



**Willow
House**

Statement of Purpose and Function

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

SC051739

**ACORN EDUCATION
AND CARE**

Better days, Better lives™

Contents

1. Mission Statement
2. Objectives of Willow House
3. Facilities Provided by Willow House / Location & Accommodation
4. Responsible Body for Willow House
5. Qualifications and Experience
6. Staff Support and Supervision Systems
7. Organisational Structure of the home
8. Who May Be Referred?
9. Admissions Procedure
10. Available Services
11. Ethos and Philosophy
12. Health Care Provision
13. Education, Educational Services & Local Schools
14. Recreational, Sporting and Cultural Arrangements
15. Consultation Arrangements
16. Methods of Control & Discipline
17. Safeguarding & Bullying
18. Unauthorised Absence from Willow House
19. Surveillance
20. Fire Precautions Adopted by Willow House
21. Arrangements for Pursuing Cultural Identity & Religion
22. Contact Arrangements
23. Complaints, Comments & Compliments
24. Arrangements for Reviews
25. Provisions made available by Willow House
26. Therapeutic Techniques
27. Anti-discrimination at Willow House
28. Acorn Education and Care Management/Home Structure

1. Mission Statement

Willow House is part of the Outcomes First 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 Willow House

Willow House is an Acorn Education and Care home committed to providing care to children/young people on a long to medium term basis depending on the needs of the young person.

Willow 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 three young people, aged eight 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 Willow 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 achieve their full potential.

Willow House Statement of Purpose

- Provide a safe and supportive environment where children and young people are listened to and encouraged to express their needs, wishes and feelings.
- Promote confidence and independence
- Provide opportunities for children and young people to make informed choices
- Develop individual care programmes 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 long-term plans for each young person and a care plan is prepared which clearly focuses on his or her individual needs. If necessary the care plan can encompass access to counselling, therapy, behaviour and anger management, the development of life skills and semi/full independent living packages.

The objectives of the care plan programme are to:

- Support the young person to build resilience through individualised support packages, helping the young person to see the benefit of socially acceptable behaviours, and those behaviours which will afford them inclusion within their community / wider community.
- Support young people to develop life skills enabling them independence and safe living in adulthood.
- Assist the young person to form, maintain and build relationships with other young people and adults and to integrate into social groups.
- To support young people to attend education, training and employment. Where young people are not attending school, they are supported to achieve through other avenues which are of professional body and qualified to do so.

Progress by the young person towards achieving the main objectives of the care programme is monitored and reviewed monthly and with other professional representatives of the responsible local authority at statutory intervals. Should there be a marked decline in the young person's presentation their Social Worker would be contacted immediately.

The staff team at Willow House 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. Once the young person has settled into the home and if they identify a preferred member of the team to fulfil this role, this will be put into place if possible to do so.

The role of the key worker will include responsibility for:

- Promoting the young person's participation in and the ownership of their care programme or semi/full independent package

Willow House Statement of Purpose

- Actively putting the care programme as well as any independent package into action
- Ensuring the care programme or independent 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 House 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 and friends and professionals involved in their care.

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

Children are put first.

We have a number of values, which are important to the home and for the children and young people who we support and look 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 and with worth.
- **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.

Willow House Statement of Purpose

- 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 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 Willow House

- Three generously sized children's Bedrooms
- One Staff Office and staff shower room
- One staff sleep in room
- Large Family Bathroom, shower, bath and Wash Basin
- Upstairs & Downstairs Toilet & Wash Basin
- One lounge and one dining room, enabling young people to have time either on their own or time with family, friends and others important to them.
- Lap top for the use for young people
- Young people also have a mobile phone in the home which they can use to keep in contact with those important to them, either by voice call or video call.
- Kitchen and separate utility room.
- Large Garden both front and rear Off street parking

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 Beeston and conveniently situated near Nottingham University, Willow 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.

Willow 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

Willow House Statement of Purpose

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 Willow House do not share bedrooms unless the placing authority stipulates this as a planned care requirement e.g. for siblings. Bedrooms are furnished and equipped to a high standard, and decorated in consultation with the children/young people.

The communal lounge area includes a flat screen television and DVD and age appropriate DVDs. There is a separate space at the back of the lounge which overlooks the garden and provides a quiet area for young people to relax. There are also a variety of games and books and other general knowledge material. We are committed to children's learning and have a children's newspaper delivered each week which helps the young people keep up to date with national and international news.

The home has large kitchen 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 including a utility room where the young people can develop their independent skills and can learn to carry out related domestic tasks.

There is a large size bathroom/shower room located on the first floor of the property. There are also two separate toilets with washbasins.

Staff are provided with well-equipped sleeping accommodation upon the first floor of the property which is located close to the bedrooms occupied by the children. Willow House operate a waking staff system as well as a sleep staff and when required are able to provide a 1:1 staff to child ratio.

All doors apart from both toilet doors have thumb locks fitted. This means that external doors are always locked from the outside preventing uninvited guests from entry however are not able to be locked from the inside, enabling easy exit at all times. Equally internal doors are not able to be locked from the outside, preventing anyone from being locked into a room. Where young people lock themselves in a room and staff are concerned about their safety, they would request the young person to unlock the door from the inside before entering by using a key. Currently Willow House do not use sensors or lock down systems as there is no risk outside of the margin of 'normal' suggesting that this type of risk management is needed. However, if this was to become the case, Willow House would work in close partnership with those significant in the young person's life as well as the young person themselves in finding solutions for safety.

4. Responsible Body for Willow House

Our main office is at:

Westbourne School, Huthwaite Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield. NG17 2EL.

Telephone 01623 392430

Willow House is registered and inspected by OFSTED.

Willow House Regional Director for Yorkshire and the Midlands is Lynette Edwards and Principal of Westbourne School which the homes are aligned to Leo Guy.

Responsible Individual and Head of Care: Donna Carlin

Donna has been with Acorn Care and Education since 2005.

Prior to working for Acorn Care and Education 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: Kirsten Cocksey

Kirsten joined the team at Willow House in March 2012 as the Manager. Kirsten has 17 years' experience of working with young people in residential care within the company. Prior to this she worked within local communities with excluded young people on community based projects for a period of three years. Kirsten has knowledge and vast experience of supporting young people and their families / significant others with a range of difficulties and / or disabilities and those who pose significant challenging behaviour. Kirsten has a desire to enable young people to have aspirations for their futures, encouraging them and enabling them in taking control and setting their own goals high.

Kirsten has obtained all relevant qualifications at a statutory level as well as furthering her knowledge by attendance on health and safety course (Iosh) and child focused and centred / specific training, inclusive of Attachment and Trauma and DDP. Kirsten holds Diploma level 5 Leadership and Management.

5. Qualifications and Experience

The registered manager holds the following qualifications:

- Diploma Level 5, Leadership and Management
- NVQ Level 3 Children and young people
- Safeguarding Lead certificate
- Various safeguarding certificates, including DSL.
- Iosh, Managing Safely

Willow House Statement of Purpose

- Foundations to Attachments
- DDP Level 1
- A Certificate in Food Safety
- A Certificate in Health and Safety at Work
- A certificate in First Aid at Work
- A certificate in Safe Administration of Medicines
- A Certificate in Supervision Skills in Social Care
- A certificate in Managing Dangerous Behaviour (Razor Edge).
- New Kind of Worker. Person Centred Approach.
- Training in Specialised Subjects such as Autism, Attachment and Trauma, deliberate self-harm and child sexual exploitation.

The staff team at Willow House is made up of:

Registered Manager

Assistant Manager

Senior Residential Child Care Workers

Residential Child Care Workers

Bank workers

The staff team shown above is predominantly female supported by a small number of male staff but this is representative of the young people who live in the home. This will enable the female house group good male role models and where necessary begin to replace with positive notions any existing negative preconceptions they may have of men. This will also serve to balance the approaches offered by male and female, nurturing and caring in a way that prescribes to the idea of therapeutic parenting.

Staff at Willow House are enrolled onto Children & Young people diploma level 3 children and young people, and complete mandatory training consisting of Safeguarding Children and Young People, MAPA, First Aid, Fire Training, Food Safety, Medication, Manual Handling, Health and Safety. Additional training e.g. autism awareness, attachment and trauma, CSE will be accessed in line with young people's needs. Some staff are C card holders and consultations are sought with professionals such as CAMHS to further support staff learning and understanding. Some staff are undertaking further management training.

The team at Willow House are committed to young people and developing with them opportunities for them to reach their personal goals and aspirations. The staff team come from various backgrounds and bring to their work a varying level of skills, experience and qualifications and have great ability in supporting young people to excel. Due to their child focused approach the team are able to support in an individualised way, respecting difference and supporting social resilience and growth. The team's main goal is to support each young person in a meaningful way, and in a way which has a purpose identified by each respective young person, supporting their identity and self-esteem.

6. Staff Support and Supervision

Each member of the team at Willow House are supported both as an individual and as part of a team. Each member can expect monthly supervision as well as annual appraisals which are reviewed throughout the respective year. Staff are supported to develop their skills, share learning within the team and work within the MDT of professionals relating children in our care. Group meetings take place where specific issues and topics are discussed to raise awareness and build knowledge. The team benefit from consultation with such professionals as CAMHS in understanding specific behaviours relating to attachment and trauma. They also benefit from attending training facilitated by such professionals as Enabling Care.

Acorn Education and Care will adhere to regulatory staff qualification targets. This will not only serve to work within the Law but we also believe in creating opportunities for team members to build on skills enabling a more resilient work force for the benefit of children and young people.

Each young person has a designated key worker. Willow 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's 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

Willow 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 resident has a Placement Plan formulated which aims to develop the young person and foster a relationship with them based on equality and trust where they can feel valued and respected. We 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 corporate policy, Willow House aims to deal with issues such as:

- Education & Leisure
- Health, Hygiene and Self Maintenance
- Behavioural Issues
- Safeguarding / Child Protection Issues
- Sex Education
- Interpersonal Skills & Socially acceptable behaviour

Willow House Statement of Purpose

- Family contact
- Self Esteem/Confidence
- Skills/Emotional maturity
- Eating Disorders, substance abuse, self -harm.

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 prepared in a daily basis and according to the young person's wishes and needs, they are able to either choose to eat together or separately, but either way, are encouraged to enjoy this as a social event.

Children/young people have their own bedroom with lockable spaces for personal possessions. Bedroom doors have turn locks enabling young people to lock their doors when they are in their rooms, however young people are aware that staff may enter their rooms if they feel the young person is placing themselves in danger.

There is one communal lounge and one dining room enabling young people to have time and space away from each other and/or staff and others. The home is staffed with young people's needs in mind, adhering to safety at every reasonable/possible level.

A variety of working methods are used with children/young people. These are tailored to suit individual needs. Such methods include one to one work, group work, mentoring, workshops, role-play.

Willow House work closely with other professionals, sharing information and with the young person at the centre of the planning process, develop strategies and enable a successful and safer outcome for young people.

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

- Weekly Pocket money allowance
- Savings on a weekly basis
- Weekly activities/interests allowance
- An ability to earn rewards, either financial or additional activity
- Monthly clothing allowance
- Birthday and Christmas money
- Annual Holiday Allowance

8. Who may be referred to Willow House?

Willow House is able to accommodate:

- three young people

Willow House Statement of Purpose

- male or female
- Young people who have social and emotional difficulties. Young people may remain at Willow House up until their 18th Birthday if they remain in full time education or equivalent. This can incorporate young people with a Statement of Educational Needs/EHC Plan). They may also remain after the 18th Birthday if they are observing a clear and deliverable programme of person centred transition to a suitable adult setting).
- Young people whose main and principal care and support needs relate to socio-and 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 Willow House is such, that the home could accommodate a young person with mild mobility difficulties it would not however be suited for children with severe mobility difficulties.

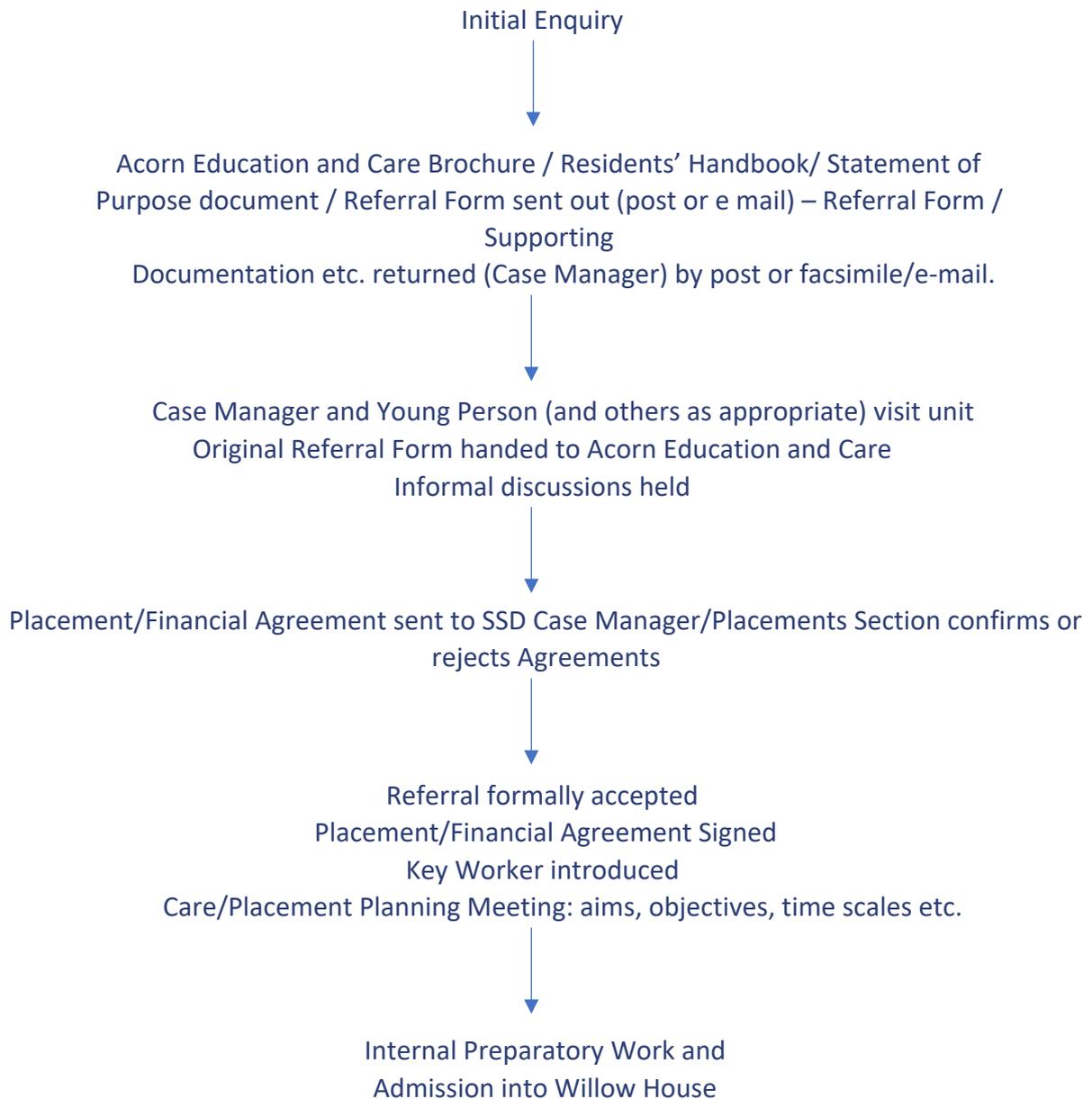
9. Referral/Admissions Procedure

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, However, Acorn Education and Care will consider Emergency Referrals but acceptance of whom will be dependent upon vacancies and child suitability (child's needs/ existing young people).

Willow House Statement of Purpose

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



10. Available Services

Residential Placements

- Medium and Long Term Residential placements
- Placements with Therapeutic Intervention.
- After - Care
- Reception & Assessment

11. Ethos and Philosophy

The underlying ethos and philosophy of Willow 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 by accommodating key working sessions and residents' meetings on a regular basis. Such sessions enable comfort and reassurance and encourage the child to actively refocus their thoughts and help to begin to manage their feelings, concerns and stresses.

Teaching basic problem-solving skills when upsetting situations arise, helping 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.

Creating opportunity for young people to achieve their goals, both educational and recreational, being included and respected for who they are, building resilience and self-esteem empowers young people.

We believe in supporting identity, contact with family and friends and encouraging participation in community, aiming high, achieving educational attainment and therefore enabling more choices on reaching adulthood.

As well as all the above, Willow House aim to show love and understanding to all the young people we have the pleasure of supporting.

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.

Each home has in place and maintains:

- An annual Equality & Diversity [E&D] Self-Assessment
- An E&D Subsidiary Service Development Plan

Also, the organisation provides, as necessary, both generic and specific E&D staff training.

12. Health Care Provision

Willow 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.

Leading up to and upon admission, medical history and health assessments are sought to determine and recognise any support needs required regards to health and medication. All young people within our care are registered with a local General Practitioner and have access to a range of other health care facilities, which include:

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

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.

Willow staff will accommodate all young people to appointments where required and will complete a written record which is placed on file so that progress can be tracked and assessed accordingly. 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.

13. Education, Educational Services and Local Schools

Willow 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. Willow House staffs are all involved in proactively implementing needs assessed personal Education Plans (PEP) for each child.

Key workers/Home Management oversee the implementation of PEPs and monitor progress in order to evaluate and modify PEPs to maximise achievement.

Willow House Statement of Purpose

Willow House have great relations with local schools and currently are working with both Foxwood Academy which in a SEN school and Bramcote College which is a main stream school. We also have the benefit of being linked to our independent special school, Westbourne School which works with children with a variety of needs such as SEMH, attachment and autism.

Willow House can/has:

- Provide 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 and the internet
- Access a number of mainstream educational provisions locally
- Access specialist education for young people/children with Learning Disabilities, within the catchment areas of Nottinghamshire area
- strong links with four schools for children with Special Educational Needs
- Good relationships with Nottinghamshire Local Education Authority, virtual head
- In-house personal tuition where applicable and necessary. We have access, through R.E.A.L Education and ADL 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, including DofE Award.
- Careers advice delivered by qualified professional, Targeted Support and other such as that offered through community led projects.

Young people at Willow 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. 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'/teaching assistants attend Looked After Care reviews as well as hosting young people's education reviews to review progress and set future targets for young people.

14. 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 Willow 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.

All Willow House staff recognise the importance of monitoring the participation in leisure, recreational, and social activities, whilst ensuring that adequate alternatives are offered to every child/young person, as and when required. We also recognise that a child/young person is entitled to time alone.

There are a number of leisure, recreational, and social activities available, including access to and use of youth clubs, sports centres and gyms, cinemas, arts and crafts facilities, cookery, guides and army cadets, bowling, ice skating and public spaces such as parks and nature reserves. Young people are encouraged to take part in activities that they themselves are interested in taking part in.

Each child/young person has 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.

15. 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 weekly basis. The home also operates a reward system encouraging appropriate behaviour. Such a system is intended to act as an incentive scheme geared to each young person's individual needs.

In line with Policies, Willow 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 allowed regular access to their files; their appointed key worker will undertake this task.

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

However, to support the young person's participation and full inclusion, they are encouraged and able to read their daily observations completed by Willow House staff in order to discuss and reflect on what has been observed and written about them, this encourages young people to feel listened to. All discussions with young person are meaningful, where necessary young people are encouraged and supported to plan and put agreements in place to support their progression and success.

Methods of Control and Discipline

Willow House, in line with Acorn Education and Care corporate policy 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 are permitted at Willow House. All staff at Willow 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. 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 (MAPA@ - the management of actual and potential aggression) 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, 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. Training is on an annual basis and competency checked where physical intervention has been employed. Post reflective discussions and support is given to all staff involved after any physical intervention with a young person. The young person is offered life space interview where they are able to reflect on what has happened and say how they are feeling. Young people are offered medical checks and where they feel they have been unjustly treated, they are offered an opportunity to make a complaint.

MAPA@ [Positive Options] is endorsed by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities [BILD]. Acorn Education and Care are an approved training centre for MAPA@ and BILD Silver Members.

Acorn Education and Care support and advocate BILDS positive Behaviour Support philosophy which makes sure that all people with learning disabilities can exercise their human rights and be valued members of their local communities and eliminates all unnecessary restrictive and aversive practice.

Young people are able to receive rewards for positive behaviour. Each young person is able to work towards their five-point plan and each day in addition to pocket money, are able to earn additional money or extra activity for positive attitude.

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 Willow 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 action is taken to reduce the risk of bullying including completion of risk assessments. 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." Policy Objectives

Our Safeguarding policy aims to:

- Provide clear and specific guidelines to enable staff to deal with Safeguarding 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'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

Nottinghamshire LADO allegations officer:

Helen Atherton

Children & Families strategic services

County Hall, Nottingham, NG2 7QP

Tel: 0115 804 1272

DCS: Miss Alison Michalska

Safeguarding Policy

At Willow 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 Education and Care policy framework and management approach is designed to minimise the risk of child abuse. However, we recognise that with the best will in the world 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 Safeguarding issue is ignored. Our response to any allegation or suspicion is child-centred, transparent, swift and affirmed.

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 Education and Care 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 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 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 perpetrators 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 Education and Care homes are a part. We are committed to an equality of service that demands a safe and caring environment for all children and young people.

17. Unauthorised Absence from the Home

Willow House provides all Residential staff and children with written procedures, which are clearly followed when a child believed to be missing from care or absent.

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 Willow House is made welcome upon return – the principal aim will be to work with the child/young person to find out why he or she felt the need to leave the 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. If this is not possible, Acorn Education and Care 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.

Willow House Statement of Purpose

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 without 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

A daily logging system enables a record of who is in the home at any one time and of their whereabouts.

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

Willow house young people benefit from waking night staff who conduct checks throughout each night in line with the Night time risk assessment.

There are no reasons highlighting a need for electronic motion sensors or other electronic monitoring device within the home.

19. Fire Precautions Adopted within Willow House

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

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

All staff and children at Willow House are familiar with all aspects of the fire policy and procedures and the Homes Fire Risk assessment. Regular fire drills are conducted within Willow House, with the outcome and results continuously monitored and recorded within a logbook, in accordance with the Willow House and procedure. Such drills are undertaken to identify, clarify and resolve any issues or problems with regards to the fire safety policy.

20. Arrangements for Pursuing Cultural Identity and Religious Observance

As a culturally competent care provider, Acorn Education and Care are committed to facilitating and supporting the cultural and religious practices of children in our care.

In the interests of maintaining the balanced development of the child/young person and in keeping with Equality and Diversity good practice, all Willow House staff ensure 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, 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 Willow 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, skype, letters; home visits in addition to visits to see the child/young person within Willow House Residential Home.

Maintaining and encouraging regular access to, and contact with, the child's/young person's Social Worker and 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 Willow 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

Each young person in the home has access to:

- A Child friendly format of Acorn Education and Care Internal Complaints Procedures and the services of an independent representative/advocate
- The Complaints Procedure of the responsible local authority
- Contact details of their social worker, independent reviewing officer and child line.
- Ofsted Tel: 0300 1231231
- Write to Ofsted National Business Unit (NBU), 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 house 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 Home 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 Education and Care

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 one month the Plan is agreed and adopted. Internal review is held on the 3 month to ensure the Plan remains up to date and relevant. And then every 6 months at this time the Plan is reviewed.

Who can attend an internal Placement Review?

- The child/young person. Reviews are child focused and led by the respective young person.
- The Parents (unless they are prevented from doing so by any court orders).
- The Reviewing Officer from the young person's area office.
- The young person's field Social Worker.
- The young person's Key Worker.
- A Senior Manager.
- Teachers, Doctors, & Psychologists.
- Independent visitor, interpreters as required • Advocates and Transition Worker/s
- Other family members.

External Care Plan Reviews:

In addition to the arrangements at Acorn Education and Care 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 Education and Care 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 Willow House

As highlighted within this document, all Residential Child Care Workers within Willow House 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 Social Care Workers will ensure that they:

Willow House Statement of Purpose

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 principle 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 Willow 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 Willow House, 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 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.

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 Education and Care /Home's decision-making processes. Through whatever channel, Acorn Education and Care 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

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. We follow guidance from the PACE model.

It's this environment, together with the multi-disciplinary support we provide, that can make Willow 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.

Willow House Statement of Purpose

All staff attend training in the use of Managing Actual and Potential Aggression (MAPA), a behaviour support approach based on Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), which is accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD). CPI is an internationally recognised crisis prevention and management system that reduces reliance on high-risk interventions. CPI recognises that it is the actions and reactions of those around young people that strongly shape and influence their behaviour, as well as their social and emotional development. Its emphasis is on empathy and proactive support, while physical interventions are very much considered a last resort.

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.

To keep young people safe there are times when the use of physical interventions may be needed. 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. 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. CAMHS, Enabling Care, and other specialist services beneficial to respective young people.

Where additional measures of physical intervention do become necessary, our procedures: are clear; fall within government guidelines; are agreed between parents and local authorities as permissible in certain circumstances to make dangerous situations safe; and are always documented.

26. Anti-discrimination at Willow House

Willow 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.

Willow House Statement of Purpose

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.
- 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.