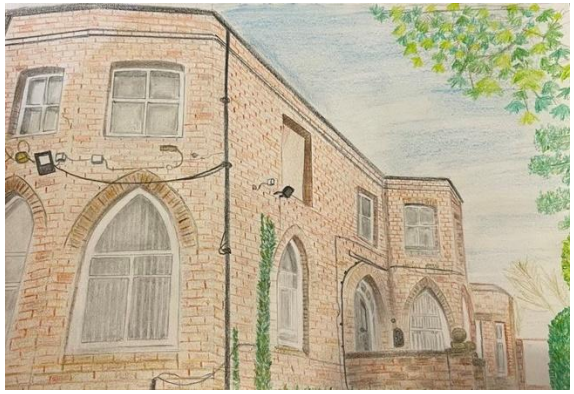
Auton Residential
Children's Homes
Newcastle • Sunderland • Darlington



Auton Sunderland

Statement of Purpose

St Cuthbert's Care
Enabling People

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1. Quality and Purpose of Care

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

Auton Sunderland provides a safe and secure therapeutic living experience for up to six children of any gender, aged from seven to 17 years old on admission. We are registered with OFSTED as a children's residential home that provides care and accommodation for children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (EBD).

We offer care and accommodation to children and young people who require a period of stability, supporting them to return to the care of family or into a foster placement as determined by the child's Care Plan. We also provide care and accommodation to children who require permanent placements where we will support them until adulthood.

Auton Sunderland adheres section 1(2) of the CSA 2000 providing care and accommodation wholly or mainly for children. We do recognise, however, that on occasion, young people placed with us may need continued care and accommodation post 18 years. Agreement for an extension to placement will be made on a case-by-case basis, and only where it is deemed in the young person's best interests and where impact risk assessment allows. There would need to be a clear transition plan in place, with agreed timescales. Any agreed extension would need to be kept under review to ensure this remained in the young person's best interests and meeting it's agreed objectives.

Auton Sunderland will only accept children and young people referred to us, where assessment indicates the home can successfully meet the child's individual needs and where it is reasonably believed the home can provide the necessary care and support required for children and young people to achieve their individual outcomes. Furthermore, this would be subject to an impact risk assessment to ensure that the quality of care for children currently placed with us will not be compromised. This will consider any potential impact to the referred child from current cohort of children and the immediate and local environment.

2. Details of the children's homes ethos, and the outcomes that the children's home seeks to achieve and its approach to achieving them.

Auton Sunderland aims to provide a safe, nurturing living environment where children and young people can feel valued as individuals with individual talents, strengths and capabilities. We

seek to provide care and support that is ambitious and stimulating to encourage each child or young person to develop, thrive and fulfil their personal potential. We place the needs of the young people at the centre of all we do, promoting choice and independence in an environment that respects privacy, rights, and dignity.

We provide residential care that is outward facing and is committed to working with families and wider systems of professionals to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people in our care. We deliver a flexible, imaginative and individually tailored service that promotes equality and individuality.

We have an experienced and suitably trained staff team that is fully committed to meeting the needs of the young people. Our comprehensive range of policies and procedures ensure that all staff adheres to practices that safeguard the welfare of our young people and meet all legislative requirements.

The Aims of Auton Sunderland

- To provide a non-institutional therapeutic environment based on an atmosphere of approval and acceptance of the individual as a unique person with a background, personality, and choices of their own.
- To create an atmosphere where young people can learn to value and develop personal relationships by providing situations and experiences that develop trust, self-esteem, and mutual respect.
- To provide a child-centred environment where young people. receive positive role modelling and guidance, through continuity of reliable relationships and consistent nurturing care.
- To assess the strengths and needs to create an individual placement care plan, which secures optimal outcomes for the young person in line with current legislation.
- To provide a safe, non-judgmental environment to encourage age-appropriate development and a positive future.
- To maintain an effective staff rota to meet the individual needs of the children placed at the home.
- To work in close partnership with other agencies, to ensure the stability and well-being of the placement, along with optimal opportunities for the young person.
- To provide outreach support to the young person and their family members through contact with significant staff members.
- To offer support when the young person is ready to transition from the home if deemed appropriate.

The Objectives of Auton Sunderland

To have in place a staff team:

- Who are trauma-informed and practice with an approach that is grounded by the key principles of trauma-informed practice.
- Who are mind-minded, and interested the child's internal world

and genuinely strive to understand it.

- Who have the ability to maintain an attitude of PACE into their practice -
  - Who are ***playful***, can have fun and create an atmosphere of lightness and interest when communicating with children and young people.
  - Who understand that ***acceptance*** is at the very core of a child's sense of safety.
  - Who are ***curious*** and are able to wonder with or alongside the child about the meaning behind behaviour. Conveying a desire to understand – not judge.
  - Who can demonstrate genuine ***empathy*** and seek to understand the perspective of the child and ability to show the child that whatever emotion they experience they are sharing it.
- Who practice with an anti-oppressive approach
- Who provide a strong ethos of unconditional positive regard
- Who can nurture, care and offer a non-judgmental environment
- Who are aware of professional boundaries and have a good knowledge of child development
- Who offer a home environment, where children feel safe with boundaries and protection
- Who will act as role models, will be honest and open and who will offer the child and young people alternative methods of coping
- Who will act as advocates to ensure and promote the rights of the children and young people and to ensure that they are involved in discussions and decisions relating to their lives
- Who will positively encourage anti-discriminatory behaviours and attitudes
- Who will encourage acceptable behaviour enabling the children and young people to understand the issues of equality and diversity through house meetings, key worker sessions and daily living situations

Achieving Positive Outcomes

Auton Sunderland place a high priority on achieving positive outcomes for the children and young people in our care. We strive to make a difference to the lives of our children and young people and wish to maximise their potential.

Auton Sunderland works collaboratively with the child or young person, their family/significant others and professional care team in identifying appropriate long-term goals for the young person through the review and consultation process. These goals or targets are then incorporated into the child or young person's individual placement care plan and monitored closely. The child/young person is fully encouraged and supported to participate in the development and review of their individual care plans, ensuring they remain central to

this process. Placement care plans are based on the Quality Care Standards.

Auton Sunderland measures the effectiveness of targets set within the young person's placement care plans monthly. Care plan monitoring measures outcomes both quantitatively and qualitatively. These plans are analysed to establish how the young person's outcomes are being met and whether the young person is achieving their long-term goal. This process allows us to identify strengths and highlight these to the young person, building on confidence and self-esteem and celebrating success through appropriate rewards and positive consequences. Where analysis suggests that a young person may not be making satisfactory progress in achieving a particular outcome, this is carefully considered and highlighted within multi-agency reviews, helping to identify how the child's care team can better support the child or young person achieve outcomes in the future. The young person's views, wishes and feelings are central to this process.

Auton Sunderland is proud of the progress made by children and young people in our care and the excellent outcomes they have achieved. We believe that keeping the young person central to this process allows for them to take ownership of the targets set, a clear voice in how they are cared for, the outcomes they want to achieve and pride in their successes.

3. A description of the accommodation offered by the children's home, including—

(a) how accommodation has been adapted to the needs of children cared for by the children's home;

Auton Sunderland is a large semi-detached house with its own private garden. The children and young people are encouraged to help garden, grow flowers/plants and maintain the hanging baskets. There is space for young people to grow their own fruit and vegetables, should they wish.

The interior of the house is warm and spacious allowing for good individual provision. The young people have chosen the décor of the home and have personalised all communal areas. There is a large comfortable living room and dining room.

There is a homework room and three additional rooms which offer a child friendly environment with soft furnishings, games, PlayStation, craft facilities and books. There is a 'quiet/study' room designed by the older young people of the home and this facilitates a social space

for the young people to enjoy quiet relaxation or private space to study. A playroom which includes multi games table, relaxing furnishings and facilities to watch movies. The homework room has 2 computers with internet access and relevant educational books are available for educational activities.

There is a functional meeting room which facilitates multi-agency reviews, should the child or young person wish to for these to take place within the home.

(b) the age range, number and sex of children for whom it is intended that accommodation is to be provided;

Auton Sunderland can accommodate six children of either sex aged 7 years to seventeen years upon admittance.

(c) the type of accommodation, including sleeping accommodation;

All young people have their own lockable bedroom. There are six bedrooms. Two bedrooms are located on the ground floor of the home and four on the first floor. Young people can choose their bedrooms wherever possible, taking into account individual need.

Young people are encouraged and supported to decorate and personalise their rooms to their taste. All bedrooms include a lockable cupboard to help keep their valuable confidential, safe and secure. Young people who would like to be supported to self-medicate will be provided with a safe, lockable medication cabinet in their bedroom.

4. A description of the location of the children's home.

Auton Sunderland is located on Thornhill Park; off Tunstall Road in the residential area of Ashbrooke in Sunderland. This area is a mixture of residential properties, schools and care homes.

Thornhill Park is ideally located close to the Sunderland city centre and local amenities. This includes local shopping centres, supermarkets, schools, parks, beach, swimming pools, sports centres, youth groups, leisure facilities such as cinema and bowling and a range of local services to promote the well-being and

development of our children and young people, for example health services.

The home is situated close to major public transport facilities including Park Lane bus terminal, metro station and Sunderland city train station. This provides relatively easy access to other regional places of interest in the northeast such as the Metrocentre, Newcastle, South Shields and Durham.

Close by are a number of churches and places of worship catering for different faiths and religions, who also provide a wide variety of youth groups and services for children and young people in the area.

Auton Sunderland is an active member of the Thornholme Resident's Association group and involved in regular community projects where young people can positively contribute to their local community.

The home's immediate local area has been carefully risk assessed in consultation with a range of professional bodies and organisations including the local safeguarding children's board, police, Sunderland County Council, local councillors and the local resident's group ensuring the suitability of the home's location. This locality risk assessment has been shared with all contributing agencies, and significant stakeholders. A copy of this risk assessment can be provided upon request.

The homes city centre location benefits young people in many ways; however, it is important to note that this can also increase risks to some young people. Auton Sunderland believes that each referral should be risk assessed against the immediate location and any known risks to ensure this does not increase risk to any potential young person being placed at Auton Sunderland.

5. The arrangements for supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children accommodated in the children's home.

The cultural, linguistic and religious needs of young people will be identified during our thorough referral procedure. There are places of worship locally for most faiths and religions and the young people will be actively supported and encouraged to continue any religious or cultural belief system they may have. We recognise and respect each of our individuals' dignity, privacy, diversity and independence needs. Any linguistic needs will be identified at the referral stage and the home will ensure that the skills, language and understanding of the staff will meet the needs of the young person. Staff will support young people to seek information and advice on all cultures and religions if required.

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.

Every child and young person have the right to complain about their care or any other issues affecting them while living at Auton Sunderland.

Copies of our "How to Complain" leaflet are provided to our young people during their transition to the home. Each young person is made aware of his/her rights and the procedures involved in both informal and formal complaints on their admission to Auton Sunderland. This includes the details of who they can contact to submit a complaint. This is reviewed regularly during children's meetings.

Young people are provided with information and resources to enable them to submit a complaint about the home or any aspect of their care to an external organisation, should they choose too. This includes how to contact OFSTED, NYAS, Children's Rights commissioner, Social worker, and IRO. Stamped addressed envelopes, phone and internet for email have been provided to the young people, empowering them to complain, without the need to request assistance from staff. Should the child or young person require support to make a complaint, this will be provided, in line with their wishes.

St Cuthbert's Care has a procedure for all Comments, Concerns and Complaints. This procedure is shared with a child's family and care team upon admittance and a copy of the procedure is sent to significant persons annually or sooner if this has been amended. A copy of this document is available on request. This document is held both in the home and additionally in electronic format, should this be required.

All complaints will be responded to promptly in line with the complaints policy and procedure. The level of complaints will be monitored on a regular basis by the home manager.

NYAS, an independent agency, will visit the home to carry out visits by an independent person on a monthly basis. Young people will be encouraged to talk to their visitor and give their views on any issues that may be concerning them through this process.

7. Details of how a person, body or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child can access the home's child protection policies or the behaviour management policy.

Auton Sunderland is committed to working in partnership with

external agencies and significant stakeholders to ensure our child protection policies are robust, transparent and developed in line with local and national policy and legislation. Auton Sunderland ensures that the homes child protection policies are shared with relevant professional bodies, and we do not work in isolation.

Auton Sunderland works closely with local authorities to promote the safety of all young people in their care. The Auton Sunderland Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is submitted to all significant stakeholders upon admittance of a child or young person and again upon any review made to this document. As part of the home's quality monitoring procedures, regular consultation takes place with professionals involved in the care and protection of children and young people placed in our care. This includes the review of the homes child protection/safeguarding policies.

The homes policies and procedures are held within the home both in electronic and written formats. These can be provided to those who require these upon request.

Auton Sunderland Safeguarding Policy

Auton Sunderland recognise and are committed to fulfilling its statutory and moral responsibilities with regards to the protection of children and young people from harm.

Auton Sunderland have a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in supporting to fulfil this duty:

- The St Cuthbert's Care Safeguarding Children Policy
- The Auton Sunderland Safeguarding Policy and procedure
- The Auton Sunderland Sexual Exploitation Policy
- The Auton Sunderland Bullying and E-Safeguarding Policy
- The Auton Sunderland Children's Complaints Policy
- The Auton Sunderland Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- Sunderland Safeguarding Children Procedures
- LSCP Safeguarding Children Procedures of those children placed outside of Sunderland
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The DfE publication "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2015

The St Cuthbert's Care procedures are underpinned by fundamental values that are central to the work of the charity.

1. Respect for all persons
2. Confidentiality
3. Non-judgmental attitudes
4. Individual rights to self-determination

5. Non-discrimination

The children and young people will be encouraged to respect the safety of all members of the home.

The staff team will act as role models and will actively discourage behaviour, which may cause harm emotionally, physically and/or sexually.

The staff team and children will treat one another with dignity and respect, sensitivity and fairness.

All young people will have individual risk management plans that are regularly reviewed. Bedroom doors have an alarm facility should this be required to safeguard children and young people from potential harm. The requirement for this risk management strategy is only be applied after careful consideration of risk, and in agreement with the placing authority. This is kept under review to ensure it is fair and proportionate in mitigating identified risk. Young people are helped to understand why this is in place and their views and wishes sought.

Child protection/safeguarding incidents will be reported to the appropriate agencies and professionals concerned. The process of reporting such incidents will strictly follow safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding Children from Abuse by Sexual Exploitation

Auton Sunderland believe it is important for all children and young people to develop the knowledge and skills needed to make safe and healthy choices about relationships, to avoid situations that place them at risk of sexual exploitation. Children and young people who are sexually exploited are the victims of child abuse and should be safeguarded from further harm.

Due to the very nature of sexual exploitation, it is very common for children and young people not to recognise that they are being abused or coerced. Exploitation can involve varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying (including cyber bullying) and grooming for sexual activity via introduction into 'party' lifestyles forming 'casual' social relationships.

There are noticeable links between young people involved in sexual exploitation and other behaviours such as running away from home or care, bullying, self-harm, drug and alcohol misuse. In addition, some children might be particularly vulnerable to exploitation because of factors such as difficult or abusive childhood experiences or educational under achievement.

Auton Sunderland are committed to working with local safeguarding agencies and partners, such as MSET, to ensure robust policies and procedures are in place at Auton Sunderland, reducing the risk of

sexual exploitation. This includes ensuring the home has an appropriate identified link with the local police to ensure the homes procedures and responses are appropriate in safeguarding our children and young people. The home has a robust police protocol is in place, that is reviewed annually or sooner if required.

Auton Sunderland ensure that our knowledge of risk remains current and up to date and ensure any intelligence gathered through our work is shared appropriately with those agencies responsible for safeguarding children at a local level.

Auton Sunderland adheres to the following documentation:

- Auton Sunderland Sexual Exploitation Policy
- Auton Sunderland Safeguarding against Sexual Exploitation Procedures
- Auton Children Missing from Care policy
- Auton Sunderland Missing from Home Return Keyworking Session Policy and Procedure
- Auton Sunderland Agreed Police Protocol

In the event that a child or young person is identified as being at risk from child sexual exploitation, or indeed any form of exploitation, Auton Sunderland will work in collaboration with the child, professionals and safeguarding partners to ensure an appropriate multi-agency response and strategy agreed to safeguard the young person.

All staff at Auton Sunderland will receive appropriate training to safeguard children from abuse by sexual exploitation.

Missing from Home Procedures

Residential childcare practitioners can be faced with situations whereby a child or young person may be missing from home. This can occur for a variety of reasons. If staff become aware that there is likelihood that a young person may be planning to be missing from home, they would talk to the child to gain a stronger understanding of their thoughts, wishes and feelings. Staff intervention would be determined by the young person's risk management plan.

All children and young people will be advised that running away from home is not a positive measure for dealing difficulty. It is the role of the staff team to make the children/young people aware that running away from home can be dangerous and places them at significant risk. Staff will be proactive and use a relational approach to support a learning process towards choosing alternative measures to deal with difficult situations.

At Auton Sunderland, an emphasis is placed on reducing the risk of harm through this behaviour by appropriate staff support. Young

people identified as being at risk from this behaviour will have safeguarding strategies clearly identified within their individual risk management plans. Strategies are individualised however for those children deemed at high risk, should they attempt to go missing, the ethos within the home is to attempt to prevent this through intensive staff intervention. This is an effective strategy and has reduced incidents of missing from home. This tells gives young people a clear message that staff care about them and will keep them safe.

The Auton Sunderland's Missing from Home Policy, Procedures and Protocols have been developed in partnership with our local police agency responsible for the coordination of children missing from home or care. These have been approved by the relevant body and this information has been submitted to the local police teams to enable a swift and effective response should this be required.

The potential risks posed through running away from home are discussed regularly within children's meetings, encouraging young people to gain stronger insight into the potential dangers. Staff members will use professional judgement as corporate parent to enable children and young people to understand the use of police in such circumstances and the outcome of high-profile cases where children/young people have 'run away'.

Young people are encouraged to access independent advocates to discuss their worries and concerns. This forms part of our return home procedure. Auton Sunderland recognises that young people do not run away for no reason.

Auton Sunderland has developed a Missing from Home Return Keyworking Session Procedure. This is to be carried out when the young person has safely returned, has been warmly welcomed home and is calm and able to reflect. The aim of this procedure is to provide a learning outcome and to identify pull/push factors for the use of this behaviour as a coping strategy. It is primarily a safeguarding tool to establish risk of harm whilst missing. This is not an independent return home interview and does not replace the independent visit required by the homes policies, procedures and protocols.

The main aims of this procedure are;

- To ascertain whether the child or young person requires medical attention
- To seek an understanding of the pull/push factors involved
- To assess the risks to which they may have been exposed whilst missing
- To explore and advocate for the young person's current and future wishes and to access independent advocate on their behalf should they wish to.
- To explore with the young person positive alternative options to going missing in the future, so that if the same situation arises

they have considered what action to take instead of leaving the home.

- Reduce risk taking behaviour
- Monitoring trends and patterns of concern

Bullying

Both staff and young people at Auton Sunderland have agreed the following definition of Bullying; Bullying - A behaviour that is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, with the intent to hurt someone physically or emotionally, that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power

Auton Sunderland acknowledge the serious and often devastating nature of bullying and recognise this as a form of abuse. Auton Sunderland view bullying as unacceptable and seeks to combat it within its child protection responsibilities. The home is committed to combating this form of abuse by raising awareness of it among our staff and the children and young people in our care. This is in support of our core values, in line with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and is stated within our Safeguarding Procedures, that "all children have the right to protection from exploitation, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse".

Bullying can take place on a number of grounds including race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and can take many forms including:

- Name calling
- Being physically hit
- Gestures
- Extortion
- Coercing the victim into acts they do not wish to do
- Exclusion from friendships or peer groups
- Stealing property
- Malicious gossip
- Watching and encouraging bullying behaviour (bystander bullying)
- Sexual Bullying
- Cyber Bullying

The Auton Sunderland Anti-Bullying Policy provides detailed

procedural guidance on countering bullying.

The staff and young people at Auton Sunderland are committed to working together in partnership with Sunderland City Council and the Sunderland Youth Parliament to achieve the Sunderland Anti-Bullying Accreditation. This is graded bronze, silver, gold and platinum. Through partnering with this accreditation scheme and having our standards of practice externally verified we have maintained consistently high standards of practice, and our threshold for identifying bullying has remained low. Auton Sunderland was awarded Bronze Level status in February 2012, Silver Level Status in August 2012, Gold Level Status in September 2013 and Platinum Level Status in November 2015. The home has maintained its Platinum status consistently since 2015, last reviewed 2023.

Auton Sunderland have also worked closely with the Bullying Intervention Group (B.I.G) in developing our anti-bullying strategies and practice. The B.I.G award is a recognisable award which demonstrates that a school or service takes bullying seriously enough to work towards accepted good practice. It gives parents and children/young people confidence in our approach to bullying, and it will help improve outcomes and wellbeing. Auton Sunderland have successfully achieved standards of practice required to be award The Bullying Intervention Group BIG award.

Auton Sunderland has provided the young people with age-appropriate information on staying safe from bullying in the form of a child focused leaflet and through interactive workshops. The young people helped develop the home's anti-bullying literature. It is regularly discussed in house meetings and forms part of the regular agenda. The children and young people fully participated in the evidence portfolio required to be awarded the B.I.G award and the Anti-Bullying Accreditation the home has received. The young people have appointed an anti-bullying mentor.

2. Views, Wishes and Feelings

8. A description of the children's home's approach to consulting children about the quality of their care.

Practical measures towards ensuring consultation

- **Communication**
  Auton Sunderland never assumes that a child is unable to communicate their views and will work in collaboration with our

children and young people to enable them to express their wishes and feelings in a manner suitable to their individual needs and preferences. We are committed to minimising barriers to communication in all areas of practice. This includes providing a comprehensive service that can adequately meet the needs of children where English is not their first language, or where a learning disability may impact upon their level of understanding and participation.

- **Cared For Review**

  Auton Sunderland work in partnership with local authorities to ensure that all formal documentation is completed, including care plan records and review consultation surveys. The care team recognise the challenge of enabling young people to actively participate in their reviews and will work creatively in meeting the needs of individual children.

- **Children's meetings**

  Auton Sunderland hosts regular fun and creative children's meetings. This forum facilitates consultation around various aspects of the running of the home. Minutes are kept of these meetings with children and young people the meeting actively encouraged to take lead in this process. Both young people and staff provide agenda items to be explored within the group. This time is also used to plan events and celebrations in the household e.g., birthdays and religious festivals. Staff will ensure that any actions are taken forward and feedback given to the young people about the outcomes of any requests made.

  Children and young people are encouraged and enable to participate in staff meetings and by providing their own agenda items for consideration. This encourages partnership working.

  External visitors are sourced to regularly attend our house meetings to enable young people to have access to a variety of services and to receive education on a variety of relevant topics.

- **Accreditation**

  The home was awarded the Bronze Award in June 2016 from Hear by Rights in acknowledgement of our commitment in placing young people's voices at the heart of operations following the Hear by Rights Framework.

  The home was awarded the Investing in Children Award in June 2016 which acknowledged the homes commitment to ensuring that children and young people have a voice and are able to influence the service they use.

- **Key worker sessions**

  The key worker or a significant other staff member will facilitate a one-to-one session frequently with allocated children and young people. This enables children to remain central to their

care planning and any assessment process that is required. The children's views on their placement are regularly sought. All sessions are recorded and available in a format the child will understand.

- **Care Planning**

  Auton Sunderland empowers young people to participate in their care planning by facilitating regular input into their monthly care plans and receiving feedback on a monthly basis on the achievement of their outcomes. This is individualised ensuring a child centred approach is taken and the young person is consulted on how and when they would like to give input into their care plans. This enables the child to be central to the planning of their care and gives them a voice on the outcomes they wish to achieve and an opportunity to celebrate achievement.

- **Contracts**

  Any contract to support the placement will be written in collaboration with the young person

- **Advocates**

  Young people who reside at Auton Sunderland will have access to an independent advocate who can be accessed through each placing authority or independent services such as NYAS.

- **Independent visitors**

  Auton Sunderland will actively encourage and support the allocation of independent visitors, when children have limited contact with parents or family members. Staff members will consult with the independent visitor where appropriate.

- **Manager's consultation**

  The registered manager regularly consults with the children on their views of the home and the quality of care they receive. When a young person gives feedback or makes suggestions to improve their experience of Auton Sunderland, we ensure that they are listened to and where possible, changes made to support that young person.

  Consultation takes place with the child, their family and care team on a regular basis to ensure that the quality of care offered by Auton Sunderland remains to a high standard. This information is recorded within the managers monitoring reports alongside the outcome from any suggestions made.

9. A description of the children's home's policy and approach in relation to—

(a) anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families;

Auton Sunderland recognises and values the diversity and

uniqueness of the individual. Not only the obvious differences we can see with our eye such as age, gender, race or disability but also the differences that we cannot see such as personality, socio-economic status, background, health, previous health experiences, education, social groups, sexual orientation, cultural beliefs, faith beliefs, expectations, behaviours and morals.

These unique characteristics are important factors in the process of identifying need. Consideration will always be given to each young person's racial, cultural and religious needs. The staff at Auton Sunderland will actively seek to support the process of meeting individual needs by facilitating visits to local places of worship and providing for any specific dietary needs, seeking to enhance understanding of different cultures and support cultural links within the community. Auton Sunderland promotes equality of opportunity for all. We recognise that equality is not about treating everyone in the same way; it is about treating everyone fairly, with respect and recognise that children and young people from different backgrounds may have needs that are met in different ways.

Through our Anti-discriminatory practice, we promote the diversity and value of all our differences, promote self-esteem and positive group identity and promote the fulfilment of individual potential. This is central to our practice and ethos at Auton Sunderland.

(b) children's rights.

Auton Sunderland staff ensure that children's rights are promoted throughout all areas of practice, in line with present legislation within the 'UN Convention on The Rights of The Child', principally:

- That the child will be treated in a non-discriminatory way
- That the views and wishes of the child will be respected
- That the child will always have the right to dignity, privacy and humane care

With rights come responsibilities and children will be encouraged to take as much responsibility for their behaviour as they are able. Behaviour that creates, or is likely to create, victims will not be condoned and will be managed in an appropriate manner.

3. Education

10. Details of provision to support children with special educational needs.

Auton Sunderland recognise that a significant proportion of looked after children residing in children's homes have special educational needs or have faced significant barriers to learning due to adverse childhood experiences, trauma, have mental health difficulties or have been excluded or out of education for significant periods of time. It may be necessary to address and work through past experiences

and present needs before they can positively participate in learning activities and formal education.

All young people at Auton Sunderland will have a comprehensive educational care plan. This plan will identify those young people who have an EHC plan with targets and support plans identified within the child's EHC plan incorporated into their education placement plan. This will support both the staff team to identify how they can offer individual support to the young person and what areas are to be monitored to measure effectiveness of support. This information is included in the child's placement reports for Cared For Reviews.

Auton Sunderland will ensure there is good attendance at all education reviews including PEP reviews and EHC plan reviews. They will ensure they prepare for reviews by completing a report, consulting the child about their views and wishes prior to the meeting. Any changes to the child's education plan will be incorporated into the child's education care plans.

Auton Sunderland work in close partnership with external professionals and agencies in providing tailored support for each child or young person. This includes the school SENCO, VS, educational psychologists. teaching staff and mentoring staff.

11. If the children's home is registered as a school, details of the curriculum provided by the children's home and the management and structure of the arrangements for education.

Auton Sunderland is not registered as a school.

12. Where the children's home is not registered as a school, the arrangements for children to attend local schools and the provision made by the children's home to promote the educational attainment of children.

Auton Sunderland is fully committed to supporting the education of our young people.

- We have developed an education policy, which clearly outlines the way we intend to promote and safeguard the education of our young people
- Each child has a detailed educational plan which highlights their educational history, specific needs and aspirations
- We will create an ethos conducive to educational success, both through raising the expectations of staff and young people and through the more tangible conduits, such as buying books and developing reward packages
- Each child has an educational care plan which ensures access and stability with regard to education, acts as a formal

mechanism to ensure regular, effective liaison between all key stakeholders, signals any particular need and establishes clear goals

- Key workers are charged with taking an active interest in young people's educational progress, championing their educational needs, celebrating their successes and ensuring that they have access to the full range of educational opportunities
- Wherever possible children at Auton Sunderland will attend local schools or alternative provision made by Sunderland or the placing authorities. Staff at Auton Sunderland will provide "in-school" support wherever possible and appropriate. If a child is excluded, Auton Sunderland staff will work closely with education placement and virtual school in identifying an appropriate alternative educational package for the child/young person. Auton Sunderland will support and facilitate the educational plan however where possible, this should be delivered by an appropriately trained educational professional. This could include alternative timetables, such as 'twilight' hours, a personal tutor or attending an alternative specialist unit. This could be within the child or young person's current educational placement or an alternative school which has appropriate facilities, ensuring continuity and best quality of education whilst excluded.
- Auton Sunderland work closely with the virtual schools and have linked with the 'Virtual Heads' for the Sunderland local authority and also for other placing authorities. This allows for effective partnership working promoting positive outcomes for our children and young people.
- Attend all multi agency meetings and act as an advocate on behalf of the child where necessary. Complete any required reports in preparation of education meetings.
- If a child's progress is not in line with their agreed goals and their next steps, staff should seek expert advice from education professionals such as the VSH, SENCO, learning mentor or teacher.
- The home will challenge a child's education or training provider if we do not receive appropriate support for the child to progress, as outlined in their relevant plans.
- We have a homework room at Auton Sunderland that incorporates facilities for private study
- Staff support and encourage extra-curricular activities and hobbies to promote enjoyment and achievement outside school hours. There are many local clubs and youth groups our young people access within the local community. This help build young people's self-esteem and confidence and provide opportunity to help them meet friends of similar age and interests.

4. Enjoyment and Achievement

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

Auton Sunderland believe that every child deserves a fulfilling childhood with a variety of leisure activities, hobbies, and holidays to provide them with a range of experiences to build confidence, self-esteem and enabling positive memories. Individual talents and interests will be identified and nurtured, with children and young people selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonable possible.

All young people have access to the leisure activities available in most homes i.e., television, radio, art and craft, board games, books, games consoles, internet etc. As well as promoting a positive ethos of play we encourage participation in age-appropriate hobbies for example swimming, youth groups, rugby and horse riding to name but a few. Our young people are very much involved in the local community groups and through this interaction they have built positive friendships, giving them a clear sense of identity within their local community. Extra-curricular clubs and activities are also encouraged and supported. This may include musical instruments or drama clubs for example. Each child is unique and as such we investigate a wide variety of activities to interest and inspire our young people.

Children and young people can enjoy day trips and holidays throughout the school holidays. This has included museums, amusements parks throughout the country, football matches and city visits. House meetings are used to plan holidays and day trips to ensure the young people are fully consulted.

We have a member of staff at Auton Sunderland who takes responsibility for co-ordinating activities with additional responsibility for accessing material for holidays, calendar events, and accessing the local community.

Auton Sunderland will clarify the homes delegated authority to give consent to school trips, sleepovers or the child's involvement in sporting, leisure and cultural activities. This information will be identified within the child's placement plan.

We believe in celebrating individual and group achievements along with any significant events that interest our young people. They are central to the decision making of the home and are able to request specific celebrations central to their interests, views, cultural and religious beliefs.

5. Health

14. Details of any health care or therapy provided, including—
(a) details of the qualifications and professional supervision of the staff involved in providing any health care or therapy;

Auton Sunderland currently does not employ individuals whose role would be to provide specific health care for our children in our home. Auton Sunderland is committed to working with local services and health agencies in sourcing required identified support our children and young people may need. This includes South of the Tyne Children and Young People's Services, Specialist paediatric health teams, YDAP/ Matrix (drug and alcohol substance misuse workers), external health educators and local sexual health advisor and clinic. This list is not exhaustive.

(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.

Auton Sunderland will actively promote the health needs of the children and young people.

All children and young people will be registered with a local GP and dentist unless otherwise requested from those with parental responsibility.

It is an expectation that all children and young people will undergo an annual medical as requested by *Regulation 7 of the Children Act 1989.* They will also undergo regular dental checks and eye tests.

The staff team will adopt a positive approach to health issues. We will provide a healthy and balanced diet, encourage, create and take part in regular leisure activities. We will seek advice in reducing risk factors to health; such as drug abuse, solvent misuse, use of psychoactive substances, smoking and sexual health matters.

The emotional wellbeing of our children and young people is just as important as their physical health. Auton Sunderland recognise that good mental health allows children and young people to develop the resilience to cope with issues in adult life. For this reason, we have participated in, and been awarded the bronze award Mental Health Charter Mark. This award required the standards of practice in the home to be externally verified by a team of wellbeing assessors that analysed the offer Auton Sunderland have in place for both staff and young people.

All young people are offered the opportunity to become members at the local gym and swimming pool to encourage regular exercise and promote healthy living. Gym induction will take place to ensure the young people exercise in a safe way.

Where young people are admitted to Auton Sunderland with specific

health needs, we work closely with the young person's identified health care team in ensuring that the young person's needs are met to the highest care standards possible. Advice is sought from health professionals in drawing the child's risk management plan and monthly placement care plans to ensure health is appropriately reflected. Training may also be identified and sourced in meeting specific health needs of a child.

The health needs and outcomes of our children are closely monitored through the young person's individual health care plan targets. Staff monitor achievement of agreed targets daily and record this. This information is then evaluated monthly and measured for effectiveness through the homes care planning and monitoring procedures, as discussed in 'promoting positive outcomes'. The young people contribute to their health care plans and their views are clearly recorded. Once effectiveness has been measured, senior staff will then review whether a specific target is likely to be achieved. Where there is concern that a young person is not achieving their health care plan targets, staff will seek guidance from relevant health professionals and support the child to achieve future outcomes.

The homes effectiveness of its approach to health is measured using individual health care plans and monthly care plan monitoring reports. This information is included on the child's monthly summary reports which are sent to care team members and family, as agreed during the child's admittance to the home. It is also included in the child's LAC/CFR reports to ensure complete transparency when meeting to review the health care of the child and agreeing future plans.

Additionally, effectiveness of the homes approach to health is monitored closely by the registered manager on a monthly basis when reviewing the quality of care for the home. The manager also consults significant stakeholders at regular intervals to seek their views and opinions on how Auton Sunderland performs in its quality of care, including its approach to health. This information is included in the manager monthly monitoring reports. This information can be accessed on request.

6. Promoting Positive Relationships

15. The arrangements for promoting contact between children and their family and friends.

It is recognised that whenever possible, children and young people need regular constructive family time, social interaction with friends and significant others. Building and maintaining positive friendships is important to our young people and as such, this is encouraged and supported at Auton Sunderland. We encourage young people to have friends to visit for planned activities, tea, celebrations and sleepovers.

The arrangements and conditions surrounding each child's family time are described within the child's placement plans and the conditions are reviewed at regular intervals. Any family time restrictions will be clarified to ensure the protection of the child.

Children will be given appropriate practical support to facilitate all constructive communication with family, whether by visits, telephone, letter or email. Young people can make confidential and private phone calls to their placing social workers, IROs, OFSTED and various other support agencies without the need to consult or refer to staff. Additionally, all young people have access to the home's computers and young people who have access to smart phones will be encouraged to download 'apps' such as MOMO (Mind of My Own) to ensure they are able to contact professionals involved in their care.

In consultation with the child's social worker, written guidance, in the form of a 'Family Time Plan', will be available for staff to define children's and parent's rights and the right of significant others with regards to maintaining contact.

If visits or telephone calls are to be supervised, then this will be done in a discreet but professional manner.

If letters or emails need to be intercepted to safeguard the child, a written agreement will be required between the home, child, parents and local authority.

Whenever possible, appropriate participation in the home's activities will take place with parents, friends and significant others if there are no significant risks or restrictions to such participation.

A written record will be kept in the home, recording the date of contact and with whom. Family time reports can be provided to the placing social worker.

7. Protection Of Children

16. A description of the children's home's approach to the surveillance and monitoring of children accommodated there.

At Auton Sunderland each child is treated as an individual. It is recognised that each child will have differing levels of need and individually tailored care plans in place reflecting key controls and strategies required to safeguard the child or young person.

Part of this assessment will include the level of staff support required on a day-to-day basis. This will include the child or young person's ability to safely spend time in the community independently, the level of supervision required when spending time with peers in the home, the level of staff supervision required whilst in the home and the staffing ratio required to support the child in the community. This approach must be balanced and reflective of the child's wishes,

feelings and level of risk and kept under constant review to ensure reflective of current need and least restrictive.

This information is recorded within the child's individual risk management plan, which is reviewed regularly to reflect personal development, age and understanding. If a child requires supervision both within the home and community, staff will supervise and monitor that child as described.

The home has an internal alarm system in place which can be programmed to monitor individual internal and external doors in the home. This is used as a safeguarding tool to reduce risk within the home. This includes preventing young people leaving the home without staff knowledge during the evening, preventing young people from entering other bedrooms without staff knowledge and reducing potential safeguarding or bullying incidents within the home, for those children who require supervision. This also acts as a security alarm on external doors, as used in private properties, to dissuade people from illegally entering the home. The alarms are used on an individual basis according to need and risk level. This is reflected in individual risk management plans.

Placing social workers and/or families for children admitted to Auton Sunderland will have the alarm system explained to them during admittance and written consent is sought for the use of door alarms.

Alarms are not used in the home as a replacement for staff supervision or support and the need for use will be regularly reviewed with the child, their family and care team on a regular basis to ensure use is proportionate. Alarms are not to be used in a manner that creates an institutional environment. External doors have alarms set each evening as a security measure, not as a monitoring or surveillance tool.

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.

Auton Sunderland's approach to behavioural support

Auton Sunderland aims to provide a safe environment through which children and young people can enjoy sound relationships, interact positively with others, and behave appropriately.

The culture and ethos within Auton Sunderland is to place an emphasis on highlighting positive behaviours and choices through appropriate praise and reward to build our young people's self-esteem and confidence. This allows opportunity to educate our children and young people on positive behaviour and expectations of

society in a manner that offers unconditional acceptance and positive regard.

Auton Sunderland staff are trained to adopt a PACE approach to practice. This approach is not a behavioural management strategy but gives staff skills to develop supportive relationships that children and young people need to emotionally regulate and to put feelings into words via reflection. It aims to help the child feel more secure, build trust, and feel understood and validated. It is not a strategy to change the child.

Through our use of PACE, we first help the child to calm and regulate, establishing an emotional connection with the child. This approach assists staff at remaining calm and supportive, allowing for a measured response to the behaviour. Only once there has been a connection established with the child, can staff begin to 'correct' the behaviour (connection before correction).

Where staff are working alongside a child to correct behaviour, we are mindful that traditional behaviour management and use of consequences, based on social learning theories, can focus primarily on the behaviour rather than the relationship and internal world of a child. We believe such consequences can be shame based and often are not supportive to children who have not experienced unconditional love and the safety of sound, secure relationships.

Once the child is calm and a connection has been established the child or young person is supported by their trusted adult to discuss the incident/behaviour, with safe space to reflect, with staff who are curious about what the child may be experiencing. The tentativeness of this curiosity supports the child to feel open to feedback with staff exploring and wondering about potential hypothesis, adjusting these with the child's responses to them. This approach helps staff truly come to try and understand the mind of child and give tis understanding back to them to encourage to child to come to know themselves.

During these discussions, together we explore potential precipitating factors and empower the young person to identify alternative coping strategies that may be effective for them. Within Auton Sunderland these are called 'Coping Chats'. This information is then incorporated into the young person's individual risk management plan and placement care plans to support the young person in a more effective manner should similar situations arise.

Occasionally, when seeking to correct a behaviour, there may be a need to use more formal disciplinary measures. We believe that although there maybe situations where this is an appropriate measure to take, it is imperative that these measures are taken after the young person has been given an opportunity to adapt their behaviour (limit setting) and used infrequently. In these cases, a 'restorative justice' approach, where possible, is preferred. It is

recognised however, that positive behaviour management model is more effective at establishing a long-term change in a child's behaviour, although we do recognise this is individualised and for some children, praise and rewards can increase anxiety as the child fears evaluation.

Behavioural Consequences

Within Auton Sunderland we promote positive behaviour by offering praise and support together with positive consequences. These can range from verbal praise to a reward of an activity or outing of the young person's choice. It is recognised that highlighting and rewarding good choices promotes positive behaviour and staff will work collaboratively with each child to identify individualised strategies support behaviour and promote positivity whenever possible.

It is also recognised that some form of consequence could be necessary when there are instances of behaviour which would in a family or group environment be reasonably regarded as unacceptable. When it is felt necessary to give a consequence for behaviour, good professional practice indicates that these should be relevant and above all, just. Formal disciplinary measures should be logical, used sparingly and, in most cases, only after repeated use of informal measures have proved ineffective.

The following consequences may be considered at Auton Sunderland and young people are encouraged to participate in this decision making where possible.

Consequences will include:

- Loss of privileges for example, loss of WIFI
- Restorative approaches to repair relationships – This could include supporting them to apologise, make apology cards etc
- Reparation – Wherever possible, before reparation is given, the young person is to be encouraged and supported by to replace or fix any damaged property. Where a child/young person declines to contribute to repairing the damage, or in the event this is not possible (for example requires a skilled professional or there is urgent need to repair for safety) this will usually require the young person to make a contribution for any non-accidental damage they may cause. Reparation will be deducted from their pocket money on a weekly basis until the damage is paid for. In any case, no more than a maximum of two-thirds of a child's pocket money should be used per week.
- Extra household tasks – young people can choose to clean up any mess they may have made.
- Loss of electronic devices
- Earlier bedtime routines
- Educational workshops

This is not an exhaustive list and will be subject to individual need and/or event.

It is acknowledged that due to the complex difficulties of many of the young people we support, the effectiveness of each of the consequences may only be seen after a period of time. The consequences will be monitored and reviewed frequently by the manager and staff team in order to evaluate the effectiveness. Staff will take the opportunity to discuss the topic of consequences at team meetings.

Where possible examples of positive behaviour are praised and encouraged by the staff team and by doing so help the young people to be proud of their achievements and help build confidence and self-esteem.

Children and young people have the option to agree achievement plans with their key worker. These plans identify specific areas of development the children and young people would like to build upon, and how this can be achieved. The plans have positive incentives given to encourage and praise these achievements.

Rewards can also be given to a child or young person who displays behaviour that is so positive staff feel this warrants recognition. These are used to reinforce positive behaviours. Again, good professional practice indicates that these rewards should be relevant and just.

Incentives and rewards will include:

- Verbal praise and encouragement
- Certificates and 'thank you' cards
- Sweets
- Additional treats – These will be negotiated with the children and young people. This could include later bedtimes for example.
- Additional activities/holidays.
- Agreed financial incentives. This includes vouchers.
- Agreed rewards such as make up/games/toys/books or beauty treatments. Again, these are appropriate and fit the purpose.

Restorative Practice

Auton Sunderland adopts the restorative justice approach to guide the way we support our children and young people. The fundamental premise of our approach is that our children and young people will be happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes when the staff supporting do things with the children, rather than to them or for them, wherever this is possible. By using restorative practices in the day to day running of the home, it provides an environment where there is mutual respect and trust. It encourages children and young people to take responsibility for their

behaviour in accordance with their age and ability. The expectation of standards of behaviour for all staff and young people is high. Developing safe, stable relationships with adults in the home is central to the ethos of the home and will support the development of secure attachments where appropriate over a period of time.

Staff will have the skills to respond to each child's individual behaviour needs. Staff members follow the "IRRP" model which distinguishes the difference between restorative justice and restorative practice. Restorative justice practices are reactive, consisting of formal or informal responses to crime and other wrongdoing after it occurs. The IRRP's definition of restorative practices also includes the use of informal and formal processes that precede wrongdoing, those that proactively build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict and wrongdoing.

(a) the children's home's approach to the use of restraint with respect to children accommodated there;

St Cuthbert's Care currently practice CPI Safety Intervention™ which is affiliated with the BILD act and compliant with the Restraint Reduction Network Training Standards. CPI Safety Intervention™ promotes and encourages the least restrictive method in order to avoid risk behaviour with its primary focus to intervene at the earlier stages in order to avoid risk behaviour and the potential for physical intervention. CPI Safety Intervention™ also has a clear emphasis on establishing therapeutic rapport in the form of the COPING model. This allows both staff and children to reflect on incidents or risk behaviour and identify patterns and strategies to support them in future.

The key values underpinning CPI Safety Intervention™ are:

- Best interests of the service user
- Least restrictive methods to be used
- Prevent injury, pain and distress
- Maintain dignity
- Reasonable and proportionate
- Physical intervention is used as a last resort.
- maintaining *Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security* SM

However, the only 100% safe way to restrain is to not restrain. There is no tried and tested fool proof way to physically intervene and restrain any child. Physical intervention carries risk every time, for both staff and children. There are however ways of physically intervening that are much safer than others which are incorporated into the CPI Safety Intervention™ training package.

St. Cuthbert's Care will always take the view that it best to prevent

behaviours happening than to deal with the outcome of aggressive outbursts. With this in mind, we actively promote and reward positive behaviour, identifying what works for each young person and incorporating this into their risk management plan.

(b) how persons working in the children's home are trained in the use of restraint and how their competence is assessed.

All staff are provided with a two-day CPI Safety Intervention™ foundation training package when they commence employment with St. Cuthbert's care, with annual refreshers to ensure on-going competence and assessment. St Cuthbert's Care have 5 certified CPI Safety Intervention™ trainers who are available to offer training, problem solving and advice and guidance to staff teams around the implementation of CPI Safety Intervention™. Auton Sunderland's Registered Manager is a certified CPI trainer and reviews each restraint thoroughly to ensure the safety and well-being of all involved and to monitor effectiveness. This is reviewed monthly in staff team meetings.

8. Leadership And Management

18. The name and work address of —

(a) the registered provider

(including details of the company owning the children's home);

(b) if nominated, the responsible individual;

Organisation St Cuthbert's Care

(Registered Provider) https://stcuthbertscare.org.uk/

Responsible Individual

Amanda Head
Director of Care
St. Cuthbert's Care
St. Cuthbert's House
West Road
Newcastle
NE15 7 PY
Telephone: 0191 228 0111
Email: amanda.head@stcuthbertscare.org.uk

Qualifications

NVQ Level 3 & 4 Social Care Leadership & Management
Registered Manager Award

Experience

- Overs 23 years working with vulnerable adults, children and young people
- Manager of adults and children's outreach service
- Senior manager of short break service providing care for

adults and children

- Manager of activity centre providing services for vulnerable adults, children and their families
- Deputy Director of St Cuthbert's Care leading and directing all care services
- Director of Care

(c) if applicable, the registered manager

Jody Scott
23 Thornhill Park,
Sunderland,
SR2 7LA
Telephone: 0191 565 9481
Email: jody.scott@stcuthbertscare.org.uk

Qualifications

Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work (SW132955)
BSc (Hons) Sociology
NVQ level 5 Leadership and Management in Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services.

Experience

- 22 years children's residential experience
- Fourteen years as a registered manager for St Cuthbert's Care
- Six months as deputy manager for St Cuthbert's Care
- Five year's senior residential officer
- Residential childcare officer

Inspection Service

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Telephone: 0300 123 1231
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

19. Details of the experience and qualifications of staff working at the children's home, including any staff commissioned to provide education and health care

Please see annex a.

20. Details of the management and staffing structure of the children's home, including arrangements for the professional

supervision of staff employed at the children's home, including staff that provide education or health care.

Auton Sunderland current staffing structure is as follows -

1 Registered Manager

2 Deputy Manager

2 Senior Residential Care Officers (full time)

8 Residential Care Officers. We have sufficient staff to meet the needs of the young people currently in placement.

The staffing levels at Auton Sunderland will be determined by the number of young people who live at the home at that time, however we will ensure that there is always a good child-staff ratio to enable staff to undertake individual work without compromising the needs of the group or administrative tasks.

The number of staff on duty should be no less than one member of staff to two young people at any one time. Two members of staff will be on sleep-in duty each evening.

The home will usually be staffed when the young people are at school however there will be times when the home is empty as all members of staff are either out with the young people or implementing another area of their role. During such times staff will be required to work within the guidelines of relevant risk assessments.

If a situation arises where a young person is presenting significant risk to others or themselves, it is possible that staffing levels will be increased. This will be at the discretion of the Director of Care. This may require additional funding from the placing authority.

Auton Sunderland is strongly committed to the personal and continuous professional development of all staff. We are currently working with outside agencies to ensure that staff meets the Quality Standards for Children's Homes guideline for NVQ qualifications. Additionally, all senior staff have opportunity to work towards NVQ level 5 in Leadership and Management.

We provide a comprehensive in-house training programme and access external specialist courses.

Auton Sunderland ensures that all staff receive effective supervision, in accordance with anti-discriminatory practice. All staff will be allocated formal supervision each month. New staff members will have supervisory time allocated on a weekly basis; the induction programme will be the primary focus of this supervision. Staff members who work on a relief basis will have formal supervision every eight shifts.

The purpose of supervision is:

- To ensure management accountability, including allocation of work, management of time, monitoring records, completion of administrative tasks, setting of priorities while promoting consistency between the individual's work and the goals of the

agency

- Offer a safe space for support, guidance and challenge.
- Case management discussion including review of the homes safeguarding policies and procedures.
- To offer professional consultation
- Reflection on practice – provide space and dedicated time for practitioners to delve deeper into their work, consider the emotional impact of this on the practitioner, consider the unquestioned assumptions and biases they may have, and how their own personal values and beliefs can influence their work. This reflective approach to supervision enables staff to develop self-awareness, critical thinking and sound decision making.
- To facilitate the supervisee's learning and professional development by providing feedback on his or her practices, including recognition of good work. The supervisor has a responsibility for building on good practice and attention to departures from it, and for ensuring that professional relationships and sound judgement in the work are maintained.
- Personal circumstances which affect the worker's professional activities should be acknowledged and discussed as appropriate.
- To acknowledge the stress inherent in working in a voluntary social care agency and to provide opportunities for dealing with this where appropriate, recognising that there are times where it is more appropriate for staff to access the St Cuthbert's Care Counselling Service.

Additionally, regular practice observations are carried out throughout the year to support development along with regular informal practice discussions.

The registered manager receives supervision from the Director of Care and senior management team.

21. If the staff working at the children's home are all of one sex, or mainly of one sex, a description of how the children's home promotes appropriate role models of both sexes.

Auton Sunderland has both male and female staff members.

9. Care Planning

22. Any criteria used for the admission of children to the children's home, including any policies and procedures for emergency admission

Criteria for Admission

Auton Sunderland will accept referrals where:

- The child is in need of an alternative placement, either where they are new to children's services or because their previous accommodation arrangements have broken down. Children who have previously been placed at Auton Sunderland will also be taken into consideration.
- It is felt the child would benefit from a period of stability and individually tailored support before being supported to independent living
- There is an indication that the child would benefit from being accommodated to enable an assessment to be carried out to secure a future care plan to most effectively meet his/her needs
- An assessment has been completed and it has been highlighted that the individual may benefit from a therapeutic environment with an open-ended period of stability to work on individual targets and outcomes to secure a positive future
- The child/young person has an identified educational placement or is in a training programme if they are within the age range required by statutory legal requirements.

Admissions to Auton Sunderland will happen in a planned way to ensure that the full referral procedure can be followed. We will consider emergency admissions if the existing young people's needs are not compromised. However, a full risk assessment would be in place prior to admission. Without exception the process can be tailored to suit the individual needs of the young person. If there is not a current vacancy, the child's name will be placed on the waiting list.

Referral and Acceptance Procedure

1. All referring agencies will be expected to complete Auton Children's Services Referral form before the young person will be considered for the service. The home manager will contact the referrer within two days of receipt of the information to give feedback on the referral status.
2. A dynamic impact risk assessment will be undertaken to measure the impact of the placement on current young people already placed at Auton Sunderland. There will also be a locality risk assessment carried out to measure the potential risks and impact to the young person from the immediate environment to ensure Auton Sunderland is a suitable placement to safeguard the young person and achieve planned outcomes. A Placement Matching Report will be completed to evidence our decision making.
3. An internal panel meeting will take place to discuss the referral. The purpose of the panel is to conclude the decision of admission, review all documentation and risk assessments and reach a decision.
4. The home manager will inform the referrer within five working

days of the panel decision.

5. If there is a vacancy in the service, a key worker will be allocated who will be involved in all stages of the admission process. Otherwise, the child's name will be placed on a waiting list.
6. Where possible, the home manager and key worker will arrange a visit to spend time with the child to explore their understanding and expectations of the placement and gain a stronger understanding of their wishes and feelings. The young person will be encouraged to share their views and wishes to gain a sense of control during the admission period and contribute to any introduction plan.
7. Wherever possible, the child will then commence an induction process to the home, which will incorporate visits working towards an overnight stay if it is felt to be in their best interests and in line with their views and wishes.
8. Time will be allocated to the child during each visit to answer any questions, queries or anxieties.
9. The home will also allocate time to liaise with professionals involved in the referral and with the child's family if it is appropriate.
10. The child's social worker will be expected to attend a pre-admission meeting before the child is admitted to the home. This will give the opportunity to share information and to obtain all relevant documentation for the child.
11. A mutually convenient date for admission must be agreed.

If a quicker admission is felt to be in the best interest of the young person, this will be facilitated. However, prior to admission a comprehensive risk assessment will be in place and the young people already living at Auton Sunderland will be informed.

Children with Special Needs

All referrals will be considered in line with the criteria for admission.

Although we work with young people whose learning has been affected as a direct result of their experiences, the focus of our work is for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties therefore it is unlikely that we would be able to fully meet the needs of young people with severe learning disabilities or impairments.

Additional Matters

Therapeutic Techniques

The care plan in place for each young person will identify the most

appropriate adult to carry out individual work with the young person if this is considered necessary. This will either be the key worker or another adult who has a significant relationship with the child.

All individual work that is implemented at Auton Sunderland will be based on social work intervention. If the assessment stipulates that a more specific level of intervention is required such as child psychotherapy this would be highlighted to the parenting body and a referral would be made to local health services.

Auton Sunderland will work closely in partnership with the child's placing Social Worker and care team in identifying the appropriate method of individual work required and when would be the most optimum time to introduce this work in collaboration with the child or young person. Auton Sunderland, as part of the care team, will contribute to the identification of the appropriate individual to carry out any agreed individual work. In the event that the individual identified or requested to carry out the work is a member of the Auton Sunderland staff team, we will then be led by the care team and placing social worker with regards to this work. Where appropriate, training will be sought to enable staff to fully carry out this role/work to the best of their abilities. If another care team member is identified, then Auton Sunderland will offer support, where possible and appropriate.

Examples of individual work may include:

Life Story Work

"Life Story Work is a structured approach to eliciting and recording the details of an individual's life with a view to identifying appropriate helping strategies." Bornat J in Davies M (pp196, 2000)

Life story work may be implemented with young people to enable them to gain a stronger understanding of their life and identity, primarily focusing on transitions and key events that are significant. A "Life Story" book will be produced as a written reminder of the important discussions that have taken place between the adult and the child about the people and events in their life.

Solution Focused Therapy

"Solution focused approaches have a very wide application their main advantage being the emphasis on listening to the service user's story and focusing on exceptions which is both anti-oppressive and empowering." Milner and O'Byrne (pp150, 2002)

Solution focused work concentrates on understanding solutions rather than problems. It builds on a young person's existing strengths and works towards future change. Research (see Parton and O'Byrne 2000 and Milner and O'Byrne 2002), shows that this approach has been of benefit to people regardless of ethnicity, age or gender.

Task Centred Practice

"Task centred social work is a practice method which provides a clear framework to guide professional intervention. It is a here-and-now, problem solving method which builds on people's strengths." Doel M in Davies M (pp345, 2000)

Task centred practice is carried out as a focused piece of work with five specific stages, including entry and exit. It is a time limited piece of work offering approaches to problem solving, taking the young people's needs into consideration to bring about change in their situation. Task centred practice is primarily about learning. It was first described as a method of helping people with the "problem of living" (Reid and Epstein 1972). It is a systematic model of social work with a coherent and explicit value base. It is anti-oppressive in that it addresses issues of power and oppression both in the encounter between the practitioner and the service user.

Attachment Theories

"Attachment theory is a theory of behaviour and personality development in close relationships. It offers an explanation of the origin of peoples emotional and relationship style…….It has now been developed and expanded to consider relationships and emotional behaviour across the lifespan. It is therefore relevant to work with all client groups." D Howe in Davies M (pp25, 2000)

If a move towards independent living is the agreed care plan, this area of work will focus on relationship skills and roles in society. The staff team will implement the placement care plan to enable appropriate interventions to be carried out.

It is also acknowledged that our skills, knowledge and professional judgement are critical in helping young people learn constructive and adaptive ways to deal with frustration, failure, anger, rejection, hurt and depression.

Quality Assurance - Service Delivery

- There is an expectation that the local authority will implement frequent Care Team Meetings to monitor and review the young person's care plan
- The staff team will be actively involved in the Cared For Children's review conferences
- NYAS, an independent agency will monitor and assess the care process through Regulation 44 visits on a monthly basis.
- The key worker will provide monthly summary reports to each social worker and parents if appropriate. It will provide both a summary of the month and a review of the implementation of the young person's care plan.
- Auton Sunderland will encourage and support each child to attend their Cared for Reviews and care team meetings, however, if they choose not to do so staff will provide detailed

explanations to highlight individual achievements and outcomes. Auton Sunderland are committed to breaking down barriers preventing children from participating in their reviews. We endeavour to work with the young person to participate in the decision-making process of their care through identifying individualised strategies according to the needs and wishes of the young person.

- Comments from parents and social workers are requested on a monthly basis (via the monthly summaries) throughout the placement to allow parents and placing authorities to share their comments.
- Manager seeks the views and comments of significant stakeholders regularly through the implementation of the managers monitoring procedures. These views and comments are then incorporated into the development of the service to maximise the outcomes for our young people and improve the service and care they receive.
- At the end of each placement the young person and those with parental responsibility will be sent a consultation form to share their comments, views and recommendations for the service

Key Worker

A key worker is a named person who has a central role with an identified young person and who works within Auton Sunderland

The Aims of the Role:

- To promote efficient case management
- To create a named link for the child or young person and all significant others involved in their care

Responsibilities:

The key worker aims to promote the general wellbeing of the young person by overseeing all aspects of their care including social, emotional, health and education.

They will be responsible for:

- Gathering relevant information during the young person's stay which will inform review reports and assessment reports.
- Maintaining the child's file.
- The preparation of reviews in conjunction with the young person, including writing up reports and presenting them at reviews and planning meetings.
- The sharing of information to staff members, social workers and all significant people with the young person.
- Develop a positive working relationship with the young person with a view to supporting and addressing with them unresolved

issues from past events, taking into account any therapeutic needs that may be identified.

- These specific responsibilities will be undertaken alongside the need to promote the welfare of all service users within the group

Evaluation process:

The key worker will receive regular supervision from senior staff in order to evaluate their progress and identify further need. Sessions will be recorded and reviewed

Training and Supervision

St Cuthbert's Care is strongly committed to the personal and continuous professional development of all staff. We are currently working with outside agencies to ensure that staff meets the Quality Standards for Children's Homes guideline for NVQ qualifications.

We provide a comprehensive in-house training programme and access external specialist courses.

St Cuthbert's Care ensures that staff receives effective supervision, in accordance with anti-discriminatory practice.

All staff will be allocated formal supervision each month. New staff members will have supervisory time allocated on a weekly basis; the induction programme will be the primary focus of this supervision. Staff members who work on a relief basis will have formal supervision every eight shifts.

Health and Safety

All employees are expected to familiarise themselves with the St Cuthbert's Care Health and Safety policy as they commence employment. The charity ensures that all staff receive core health and safety training during their induction period. The young people at Auton Sunderland also receive regular fire instruction.

Instruction on the fire system and its operation is carried out with each staff member on the first day of employment, for a second time within four weeks then quarterly thereafter. As well as statutory training on fire safety, staff will receive fire instruction via staff meetings covering areas such as: fire prevention, fire protection and fire procedures.

St Cuthbert's Care recognise and accepts its responsibilities as an employer for providing a safe environment for everyone involved with the service. St Cuthbert's Care has achieved the CHAS award. The CEO, the Agency Health and Safety Officer, Director of Care, Home

Manager and the Home Health and Safety representative have responsibility in their respective roles for the provision and maintenance of:

A safe working environment

- Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances used by employees
- Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own safety and health at work
- Period reviews and updating of health and safety procedures within their work areas of responsibility and monitoring their effectiveness by regular checks and recommendations where appropriate.

The agency reminds all employees of their duties under section seven of the Health and Safety at Work Act to take care of their own safety and that of other workers and that of the people they work for and to co-operate with the Agency, enabling it to carry out its responsibilities successfully.

First Aid

All staff at Auton Sunderland receive first aid training to enable them to take charge in an emergency situation.

The Registered Manager, Deputy Manager and a Senior staff member of Auton Sunderland have completed a 3-day first aid at work course.

All first aid treatment will be recorded in the accident book.

The first aid box will be fully stocked in accordance with agency guidelines and is accessible at all times.

COSHH

The agency complies with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1998, (COSHH), which requires employers to prevent or control exposure, to hazardous substances at work.

An assessment of health risks faced by employers and risk to service users' health from exposure to substances used in Auton Sunderland will be carried out every six months. All substances used in the home will be assessed in terms of potential hazard and control mechanisms introduced as necessary. All new substances being introduced will be similarly assessed. Manufacturer's guidelines will be obtained and followed.

Accident Prevention

Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out in relation to any hazard which may be a risk to Health and Safety on Auton Sunderland premises. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and shared with the Health and Safety Officer.

Violence at Work

St Cuthbert's Care endeavours to provide a safe working environment to all staff. All staff are trained in CPI Safety Intervention ™ during their induction period then supported with refresher courses on a frequent basis.

Risk Management Plans identify and outline strategies to manage known behaviours the young people may display and are compiled from the young person's history and continual observation whilst in the home.

Should a violent incident occur, the agency will ensure that the staff member receives appropriate support. This can be in the following form:

- On the spot supervisory or peer de-briefing
- Supervision to support reflective practice
- Access to the agency counselling service

Incident reports are required for all violent incidents; these are communicated to the Director of Care, placing social worker and parents (where appropriate).

All details will be recorded in the accident book, as required by Health and Safety regulations.

Fire System

To comply with Health and Safety Legislation and the requirements of the Quality Care Standards for Children's Homes, Auton Sunderland has a fire alarm system and emergency lighting system.

Appropriate fire extinguishers and fire blankets are situated around the home; the type, quantity and location conform to the requirements made by the Local Authority Fire Services. Standard safety checks and tests are carried out by Auton Sunderland staff and an external organisation that specialise in this area.

Risk Taking

Although some of the young people we work with can present with high-risk behaviours, we strive to support them to participate in as many activities as possible through taking calculated risks.

Staff accompanying young people on activities are required to ensure

that the health and safety arrangements are adequate and to always follow the young person's individual risk assessments alongside any activity risk management strategies.

Annex A –

Details of the experience and qualifications of staff working at the children's home, including any staff commissioned to provide education and health care

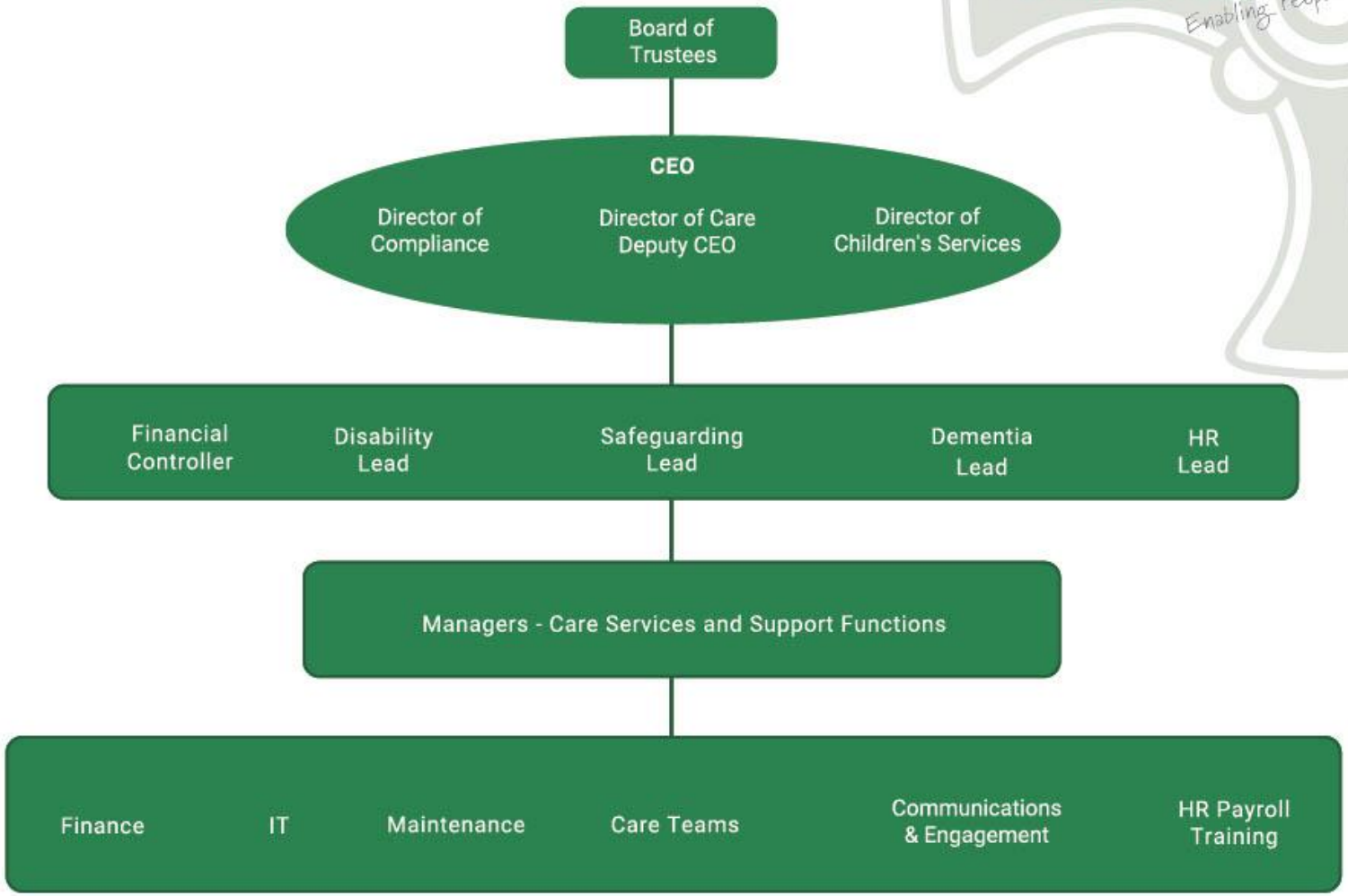
Position	Start Date	Qualifications	Experience
Registered Manager Full Time -35 hours Female	17.11.03	• Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work • BSc (hons) Sociology • NVQ Level 3 Caring for Children and Young People. • NVQ level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Health and Social Care and children and young people's services. • CACHE Level 2 in Principles of Working with Individuals with Learning Disabilities • PACE	➢ 22 years' experience of working within a children's residential care ➢ 14 years' experience as Registered Residential Manager ➢ 6-month experience as Deputy Manager ➢ 5 years' experience as a Senior Residential Care Officer
Deputy Manager Full Time – 37 hours Female	13.08.01	• BTEC Health and Social Care, • NVQ level 3 Working with Children and Young People • NVQ 4 Children and Young People managers' award.	➢ Support worker for adults with learning difficulties ➢ 22 years' experience in post as supervisor in children's residential care. This has included Senior Residential Care, Deputy Manager, registered manager, and Interim Manager (2014 for 6 months and 2021 for 6 months)

		• NVQ level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) • Health Champion • Mental Health First Aider • PACE	
Deputy Manager Full time – 37 hours Female	09/03/22	• NVQ level 3 diploma for the children and young people's workforce • NVQ Level 3 Support Teaching and Learning • NVQ level 2 Mental Health Awareness and understanding autism • Anti-bullying Champion • PACE • Currently undertaking level 5 Leadership and Management Diploma	➢ 5 years' experience in children's residential setting, of which 3.5 years employed by Auton Sunderland. This includes 2 years supervisory senior experience. ➢ 5 years experience as classroom assistant
Senior Child Care Officer Full Time – 37 hours Male	05.07.04	• NVQ Level 3 Working with Children and Young People • NVQ level 5 Diploma Leadership and Management in Children's Care • CACHE Level 2 in Principles of Working	➢ 21 years Residential Child Care experience within Auton Residential Children's Services ➢ 15 years of supervisory experience as Senior Residential Child Care Officer ➢ RSW with Teenagers ➢ ESPA supporting young people with disabilities.

		with Individuals with Learning Disabilities • PACE	
Senior Residential Care Officer Female Full time – 37 hours	02/05/23	• BA (hons) social worker • Access to HE-social care • NVQ3 health and social care • NVQ2 health and social care	➢ 9.5 years' experience NHS Auxiliary nurse ➢ 2 years' experience residential learning disability support worker ➢ 6 months experience local authority social worker ➢ Two years children's residential setting
Residential Care Officer Part Time – 16 Hours Female	01/04/15	• NVQ level 3 diploma for the children and young people's workforce (social care) • PACE	➢ 10 years' experience in Children's Residential Setting ➢ 3 years' experience as a Senior Residential Care Officer in a children's residential care home ➢ Previous Youth Offending experience
Residential Care Officer Full time – 37 hours Female	08/05/12	• NVQ level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce (social care) • NVQ level 2 Team Leading • CACHE Level 2 in Principles of Working with Individuals with Learning Disabilities • PACE	➢ Over 13 years' experience working in children's residential settings. ➢ 1 years' experience working with children with learning disabilities
Residential Care Officer Full time – 37 hours	26/07/21	• NVQ level 3 Diploma for Children and Young People's Workforce	➢ 3 years' Leaving Care Personal Advisor ➢ 18 months Residential Care Officer (LAC)

Male		• NCFE Level 2 Understanding Autism • PACE	➢ 3 years' experience as a local authority foster carer ➢ 4 years' experience Special Constable ➢ 3 years' NECA Housing Support Worker – high risk/high support needs
Residential Care Officer Full time – 37 hours Female	15/04/24	• CACHE Level 3 Working with Children and Young People • Currently undertaking level 4 diploma	➢ 1 years experience within children's residential setting. ➢ 5 years experience as a Nursery Assistant ➢ 5 years Experience as a Special Needs Teaching Assistant
Residential Care Officer Full time – 37 hours Female	23/04/24	• GNVQ Health and Social Care • National Diploma Health Studies (science) • NVQ level 3 Children and Young People's Early Learning and Development • A-Level in Forest School • Currently undertaking level 4 diploma	➢ 1 years residential experience within children's residential setting ➢ 4 years' experience as a Care Assistant – Older People's service ➢ 1 years Quality Lead at a Children's Nursery ➢ 10 years Enhanced Teaching assistant at a Children's Nursery and Forest school
Residential Care Officer Full time – 37 hours Female	05.02.25	• Level understanding 2 Domestic Violence. • Enrolled on Level 4 Diploma	➢ 5 years as a support worker. This includes supporting children and adults with a range of different needs.
Residential Care Officer	06.08.25	• Childhood Studies degree	➢ 2.5 years children's residential experience as an RCO ➢ 4 years support worker

Full Time – 37 hours Female		• Access to HE Diploma • Pre access course	
Residential Care Officer Full Time – 37 hours Female	22/09/25	• Level 2 Early Years Educator • Level 3 Early Years Educator	➢ 3.5 years Nursery Assistant Apprentice ➢ 2.5 years Nursery Assistant
Domestic Part Time – 25 hours Female	01/07/24	• Mandatory Training • Safeguarding Training	➢ Worked as a domestic within care settings, retail and leisure facilities with over 5 years experience ➢ Care assistant – elderly care for 5 years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