



Walnuts Children's Home

# *Statement of Purpose*



## Our contact details

*Schedule 1.18 - The name and work address of (a) the registered provider; (b) the responsible individual and (c) the registered manager*

<u>Registered Provider:</u>	Milton Keynes Local Authority Saxon Court 502 Avebury Boulevard Central Milton Keynes CMK9 3HS T: 01908 691691
<u>Registered Manager:</u>	Mrs Rosemarie Cooper Walnuts Children's Home Admiral Drive Hazeley Milton Keynes MK8 0PU T: 01908 555618/555619 E: rosemarie.cooper@walnuts.milton-keynes.sch.uk
<u>Responsible Individual:</u>	Mrs Jo Rabbitte Head of Delivery: Corporate Parenting Service People Directorate, Milton Keynes Council Saxon Court 502 Avebury Boulevard Central Milton Keynes CMK9 3HS T: 01908 25 3473 E: Joanne.Rabbitte@milton-keynes.gov.uk
<u>Head of Safeguarding:</u>	Jo Hooper Milton Keynes Council Galley Hill Centre Galley Hill MK11 1PA T: 01908 254307 07506744578 E: jo.hooper@milton-keynes.gov.uk
<u>LADO:</u>	Jo Clifford T: 01908 254300 M: 07775817827 If not available, call duty social worker 01908 253169

This statement of purpose is written in accordance with the regulatory requirements of the Children's Home (England) Regulations 2015.

As per Regulation 16.2 a copy of this statement of purpose will be provided to Ofsted (HMCI) and is also available to:

Each person who works at the home.

Each young person provided with accommodation at the home.

Each young person who is being considered for accommodation at the home.

All Parents or person(s) with parental responsibility of any young person provided with accommodation at the home.

All Parents or person(s) with parental responsibility of any young person who is being considered for accommodation at the home.

The Local Authority or placing Authority of the young person who is provided with accommodation

*Regulation 16 (4) - If a home has a website, the registered person must ensure that a copy of the statement of purpose is published on that website unless the registered person considers that such publication would prejudice the welfare of children in the home.*

A copy of the Home's statement of Purpose can be found online at [www.walnuts.milton-keynes.sch.uk](http://www.walnuts.milton-keynes.sch.uk) however this can be reviewed at the discretion of the Home's manager and where this may conflict with the placement of a young person within the home this document may be removed from the website. Any web version of the document may also have restricted content and alternative contact details to ensure that confidentiality is maintained in respects of any young person accommodated at the home.

*Regulation 16 (3) - The registered person must -  
(a) keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and  
(b) notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.*

The statement of purpose will be reviewed after completion of any review of care (Regulation 45) or where there have been any changes/updates to the children's home regulations. Reviews will also be conducted where the secretary of state has published a statement of standards. Any amendments in regards to processes of the home or its policies and procedures may lead to the statement of purpose being amended. A copy of any revised statement of purpose will be sent to Ofsted.

## Quality and purpose of care

*Schedule 1.1 - A statement of the range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care*

We provide care for children and young people with a learning disability. Some of these children and young people may have additional needs including, autism, sensory impairment, communication difficulties and behaviours that challenge

Walnuts Children's Home offers short and long term placements and day care provision.

The age range of the young people that are placed with us on a 52 week basis is between 5 and 19 years old. As this is such a wide age range we need to ensure the compatibility and the impact of any new placements on the existing residents. Walnuts Children's Home accommodates both boys and girls.

The young people that access the short term provision are aged between 7 and 18, again we assess compatibility before a placement begins.

Most of the young people in the home find change to routine very difficult and it is crucial that admissions are carefully managed, to ensure that the new child/ young person and the young people already accessing the home will be compatible.

Before providing care for any child or young person we will ensure that the staff knowledge and skills set, and the environment are able to meet their specific needs.

We have places for up to 6 young people who are placed on a 52 week basis. We also have a number of flexible weekly places, offering targeted intervention and respite care. These numbers can vary, depending on the needs and compatibility of the young people.

*Schedule 1.22 - Any criteria used for the admission of children to the home, including any policies and procedures for emergency admission*

Admissions to the home are usually on a planned basis. Young people who meet the age and admissions criteria are introduced to the home prior to moving in to live there. All necessary documentation regarding the young person should be provided by the family and social worker, if applicable, prior to admission.

In exceptional circumstances, where there is no more suitable placement available and where there is a greater risk in not placing a young person, emergency admissions will be accommodated; with a review meeting taking place within 72 hours.

Enquiries regarding referrals are made to the Registered Manager by parents, education authorities, social services departments or health authorities. Visits from prospective parents and professionals are welcome and we value their feedback.

*Regulations 41 - Notification with respect to children admitted into, or discharged from, a children's home*

Following any placement of a young person it is important that where the placement has not been from Milton Keynes (the home's local authority) the home must inform the local authority of any young person's admission as per Regulation 41 of the Children's home regulations.

## **Walnut's ethos, and the outcomes that we seek to achieve and our approach to achieving them**

*Schedule 1.2 - Details of the children's home's ethos, and the outcomes that the children's home seeks to achieve and its approach to achieving them*

The Staff Team work to ensure that the following ethos and values are an integral part of life at Walnuts:

- Value and respect ourselves and all other members of our community as individuals who have a unique contribution to make
- Acknowledge and celebrate each other's skills, experiences and characteristics and accept each person as a 'whole'
- Know that problems can be shared, and to ask for support and help
- Take responsibility for our words and actions
- Show courtesy and consideration to others
- Value working in partnership with parents
- Enable the young people to gain greater independence and learn life skills, to equip them for the future.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the diversity of cultures, customs and ethnic origins within our community
- Residential care can be a positive choice and experience at an important stage in young people's lives. This can be achieved by helping young people and their families or carers to address issues and to be solution focused.
- Residential care should provide a skilled service from committed staff in a safe, appropriately structured and caring environment.
- The staff team has a responsibility to make sure that young people in residential care are protected from abuse and neglect.

Our overall purpose is to provide a safe, warm, nurturing and empowering environment for young people to live in and to move appropriately on from, when they are ready.

Working together with each young person we endeavour to enhance their levels of self-esteem by creating and maximising safe opportunities, in which they learn, develop and realise appropriate degrees of self-determination. We believe that to make life long change we have to give young people the tools and engagement which enable them to gain the skills they require throughout their lives.

To be able to deliver this we will ensure their needs are met by providing:-

- Adequate staff to work closely with smaller groups or individual young people in order to promote their welfare.
- Adequate staffing to enable outside activities to take place, including days out and residential holidays (for children on 52 week placements)
- A keyworker system to reflect individual needs as part of daily living plans.
- Detailed and up to date case records, such as:- Care plans; Risk Assessments; Pen Profile; up-to-date CLA information; key worker role; targets and Pathway plans; young people's and staff meetings; robust handovers; parental/carer and social worker input.

### Targeted Intervention

The targeted intervention concentrates on the teaching of self-help skills, participation in leisure activities in both the home and the local and wider community, and in promoting independence. Progress is regularly reviewed and when targets have been achieved the placement will end.

A request for a placement is made through the school heads of departments who then present the request at a senior management team meeting (SMT). The decision whether to offer a place and the priority of placement is made collaboratively by the STM. When a place becomes available the SMT will access the priorities of the young people, it will not be done on who has been on the list the longest but, by who has the most urgent need.

### 52-week provision

The Home is open 52 weeks and a small number of the young people access this provision. Our residents maintain regular contact with their families through a variety of ways, via telephone calls, and planned home contact visits etc.

Whatever the pattern, the important factor is that it is in the best interest of the individuals involved, that parents, school and other agencies liaise closely in working out the most supportive care plan. During holidays and weekends, young people access more community activities. These activities are planned to meet individual child interests.

### Short break care

We also provide short break care which can be in the form of day care, evening care or overnight care. This provision is normally provided at the request of a social worker after a package of care has been arranged for a young person.



## The home

*Schedule 1.3 - A description of the accommodation offered by the home, including (a) how accommodation has been adapted to the needs of children; (b) the age range, number and sex of children for whom it is intended that accommodation is to be provided; and (c) the type of accommodation, including sleeping accommodation.*

Walnuts Children's Home is a purpose built large detached property in Milton Keynes, it is set in the grounds of The Walnuts Special School. The 24 bedded home consists of a House and Home provision.

Walnuts Home is separate from the rest of the building as this is where the young people on 52 week placements live. There facilities are:-

Individual, personalised bedrooms (One bedroom has en-suite shower facilities)

Bathroom

Toilets

Shower room

Lounge

Activity room

ICT & games room

Soft play room

Sensory room

Kitchen & dining room

Garden

Staff Office

The rest of the building is what we refer to as the 'house', this is used for short break/targeted intervention care. The facilities are:-

Single bedrooms

Bathrooms

Shower rooms

Toilets

Activity room with sensory corner

Lounge

Relaxing room

Small kitchen

Main school / Children's home kitchen & dining room (this is used during the day for school pupils & staff)

Staff office

Sleep in rooms, work room and offices are for staff use only.

On the top floor of the 'house' is an independent flat. This is used during the day by school pupils to work on ASDAN awards and to learn everyday life / living skills. This is occasionally used overnight by pupils who are working on their independent skills, they are then supported by school staff.

We also use rooms within the main school:-

Soft play room

ICT room

Gym/hall

There are also large outside play areas. We have the ballcourt, which has some fixed exercise equipment. It is a large area where we can play games, kick or throw balls around, ride the bikes etc. There is a sensory garden where different herbs and plants grow. We also have another playground, which has different types of play equipment and a trim trail, again with different equipment to play on.

All areas of the home are attractively decorated and furnished. The furniture, flooring and soft furnishings have been thoughtfully selected and designed to

provide a robust and safe environment that retains a homely, domestic character.

Individual tastes are accommodated and young people are encouraged to decorate their rooms as they wish. The choice of furnishings and equipment is guided by the need for high quality, value for money and meeting the needs of the young people, each child's bedroom is equipped with a bed, and if they choose, a desk and chair.

The lounges are equipped with TV and video/DVD and we have a good selection of toys, books and traditional and electronic games that are regularly renewed and added to. The furniture provides plenty of varied seating options, enabling them to enjoy some personal space or join with others as they wish.

The dining areas contain modern dining tables and seating, with enough separate tables for the young people to maintain the space they require to eat comfortably. The two bathrooms on each landing provide plenty of showers and baths, basins and toilets to meet the needs of the young people.

There are smoke and heat detectors throughout the home.

The Fire Alarm System has sensors in every room. Procedures for a staged evacuation into the school main hall building have been agreed with the local fire services, the procedures are quietly and calmly implemented if and when necessary. The main fire exits are electronically released when the alarm is activated. The fire doors have automatic closures, smoke seals and vision panels as required that conform to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and current building regulations. Appropriate fire extinguishers and blankets are located in key areas.

Clear guidelines on what to do in case of a fire and any associated emergency are posted in critical areas and on each floor next to each external entrance door. Regular fire practices are carried out whilst the young people are in the provision. Additionally, there are regular tests of the fire alarms and emergency lighting. Fire safety equipment is subject to regular inspection by our site

management team. When equipment has been used or damaged arrangements are made for its immediate replacement.

Young people and staff are included in fire drills and evacuations. The fire procedures are displayed all around the home.

*Schedule 1.4 - A description of the location of the home*

Walnuts Children's Home is located on the very outskirts of Milton Keynes. From our upstairs windows we overlook a nature preserve for newts, fields and the North Bucks Way, which is a wooded countryside pathway.

This area is very quiet and ideal for the children and young people we provide care for as they have lots peace and quiet, but are able to make as much noise as they like without impacting on the neighbouring community.

Milton Keynes is a vibrant and diverse city, with lots of wide open green spaces, parks and wooded areas. There is also a wide variety of different leisure and sporting activities which we are able to access, along with local transport such as buses and trains.

## Identity and meeting holistic needs

*Schedule 1.5 - The arrangements for supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children*

A young person's cultural background is fundamental to their identity and as such needs to be maintained and encouraged. Staff at Walnuts will support all young people with learning about diversity and the importance of understanding that people have different backgrounds. To do this it is important that staff have a good understanding of the individual young person's needs and background.

All religious and cultural activities are important to the young person and their family and will be supported by the staff team. Staff will:

- Be proactive in assisting to maintain modes of dress, ceremony, diet and custom.
- Provide transport where practicable, to places of worship and meeting places.
- Make efforts to ensure important aspects of culture and religious heritage are not lost.
- Provide access to sources of information that will encourage the young person's cultural and religious understanding and beliefs.
- Give young people positive images of their identity and develop their self-esteem
- Prepare young people for the society in which they are growing up in and have a significant part to play in, not only shaping their future but the future of others.
- Learn about and share ideas of not only the young people's cultures but staff and other wider cultures.
- Respect and mirror that we also learn every day.

Staff will not tolerate discrimination against young people on the grounds of race, religion or culture under any circumstances. Any incidence of this type of behaviour will be challenged individually and through house meetings.

We believe in promoting identity and we will always take into account the racial, religious and cultural needs of young people when determining how we will meet their needs throughout their time with us. We don't only do this because it is a requirement of law, we do it because it is our own personal belief that all young people are cared for in a child focused manner. We are committed in establishing a group living community within the home which is free of prejudice and which has an understanding and tolerance for difference. We believe in sharing experiences because we have all learnt from others at some point in life and it is easier to know someone if you know where they come from.

When any young person is placed in the home, the staff team will identify ways in which it can actively maintain and develop a young person's cultural preferences. Staff will do this by:

- Finding out about foods that the young person may like to eat and whether they have any special dietary requirements
- Finding out about essential cultural customs, like hair and skin care
- Finding out about the rules of specific religious observance
- Researching and involving themselves and the young people in areas which reflect each young person's heritage
- Encouraging young people to keep contact with members of their original community and to introduce you to them - where this is appropriate.

Staff will act in a professional and courteous manner being aware of their own language whilst also examining their own attitudes to ensure that they role model positive behaviours to young people on acceptance of diversity and promoting equality within the home. Staff will support young people to find ways of coping with racism and any discriminatory concerns they may have.

Staff at Walnuts will respect the views of people significant to them and where appropriate gain their views on how we can meet the cultural needs of young people. The home will always work alongside others to develop young people's cultural identities.

The home is also committed to supporting young people to maintain any linguistic needs they have such as being able to speak other languages and will support young people in either the education to learn their language of heritage or any other languages they see fit. We will do this by working closely with educational provisions, enrolling young people into classes and sessions through external providers or researching and outsourcing tools which can support them.

All staff at Walnuts will have regard for the holistic needs of the young people ensuring they are able to develop in a range of areas including physical, emotional, spiritual and moral development. Staff will never impose their own religious beliefs upon the young people in the home. Staff will never try to change a young person's religion, but will support a young person to attend their place of religion and observe special religious occasions.

## Complaints

*Schedule 1.6 - Details of who to contact if a person has a complaint about the home and how that person can access the home's complaints policy*

A copy of the children's guide to the home is available on each landing and in different formats. This contains a symbols version of what to do if a young person is unhappy. There are also copies of the 'I want you to know' forms that young people can complete either on their own or with help. Staff will then help the young people to resolve the problem or support them to take it further if needed

Requests for the complaints policy can be made by any party, with all of the home's staff able to make available a physical or electronic copy of this. Should any person request for the policy to be altered for ease of reading this can be facilitated so far as is reasonably practicable.

Informal complaints that may be easy to address or rectify will generally be dealt with by any person who may be on duty. The home will record informal complaints as a means of ensuring that its delivery of care is maintained to the highest of standards. Several informal complaints can become a formal complaint, it is important to remember that complaints can be built up over time and when people feel they have not been listened to. All staff at Walnuts believe in actively listening and supporting all parties to find resolutions to any concerns they have.

**Formal Complaints** - As stated previously complaints can be made to staff on duty where the complaint is passed onto the most senior member of staff on duty. The complaint is then elevated to the Home Manager if lodged formally. There are 2 stages to the formal complaints procedure and complaints can be made to the home manager directly.

Stage 1 complaints will usually be dealt with by the Home Manager and can be investigated by a delegated senior member of staff. Where complaints are lodged directly against the manager or where a stage 2 escalation is required the responsible individual will be the point of contact for the complaint being lodged.

Complaints can be made directly to any placing/local authority (social services) with contact details being made available to any concerned party.

Complaints can also be made to various other bodies, such as Ofsted or in some cases the children's commissioner who has a dedicated team who promotes the rights of young people.

### ***Ofsted***

***Email:*** enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

***Tel:*** 0300 123 4666

***Address:*** Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

### ***Childrens Commisioner***

***Tel:***0800 528 0731 line is open Monday to Friday, 9am to5pm

***Email:*** advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

***Address:*** The Office of the Children's Commissioner, Sanctuary Buildings , 20 Great Smith Street , London, SW1P

## Accessing policies

*Schedule 1.7 - Details how a person, body or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child can access the homes child protection policies of the behaviour management policy.*

Copies of the home's behaviour, whistleblowing and safeguarding policies can be obtained on request. Both electronic and hard copies can be provided. Copies of all the homes policies are available in each office and the staff work room.

## Consultation

*Schedule 1.8 - A description of the homes policy and approach to consulting children about the quality of their care*

We believe that actively promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes is beneficial not only to the young people themselves but also to us as the staff team.

There is a legal requirement to consider the views of young people and we have seen in practice that positively and actively involving young people in the decision making processes of the home has a significant impact on how the young people develop and on their self-esteem. We hold weekly young people's meeting where they all participate, have a voice, makes choices and decisions.

Young people are consistently encouraged and supported to make decisions about their individual lives. We use communication tools, such as PECS, makaton



or an advocate whenever necessary in consulting with young people. Consultation is encouraged through, for example keyworker time. The views of young people's family and significant others are also taken into account.

Each young person will have a Care Plan, which covers the major dimensions of a young person's life (Health, Education, Family, Social and Emotional Development, Leisure and Culture). The Plan is developed with young people, family, professionals and significant others. It assesses and identifies the young person's needs and issues and how these will be met and addressed on a day-to-day basis. A main task for the keyworker is to monitor, review and make appropriate changes to the Care Plan on a regular basis and in partnership with the young person and other key people.

Parents and significant others will always be consulted in the review of a Care Plan. The plan may also change in accordance with the outcomes of statutory reviews.

Young people may, if they wish, speak to the Independent Visitor who conducts the required Regulation 44 visit on a monthly basis in confidence and in private.

## Antidiscrimination and children's rights

*Schedule 1.9 - A description of the home's policy and approach in relation to - (a) anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families; and (b) children's rights*

### **At Walnuts Children's Home, the young people have a right:**

- To be treated fairly.
- To be physically well cared for in relation to, for instance: their health, clothing, food and a warm, clean and safe home.
- For friends and families to be made welcome in accordance with their care plan.
- To make mistakes and to expect new chances.
- To have their views encouraged and considered.
- To be supported in following any religion they may choose.
- To expect choices whenever they are available.
- To read what we write and record about them.
- To receive care, which is planned, and reviewed regularly
- To complain if unhappy with the care received or offered.
- To be included in and have access, with the help of staff, to their daily active files and care documents.
- If requested, to have their own copies of their care plan, statutory review and the reports from social workers and care staff

The staff team at Walnuts Children's Home work in ways that are consistent with our Equal Opportunities and Anti-discriminatory Policy, The Children Act 1989, The United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child, 1991 and The Care Standards Act, 2000.

We aim to be continually aware of the ways in which certain groups within society are disadvantaged, particularly in relation to age, gender, ethnicity, religion, class, disability and sexual preference. In order to help address inequality and disadvantage, the Walnuts Residential team embraces diversity.

## **Dignity and Respect**

We recognise the value of young people, their uniqueness, and personal needs. We are committed to respond to young people with dignity and respect.

## **Equality**

We aim to ensure that services are accessible. We promote opportunities for all young people. The services provided by staff at Walnuts will not judge young people's circumstances and backgrounds but will support and help young people make positive choices in their lives. We will work in ways which do not discriminate.

We will challenge, support and encourage other people not to discriminate against young people or others on the grounds of age, ethnicity, culture, language, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual preference or sexuality. A commitment to treat young people fairly and safely is central to our services to young people.

## **Partnership**

We are committed to working in partnership with young people, their parents, carers and families, social workers and with other agencies and organisations in order to provide young people with the help they need.

## **Quality**

It is our intention to provide quality services. We will work towards continuously improving the work that we do in line with current legislation and best practice requirements.

## **Independence**

We have a commitment to providing equal opportunities for young people to act and think independently, whilst having particular regard to helping young people to keep safe.

## **Rights**

We have a commitment to young people's rights and entitlements as set out in The Children Act 1989 and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and which are further endorsed within the Children's Homes Regulations 2015 and The Guide to Children's homes.

**Listening:**

We have a commitment to listen to young people about what they think about the care they are receiving and about what is important to them in their lives. In particular we will listen to any comments or complaints they have about their care and we will deal with these fairly and openly in accordance with our complaints policy and procedures.

**Planning:**

We aim to ensure that young people's needs are assessed and plans to meet these needs are made and regularly reviewed where possible with the young people. This will include Pen profile, Care Plans, Risk Assessments and Personal Targets. We have a commitment to involving young people and their families in decisions and ensuring that they have a voice about how they are helped.

**Development and Fulfilment:**

We will encourage young people to reach their full potential. We will work in ways that aim to help young people to achieve their hopes and ambitions and to develop their abilities in their daily lives. We believe that young people should be encouraged to make the most of opportunities for education, leisure and the promotion of their health.

**Confidentiality:**

We will treat all personal information respectfully, sensitively and confidentially. The staff team is committed only to sharing personal information with other professionals about a young person on a "need to know" basis, balancing the need to protect with being able to provide a good service.

## Education

*Schedule 1.10 - Details of provision to support children with special educational needs*

*(Exert taken from The Walnuts School's curriculum policy)*

At The Walnuts we use autism specific, empathetic approaches, and provide an autism friendly environment. The curriculum at the Walnuts School relates to all aspects of school life and is a vehicle through which the staff seek to achieve the best possible progress and highest attainment for all young people and to embrace the rich cultural diversity of our community. We recognise that each young person is a unique individual; however, the underlying difficulty for every Walnuts student lies in the area of communication. We therefore provide an environment where spoken language is clear and precise and, where appropriate, written communication, symbols and sometimes gestures are used to reinforce both expressive and receptive language.

In order to best meet the needs of our young people we aim to teach skills within a meaningful social context and to provide opportunities for generalisation across settings. Our pedagogy is based upon the TEACCH approach, with the goal of young people achieving a maximum level of independence through the provision of structure and the development of communication skills. This drives our approach to the curriculum and behaviour management throughout school and children's home. Knowledge and understanding of the individual, the building of positive relationships and the creation of personalised learning programmes delivered in an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding are at the heart of our approach.

## Enjoyment and achievement

*Schedule 1.13 - The arrangements for enabling children to take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills*

Young people are encouraged to take part in both group and individual activities which not only take into account their ethnicity, culture, language, religion, interests and abilities but also help to widen and deepen a young person's experience of diversity.

We recognise young people have strengths in a variety of areas and our hope is to continue to build on those skills and talents they have already acquired whilst introducing them to new experiences which can develop several other areas of their development.

Participation in activities is seen as a way to channel negative energies, learn new skills, develop a level of fitness, develop social skills, teamwork and confidence and achieve positively.

We want young people to be able to participate in activities which are beneficial to their development but also enhance life opportunities and develop their abilities and talents.

Young people who are Looked After receive an activity allowance to be spent, within the boundaries of legality, safety and appropriateness, as they choose. This may include activities with their friends and families as well as group activities; for instance swimming, bowling, ice-skating, cinema, etc.

Young people who are accessing Walnuts Children's through respite care or the targeted intervention are given pocket money by parents/carers to cover the costs of these activities.

## Health

Schedule 1.14 - Details of any healthcare or therapy provided, including (a) details of the qualifications and professional supervision of the staff involved in providing any healthcare or therapy; and (b) information about how the effectiveness of any healthcare or therapy provided is measured, the evidence demonstrating its effectiveness and details of how the information or the evidence can be accessed.

The young people who are placed with us have specific and individual needs. The need for a safe and consistent approach is an integral part of providing them with quality care. Alongside this, many young people will need particular help with their educational and health needs. The team at Walnuts therefore aims to work in ways that ensures young people receive the appropriate help and support from within Walnuts as well as the appropriate specialist services from outside.

We regard health protection and promotion of young people as an important part of our role at Walnuts. We will therefore work with the young people and appropriate health professionals, where needed, to develop personal hygiene plans. These will be detailed in the care plan. The plan covers the whole range of potential health needs, including physical, emotional and sexual health.

Young people are encouraged to have regular dental, health and eye sight check-ups. For young people accessing the Walnuts through respite care or the 24 hour curriculum it will remain the parents/carers responsibility to arrange these check-ups.

For young people that are CLA wherever possible and if young people choose, we aim to help young people remain with their own doctor, dentist and optician. However, if this is not possible or desirable we will ensure that young people are registered with the local GP, Dentist and Optician and receive regular check-ups.

Walnuts Children's Home does not use any specific therapeutic techniques, however we have regular contact with the team from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and from the Education Psychologist. This consultation provides the team with guidance and support in working with a range of issues and possible behaviours that young people face and present.

Short stays - If a young person becomes ill during their stay in the house, then staff will contact parents/carers to arrange for them to go home.

Occasionally young people's stay at the house may need to be cancelled due to staffing shortages. If this does happen then we respectfully ask that

parents/carers understand the situation, as we have to maintain adequate staffing levels to ensure the safety of the young people and staff.

### Positive relationships

*Schedule 1.15 - The arrangements for promoting contact between children and their families and friends.*

The Walnuts staff team will work in partnership with young people to ensure that contact arrangements with families, as outlined in their Care Plan, is adhered to. We will give as much constructive support as possible to maintain contact. Young people will be encouraged when appropriate, to keep their family at the centre of their lives. Families, friends and significant others will always be made welcome, as long as they behave in safe and appropriate ways when visiting. Before visitors are given entry to the home, staff have a duty to establish the credentials of the visitor. All visitors will be asked to sign the Visitors Book. Young people will be encouraged to spend as much time as possible within the family home and their local community.

We will ensure that when there are contact restrictions that young people understand the reasons why these restrictions are in place.

All young people have access to a telephone and are in regular contact with their parents/carers. Due to the communication difficulties of many of our young people, a facilitator is required to support this process.



## Protection of children

*Schedule 1.16 - A description of the home's approach to the monitoring and surveillance of children.*

The Walnuts staff team will monitor young people in the home throughout the 24 hours period in the day however their privacy and dignity will be maintained at all times

The only form of electronic surveillance used at Walnuts is CCTV which records the outside of the buildings, play areas and car park.

There is a visual panel in each bedroom door, however these are covered over. If there was an identified need for supervision due to health and safety issues such as self-injurious behaviour or epilepsy, then we could uncover the panel if required.

## Behavioural Support

*Schedule 1.17- Details of the home's approach to behavioural support, including information about (a) the home's approach to restraint in relation to children; and (b) how persons working in the home are trained in restraint and how their competence is assessed.*

The Staff Team believe that with Rights, come Responsibilities and therefore the Team expect Young People:

- To work with us towards identified targets.
- To treat themselves, other young people and staff who live or work at Walnuts with respect.
- To value and look after the physical environment, since this is their home and other young people's.
- Not to hurt, threaten, bully or frighten anyone at Walnuts.
- Take part in house routines and respect house rules, for instance about bedtimes, use of TV, sharing activities and taking turns.
- Attend the young people's meetings and other activities facilitated by our Advocacy provider.
- Admit responsibility when in the wrong and make amends.

The staff team at Walnuts believe that it is the responsibility of all staff to communicate with young people about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of staff to maintain safe and

appropriate boundaries with and between staff and young people. Consistency and fairness are key ingredients to developing a safe and positive atmosphere.

The team also believe that methods of control, restraint and discipline can only have the desired impact within the context of positive relationships existing between staff and young people. Communication, negotiation and mediation are important skills that the team use to help young people to address unacceptable behaviour. Within this overall context, the emphasis and aim of the team is to promote, acknowledge and reward positive behaviour.

Although the emphasis at Walnuts is on safe and consistent approaches within the context of positive relationships and rewarding positive behaviour, there are times when sanctions are deemed necessary. Any sanctions that are given are recorded and the manager checks and monitors their use.

The restraint of a young person is not part of sanctions or punishment. There are occasions when the use of restraint may be necessary but this is only used if the young person is likely to seriously injure themselves or others. The restraint techniques used are those taught in Team Teach, and only members of staff trained in this technique should undertake restraints. All restraints and physical interventions are clearly recorded and monitored by the manager. The home ensure's that staff receive regular refresher training.

*Regulations 20 - Restraint and deprivation of liberty*

### ***Deprivation of Liberty safeguards (DOLS)***

The Mental Capacity Act allows restrictions and restraint to be used, but only if they are in the best interests of a person who lacks capacity to make the decision themselves. Restrictions and restraint can include the following:

- Using locks or key pads which stop a person going out or into different areas of a building
- The use of some medication, for example, to calm a person
- Close supervision in the home
- Requiring a person to be supervised when out
- Restricting contact with friends, family and acquaintances, if they could cause the person harm
- Physically stopping a person from doing something which could cause them harm
- Removing items from a person which could cause them harm
- Holding a person so that they can be given care or treatment

- Mechanical items (mechanical restraint) *e.g. bedrails, wheelchair straps, and splints*
- The person having to stay somewhere against their wishes
- The person having to stay somewhere against the wishes of a family member.

The home recognises restrictions or restraint can take away a young person's freedom and so deprive them of their liberty. The home will ensure that we are always conscious about the use, frequency and number of restrictions or restraints used. The home also understands that there is sometimes difficulty in being clear when the use of restrictions and restraint crosses the line of depriving a young person. Managing risk isn't always clear cut however the home will always consult all parties and relevant bodies on the measures used within the home.

Similar to the conditions required in safeguarding protocols the home will always ensure that where there is a suspicion or concerns are raised in regards to whether a young person is being deprived of their liberty, action is taking immediately. The home will always work on the ethos of least restrictive practices and operate a step system which effectively safeguards young people and promotes their ability to not be deprived.

In general where one or more of the following is happening a person may be considered to be deprived of their liberty:

- A young person, by either words or behaviour, challenges the restrictions placed on them.
- There are significant restrictions on a person's contact with family or friends, or the outside world.
- People disagree about a person's placement in the home or any restrictions or restraint.

The risk assessments protocols will have regard for these subject matters and regular reviews will take place through various formats such as keyworking sessions and Regulation 44 and 45 reports.

One of the aims of Walnuts, as stated at the beginning of the Statement of Purpose, is to provide a safe and empowering place for all young people to live in. Child Protection procedures are a key to keeping young people safe. As such, any visitor to the home is required to sign into the visitor's book, and produce identification if appropriate before being allowed access to any of the living areas.

Risk Assessments are undertaken with each young person and these are regularly reviewed and monitored as part of the care planning system. It covers all aspects of behaviour and history that might pose a risk to the young person or to others. These should be followed by staff at all times. Risk assessments are updated regularly.

Staff at Walnuts are familiar with and adhere to Children's Safeguarding Procedures, and will be prompt in raising a child protection concern.

Child Protection is a part of the mandatory training for staff, they are expected to become familiar with, and gain an understanding of, child protection issues and protocol. All staff, including relief and ancillary staff, attend appropriate Child Protection training and inter-agency training provided via the Milton Keynes Council Safeguarding Children's Board.

Where child protection issues are identified in the home which place individual young people at risk of significant harm, staff will follow different strategies to minimise and reduce risk as well as following the appropriate child protection procedures.

The staff team are aware that bullying can be present in residential care, and that it causes great misery for the victim. Bullying behaviour is not tolerated at Walnuts.

There is a need for vigilance and immediate action if it is happening. To counter bullying, the team follow policy and procedures.

The staff team believe that a young person's safety and welfare is of paramount concern, some have little idea of their own personal safety and in some instances will attempt to leave the site. It is therefore our priority to do everything possible to ensure the safe return of a young person. The policy requires that residential staff make all appropriate enquires to recover the

young person. We acknowledge that in most cases young people are usually an unauthorised absence rather than truly missing. All appropriate people would be informed of the unauthorised absence.

### Leadership and Management

Schedule 1.19 Details of the experience and qualifications of staff, including any staff commissioned to provide education or health care.

The diverse nature of the team in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, experience, skills and qualifications provides the opportunity to promote a positive view of difference to the young people.

*Schedule 1.21 - If the staff are all of one sex, or mainly of one sex, a description of how the home promotes appropriate role models of both sexes.*

The staff team has a slightly higher ratio of female staff to male staff, however young people are given appropriate representation of male role modelling, ensuring that young people are able to have a gender preference when this is preferred and to meet their holistic needs.

Staff name & job title	Qualification & experience
<b>Rosemarie Cooper</b> Registered Manager / Head of Care	NVQ 4 Care NVQ4 Leadership & management of care services NVQ 4 Management Over 23 years' experience working in residential homes for adults & young people with additional needs & has previous experience of being a registered manager of a children's home Working towards level 7 Health & Social care
<b>Peter Coulter</b> Deputy Head of Care	Has worked in children's residential care since 2006 & had previous experience of being a deputy & running a home. NVQ 3 Level 3 Health & Social care Working towards Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services
<b>Mandy Jenkins</b> Senior RCO - Term Time	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people. Level 5 diploma in caring for children & young people. Mandy has many years' experience of working in care settings with adults & young people. She also spent 3 years working at a ASD school & has gained her assessors award
<b>Sharon Anderson</b> Residential Care Officer - 52 week Nights	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people Sharon has worked at Walnuts since 2008 as a member of the waking night team & is a very experience member of the team
<b>Bernice Babarinde</b> RCO - 52 week	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people Bernice worked as a relief member of staff to begin with & was then taken on as a term time member of staff. She now works on the 52 week team.. Bernice gained her experience working with us & in other residential homes
<b>Lacey Ball</b> RCO - 52 week	Working towards Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce Lacey worked in a special school before joining us & has lots of experience of additional needs.
<b>Sue Bates</b> RCO - Term Time	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people. Sue worked for a number of years in a special school for severe learning disabilities. She has been at the Walnuts since 2007 & has a wealth of knowledge & skills
<b>Carla Bell</b>	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people

RCO - Term Time Nights	Carla has worked in the residential home since 2001. She is a valued & reliable member of the waking night team
<b>Lisa Benn</b> RCO - 52 weeks	Has previously worked with adults who have learning disabilities & mental health problems. Working towards Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce
<b>Lindra Bvungidzire</b> RCO - Term Time Nights	Access to health & social care - NVQ 2 Lindra has worked at the Walnuts as a member of the waking night team for 2 years. Prior to that she worked as an agency member of staff, gaining experience in different settings
<b>Suzanne Clarke</b> RCO - 52 week	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people. Suzanne worked at a special school, where she gained experience of young people with learning disabilities.
<b>Laura Christmas</b> RCO - 52 weeks	Previously worked as a teaching assistance with young people with additional needs & ran a gymnastics club. Working towards Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce
<b>Bethany Constant</b> RCO - 52 weeks	Previous experience of working at a special needs school & as a support worker for adults with additional needs. Working towards Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce
<b>Debbie Dowling</b> RCO - 52 week	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people. Debbie has worked for the Walnuts for a number of years & has gained lots of experience & knowledge.
<b>Margaret Ezeigbo</b> RCO - 52 week	Working towards Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce Margaret started as a bank member of staff, but is now part of the 52 week team. She has gained lots of knowledge & understanding of the young peoples needs.
<b>Alice Holland</b> RCO - 52 week night	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people. Alice worked for an agency before coming to the Walnuts in 2010, where she gained experience of working with young people with additional needs
<b>Nicky James</b> RCO - 52 week	Working towards Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce. Nicky gained her experience of working with young people with learning disabilities in the school before transferring over to the home
<b>Ryan James</b> RCO - 52 week	Ryan is a new member of staff, who has some knowledge of additional needs but is willing & eager to learn new skills Working towards Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce
<b>Gabriel Mubaira</b> RCO - 52 week	Has previously worked with adults with learning disabilities, also worked as a teaching assistant in the walnuts school for 2 years Working towards Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce
<b>Blessing Motsi</b> RCO - Term Time Nights	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people Blessing joined the Walnuts waking night team in 2011. She had previously worked for an agency, working in the 2 other local authority children's homes
<b>Sophia Munangati</b> RCO - 52 week Nights	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people. Level 5 diploma in caring for children & young people. She has been a valuable & experienced member of the waking night team since 2008
<b>James Mutonono</b> RCO - 52 week	Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce James had previous experience of working with young people with additional needs & challenging behaviours so is a confident member of the team
<b>Deb Trett</b> RCO - 52 week	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people. Debs worked with adults in care before coming to the Walnuts 5 years ago
<b>Sonia Wilkes</b> RCO - 52 week	NVQ 3 Caring for children & young people Sonia has previously worked in a children's home & for an agency providing care for young people. She joined the walnuts in 2009
<b>Kelsey Warburton</b> RCO - 52 weeks	Has previously worked with both adults & children with special needs Working towards Level 3 Diploma in Children's and Young People's Workforce

**All workers currently employed at the home have undertaken an Enhanced DBS check and have documentary evidence of this on file.**

*Schedule 1.20 Details of the management staffing structure of the home, including arrangements for the professional supervision of staff that provide education or health care.*

Rosemarie Cooper - Registered Manager

Peter Coulter - Deputy Head of Care

Mandy Jenkins - Senior Residential Care Officer

Residential Care Officers -

15 x 52 week staff

2 x 38 week staff

8 x waking nights

Day shifts start at 7.00am to 2.00pm & 2.30pm to 9.30pm week days during term time. Weekends and school holidays, shifts are 7.00am to 2.30pm & 2.00pm to 9.30pm. Some staff work term time only on split shifts. These shifts are 7.00am to 9.30am & 2.30pm to 9.00pm. The waking night hours are 9pm - 7am.

Efforts are made to ensure the staff on duty represent a range of experience, gender balance and qualifications.

Where short term gaps in the rota occur, due to training, sickness, vacancies or leave, these will be met by the use of bank staff. Some of our bank staff also work within the school as teaching assistants. This helps to ensure familiar people working with the young people. It also helps to keep consistency of routines between the children's home and school. All staff are appointed using the full Recruitment and Selection procedure, and receive induction training.

Supervision is a vital part of supporting, managing and developing the staff team. All staff that are newly employed are subject to 6 months' probationary period. It is a requirement that staff both receive and take part in the supervision process. Supervision is provided by the manager, deputy and senior residential care officer.

It is provided to new staff on a 2-3 week basis ideally for the first 6 months. After this period, formal supervision is every 4-6 weeks for full time staff, 6-8 weeks of work for term time only staff. Bank staff also receive supervision on a

regular basis, their times scales for supervision can vary, depending of the frequency of shifts worked.

Supervision sessions are recorded and staff are required to read and sign their notes, which are then placed on the staff member's file. If there are any disagreements these are recorded. Further support is provided by team meetings and informal meetings

All staff undertake an annual Performance Appraisal with their supervisor or Registered Manager, which reviews progress and sets personal work targets and actions for the coming next year. An interim appraisal can be requested by management or staff if they feel that it is required.

Prior to going on the rota within the home, all new staff receives Induction training, which includes child protection procedures, fire safety and drill training, medical procedures and the recording of information.

Staff receive Team Teach training which equips staff to de-escalate, intervene and also to re-engage with young people who are in crisis. Safe restraint and holding techniques are part of the course content but are only to be used when all other de-escalation techniques have failed.

Training needs will be discussed, agreed and monitored through the supervision and appraisal process. These are recorded in a Personal Development Plan, which is part of the Performance Appraisal system.