 child at Elm House has an individual equality & diversity plan that essentially sets out the child's equality & diversity profile and ensure plans are in place to ensure all respective needs are met in a planned, reviewable and sensitive manner.

## APPENDIX: Care Management & Governance

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Our group now operates in a regional structure that enables education and residential care services to work closely - as well as creating locally resilient operational networks by connecting groups of services. These services are managed by skilled operational leaders from a variety of backgrounds.

We recognize that the complexity of residential care services and the challenges we face on a day to basis - 365 days per year - means we also need to provide an increased level of expertise, support and leadership around these services. In the same way children in our homes require appropriate levels of a high structure and high nurture approach to their care, our services also share this need.

Our residential services are managed by a Registered Manager and a Head of Care (Responsible Individual). Heads of Care are line managed by Heads of Service or Regional Directors' who manage both education and care settings. We then provide a centralized specialist residential care team of National Care Managers who report to the National Care Director, to work alongside and within the operating regions in a planned way, providing consistent supportive relationships and a structured system of improvement and

development work. The National Care Team also help build relationships with regulators, local authorities and outside agencies who can help us be more effective in our work as well as delivering strategic improvement projects across the group.

Outcomes First Group operates a clearly defined improvement strategy, setting out our standards within an operational performance framework and improvement planning process that services work to collaboratively with senior leaders.

Heads of Care are accountable for quality performance and improvement to the National Care Team. The performance quality and improvement process underpins the residential governance process in which Registered Managers and Heads of Care represent their services locally to an accountable group of governors, chaired by the National Care Manager. This information is reviewed as part of the National Performance Board chaired by the National Care Director and finally at a board level Safeguarding & Quality Committee. This allows the group to challenge, understand and focus resource on residential services that need support to deliver the best possible outcomes for our young people.

### APPENDIX: Education Services

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Outcomes First Group believes that education should be individually tailored and delivered in a variety of environments with a curriculum that encourages the development of communication, social and life skills as well as academic achievement.

The alignment of our education services geographically to our residential and foster care services allows us to help children and young people to achieve positive outcomes within a school-based environment, while simultaneously receiving high-quality care within a home setting.



Each student and resident's individual learning abilities, requirements and academic progression is consistently monitored to ensure that support remains proactive, learning opportunities are maximised and every singular achievement is celebrated. This approach is further supported by our in-house clinical teams, recognising each person we support as an individual and tailoring our care plans to meet specific needs from the point of admission and throughout their journey with us.

Our aim is simple; to work with the vulnerable people entrusted to us, step-by-step, day-by-day, to help them achieve their potential.

Our expert teachers and care specialists work in tailored environments to help them make progressive, incremental improvements. We monitor the progress of each of our students and residents very carefully, making adjustments to their individual development plans as necessary.

We take the lead in liaising with carers and families and involving the relevant agencies and authorities to build the appropriate care around the particular needs of those we look after.

*“We deliver an integrated Education and Care service supported by therapy, which provides much stronger outcomes for the people in our care. Seeing progress and building incredible futures is what drives us. We deliver a bespoke service best suited to that individual.”*

*Richard Power, Managing Director of Education*

APPENDIX: Clinical Support – Wellbeing Strategy Rainbow



### Red Stripe

The red stripe is our widest reaching stripe and therefore represents all colleagues - our administrators, the operations team, domestics, maintenance, managers, clinical, care, education, fostering, IT, HR, finance and the CEO. This stripe emphasises our Vision, Mission and Values.

**It is the responsibility of everyone to:**

- Be professional and polite to colleagues and the wider community
- Understand their own wellbeing needs, their own triggers and signs when their wellbeing is not good
- Ask for help from their line manager/supervisor

**OFG has a responsibility to:**

- Ensure everyone attends comprehensive induction training
- Have a clear wellbeing strategy that includes all staff members
- Provide colleagues with access to the Clinical Support line
- Allocate you a line manager/supervisor who has regular contact with you

### Green Stripe

The green stripe is the first stripe where staff have specific training and their roles are focused on wellbeing these are all members of the Wellbeing and Clinical Services Teams. This stripe reflects the OFG Universal Offer, so all young people across the range of services should have access to this level of wellbeing service provision.

**These people have a responsibility to:**

- Attend reflective practice, be open and honest
- Deliver Group based interventions which are evidence based
- Contribute to MDT discussions
- Provide consultation

**OFG has a responsibility to:**

- Facilitate reflective practice sessions
- Hold proactive and responsive meetings about children and young people who are struggling
- Provide appropriate supervision and line management

### Orange Stripe

The orange stripe begins to focus on those colleagues who have contact with our young people because they work in our schools and homes. These include our school administrators and cooks, our maintenance staff and domestics. The focus of this stripe echo's the OFG Pledge.

**These people have a responsibility to:**

- Attend and engage with all training that is offered
- Raise safeguarding concerns to your safeguarding lead
- Follow the OFG code of conduct
- Whistle blow if they feel another colleague is not following the Wellbeing Strategy

**OFG has a responsibility to:**

- Ensure these staff have DBS
- Provide training on safe practice so people can whistle blow should they witness unsafe practice
- Provide a comprehensive and easy to understand code of conduct

### Blue Stripe

The blue stripe contains our qualified health professionals, who are trained in clinical disciplines which focus on increasing wellbeing through communication (speech and language therapists), movement/environment (occupational therapists) and mental health (psychologists and psychotherapists). This stripe reflects the OFG Enhanced Offer.

**These people have a responsibility to:**

- Understand each young person's level of need
- Maintain CPD and requirements of their professional registration
- Use evidence-based approaches and standardised assessments
- Provide consultation and supervision

**OFG has a responsibility to:**

- Provide training opportunities to ensure our disciplines provide the most up to date and evidence based assessments and interventions
- Supply the wellbeing & clinical services with standardised assessment measures
- Provide appropriate supervision, line management and CPD opportunities

### Yellow Stripe

The yellow stripe represents our care, education and fostering teams. Colleagues and carers in this stripe ensure a young person's wellbeing through their nurturing and compassionate approach. Our young people spend the majority of their daily lives with these people, so it is recognised that these individuals are crucial to the successful functioning of each OFG provision.

**These people have a responsibility to:**

- Consistently deliver a therapeutic parenting approach
- Be aware of neurodiversity
- To read and follow each child's behaviour support and educational plan

**OFG has a responsibility to:**

- Train staff in therapeutic parenting approaches
- Train staff in understanding neurodiversity
- Hold frequent multi-disciplinary meetings, consultation and reflective practice sessions
- Provide regular supervision and line management

### Violet Stripe

The violet stripe is our smallest stripe, and therefore represents the most specialised group of people whose primary job is to support the wellbeing of our most complex young people through evidence-based psycho-therapy and holistic consultation. This stripe reflects the OFG Specialised Offer.

**These people have a responsibility to:**

- Maintain CPD and requirements of their professional registration
- Work systemically and communicate with all other staff and family around each child
- Provide specialist consultation and supervision
- Ensure the concept of wellbeing is understood and prioritised by all other staff across the rainbow

**OFG has a responsibility to:**

- Support the ongoing development of these professionals
- Support a culture where wellbeing is understood and prioritised

### East of England and North East

#### Dr Leanne Johnson, Consultant Clinical Psychologist

leanne.johnson@hillcrest-cs.co.uk

Before training in Clinical Psychology, I was a qualified Special Needs Teacher. I have worked in a variety of services supporting early trauma, such as CAMHS, inpatient services, and residential care. I love supporting young people to gain the best outcomes for now and their future.



## APPENDIX: Outcomes First Group Pledge

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We all know that from the statistics available, children and young people in care are less likely to achieve well at school, suffer from mental health issues, enter the criminal justice system or, as an adult, other social care systems. At Acorn Education and Care/Options Autism, we are working hard to change this bleak picture on an individual basis for our children and young people, and have a dedicated team to boost and improve outcomes. Residential Managers or residential staff can access this additional resource at any point, and the support offered aligns with our Pledge to Children and Young People.

*Help me get a good education (achieve and enjoy)*

Education and SEND Lead

The Education and SEND Lead can support with any education enquiry, big or small, from a simple question which needs answering, to playing an active role in a case where a Residential Manager has not managed to get a suitable or appropriate educational outcome for their child or young person. This service can help with advice on where to go next with an enquiry or question, or at a more serious level, can start to take an active role, including any escalation on behalf of the Registered Manager, child or young person. This work is always sensitively undertaken with stakeholders, with the needs of the child and young person, and a sense of what the desired outcome should be at the heart of the support delivered.

Emma Farr – [emma.farr@ofgl.co.uk](mailto:emma.farr@ofgl.co.uk)

*Support my future*

Careers and Employability Lead

The Careers and Employability Lead can support with any careers, employability or employment enquiry, with the purpose of boosting the future chances of our young people. This service can provide high-level support to Registered Managers in trying to find appropriate further opportunities for our young people, but can also provide 1:1 careers advice and guidance where necessary. This is particularly important if:

- the young person is not currently in an educational setting;
- the young person's current educational setting has not provided it at a suitable or appropriate level;
- if opportunities for this support were missed by the young person.

Kelly Spence – [kelly.spence@ofgl.co.uk](mailto:kelly.spence@ofgl.co.uk)

### *Support my next adventure*

#### Adventures and Activities Lead

Responsible for the two key partnerships with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and British Exploring Society, the Adventures and Activities Lead delivers the opportunity for our young people to complete a DofE Award at the three levels of Bronze, Silver or Gold, or to join an expedition adventure with British Exploring Society. These opportunities allow young people to acquire essential personal skills, and connect them with their communities and the great outdoors in a developmental and positive manner. These activities support and boost the other areas of 'Help me get a good education' and 'Support my future'.

Chloe Moul – [chloe.moul@ofgl.co.uk](mailto:chloe.moul@ofgl.co.uk)

