Auton Residential
Children's Homes
Newcastle • Sunderland • Darlington

Auton Darlington
Statement of Purpose

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Auton Darlington Children's Residential Home
Statement of Purpose

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 Darlington provides a safe and secure therapeutic living experience for up to six children of either gender, aged from seven to 17 years old on admission, where they can learn constructive and adaptive methods of dealing with negative experiences and emotions. We are registered with Ofsted

as a children's residential home that may provide care and accommodation for children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (EBD).

We offer permanent placements that provide a period of stability and support to children and young people, assisting them to move into independent living, move back home or into a foster placement. It is unusual for a young person to remain at Auton Darlington post 18, however in exceptional circumstances, and if in the best interest of the young person, this is possible. This would be for a limited time and with a clear transition plan in place. Clear timescales would be agreed and there would be regular review of the transition plan to monitor effectiveness and outcome.

Each individual placement is carefully assessed during our referral procedures to ensure that the needs and outcomes of the individual child or young person can be successfully met, should they be placed with us. Special consideration is also given to the children currently being cared for at Auton Darlington to ensure that their care is not compromised and that the needs of all young people currently placed can be met.

Staff have high aspirations for the young people and expect nothing less than a good parent would in all aspects of their life both inside and outside of the home.

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

Auton Darlington Children's Residential Home 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 seek to provide residential care that is outward facing and is committed to working with families and wider systems of professionals in order 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. In all aspects of our parenting approach we endeavour to care for young people within an ethical manner. To protect the young people from harm and help them recover from the trauma they have experienced.

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 adhere to practices that safeguard the welfare of the young people and meet all legislative requirements.

The Aims of Auton Darlington

- 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 to enable young people to 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, in order to ensure the stability and wellbeing 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 for a move to independent or supported living if deemed appropriate.

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 in the child's internal world and genuinely strive to understand it.
- Who have the ability to maintain an attitude of PACE in 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 the ability to show the child that whatever emotion they experience they are sharing it.

The Objectives of Auton Darlington

To have in place a staff team:

- 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

At Auton Darlington, a high priority is placed on achieving positive outcomes for 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 support the young person in maximising their potential.

Auton Darlington works closely with the child, family/significant others and 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 young person's individual placement plan and

monitored closely via the young person's individual placement care plans.

The young person is encouraged to participate in the development and review of their individual care plans and is central to this process. The areas monitored are based on the quality care standards.

Auton Darlington measures the effectiveness of the targets set within the young person's care plans on a monthly basis. Care plan monitoring allows for the young person's outcomes to be measured numerically and analysis to take place to establish how the young person's outcomes are being met and whether the young person is on target for achieving their long-term goal. This process allows us to identify strengths and highlight these to the young people, building on confidence and self-esteem and celebrating success through appropriate rewards and positive consequences. Areas identified as not being achieved are considered carefully and highlighted within multi agency reviews and reports to identify how this can be achieved in the future, again keeping the young person central to this process.

Auton Darlington is proud of the progress made by the young people in our care and the excellent outcomes they have achieved. We feel keeping the young person central to this process allows for them to take ownership of the targets set, have a clear voice in how they are cared for and the outcomes they want to achieve and take 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 Darlington is a large, detached house with its own private garden where young people can help grow their own fruit and vegetables should they wish. The young people are also encouraged to help garden, grow flowers/plants and maintain the hanging baskets. The garden has many games for young people to play as well as picnic benches and a BBQ in the summer months.

The home is warm, homely and inviting. 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 large kitchen where young people are encouraged to bake and help with cooking meals each day.

There is a homework room which provides educational materials and resources to young people and has access to the internet with appropriate safeguards.

The home has a chill-out room used for playing computer games, board games, arts and crafts or generally relaxing and having time away from the rest of the home.

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

Auton Darlington can accommodate six children of either sex aged from seven years to 17 years upon admittance.

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

All children and young people have their own lockable bedroom. There are five young people's bedrooms. Two bedrooms are located on the second floor of the home and three on the first floor. Young people are able to choose their bedrooms where possible taking into account individual risk assessments and needs. The children are able to decorate and personalise their rooms. Young people have a lockable cupboard in their rooms to keep their valuables safe. Those young people who have medication needs can be supported to self-medicate, if this is risk assessed as safe and appropriate by having a lockable medication cabinet in their rooms.

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

Auton Darlington is located in a quiet residential area of Darlington in close proximity of the town centre and local amenities. The home is within walking distance of a leisure centre, including a swimming baths. The town centre boasts a shopping centre, cinema and several restaurants. The home is within walking distance of several parks and playing fields as well as tennis courts.

Darlington train station is a short walk from the home, as are all bus links, making local areas easily accessible from the home.

The home has developed a comprehensive risk assessment of the immediate local area in which the home is placed to ensure the suitability of its location. This was developed in consultation with a variety of professional bodies and organisations including the local safeguarding children's board, neighbourhood police teams, PVP (Protecting vulnerable people) police teams, Darlington County Council, local councillors and the local residents' group. This risk assessment has been shared with all persons who gave input and all other relevant persons involved in the care of our children and young people, including family. A copy of this risk assessment can be provided upon request.

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 all 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 has the right to complain about their care or any other issues affecting them while they are at Auton Darlington.

Copies of our leaflet "How to Complain" are given to our young people and are kept in 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 Darlington. This includes the details of who they can contact to submit a complaint. This is again revisited regularly during children's meetings.

The young people are provided with information and resources to enable them to submit a complaint about the home to an external organisation, should they choose to. This includes how to contact OFSTED, NYAS, Children's Rights Commissioner, social worker and IRO. Stamped addressed envelopes, pay phone and internet for email have been provided to the children to enable them to submit a complaint, without the need to request assistance from staff. Should the child or young person require support to make a complaint, this will be provided and the child and young person consulted about whom they would like to support them.

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 immediately 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. The young people will be able to talk 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 Darlington is committed to working in partnership with external agencies and significant stakeholders to ensure that our home's child protection policies are robust, transparent and developed in line with local and national policy and current legislation. Auton Darlington ensures that the home's child protection policies are agreed by the relevant professional bodies and we do not work in isolation.

Auton Darlington works cohesively with local authorities to promote the safety of all young people in their care. The Auton Darlington Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is submitted for agreement to the host and placing Local Safeguarding Children's Partnerships.

The home's child protection policies are submitted to all significant stakeholders upon admittance of a child or young person and again upon any review made to this document. The Manager regularly consults with professionals involved in the care and protection of children placed in the home, as part of the home's monitoring process. This includes reviewing the home's child protection policies and inviting professionals to request literature or policies they require.

The home's policies and procedures are held within the home, both in electronic and written formats, and can be provided on request to those who require them.

Auton Darlington Safeguarding Policy

Auton Darlington recognises and is committed to fulfilling its statutory and moral responsibilities with regard to the protection of children and young people from harm.

Auton Darlington adheres to the following documentation:

- The St Cuthbert's Care Safeguarding Children Policy
- The Auton Darlington Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- The Auton Darlington Sexual Exploitation Policy
- The Auton Darlington Bullying and E-Safeguarding Policy
- The Auton Darlington Children's Complaints Policy
- Darlington Safeguarding Children Procedures
- LSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures of those children placed outside of Darlington
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The DFE publication "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2018

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

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. It is standard practice for all bedroom doors at Auton Darlington to have alarms attached. This is an effective risk management strategy for all of the young people placed in the home. Should a young person be risk assessed as not requiring a bedroom door alarm for safeguarding or care purposes, then their individual door alarm can be omitted. This is agreed with the child/young person, their family and care team.

Child protection/safeguarding incidents will be reported to the appropriate people concerned. The process of such reporting will strictly follow Safeguarding Procedures and will reflect the seriousness of the incident.

Safeguarding Children from Abuse by Sexual Exploitation

Auton Darlington believes it is important that all children and young people develop the knowledge and skills to make safe and healthy choices about relationships and sexual health 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 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 Darlington are committed to working with other agencies such as Erase and Barnardo's, and our local safeguarding children's board, to ensure robust policies and procedures are in place at Auton Darlington, to reduce the risk of sexual exploitation.

This includes ensuring the home has an appropriate identified link with the local police in ensuring the home's procedures and responses are appropriate to the needs of the local areas in safeguarding our children and ensuring a police protocol is in place.

Auton Darlington liaise with the Erase team in Darlington and other local areas our children may frequent to ensure that our knowledge of risk and risk areas 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 Darlington adheres to the following documentation:

- Auton Darlington Sexual Exploitation Policy
- Auton Darlington Safeguarding against Sexual Exploitation Procedures
- Auton Children Missing from Care Policy
- Auton Darlington Missing from Home Return Key Working Session Policy and Procedure
- Philomena Police Protocol for Missing from Home.

Those children and young people identified as being at risk from Child Sexual Exploitation will have this risk clearly identified throughout their care planning to ensure appropriate measures are in place to safeguard. This includes a specific risk assessment, and risk of abuse through sexual exploitation, for children. This is developed as a multi-agency response and strategies outlined are reviewed regularly.

All staff at Auton Darlington will receive training in Safeguarding Children against Abuse by Sexual Exploitation.

Missing from Home Procedures

Residential childcare practitioners can be faced with situations where a child or young person may be missing from home for a variety of reasons. If staff members are aware that there is a likelihood that a young person may go missing from home, they would talk to the child in order to gain a stronger understanding of their thoughts, wishes and feelings. In such situations, responses will be made in accordance with the young person's risk management plan. This document determines if there is justification to hold the young person to avoid the likelihood of significant harm through missing from home. This decision will always be made in collaboration with the parties who have parental responsibility for the young person.

All children and young people should be educated that going missing from home is not a positive measure for dealing with any difficulty. It is the role of the staff team to make the children/young people aware that missing from home is dangerous and places them at significant risk. Staff will be proactive in their approach and use their relationships with individual children/young people as a tool to support a learning process towards choosing alternative measures to deal with difficult situations.

At Auton Darlington, an emphasis is placed on reducing the risk of harm through this behaviour by appropriate staff support during these incidents. For those young people where missing from home is an identified risk-taking behaviour, this risk is clearly identified within their individual risk management plans and appropriate strategies identified. These are individualised however, for those children deemed at higher risk, should they attempt to go missing; the ethos within the home is to prevent this through intensive staff support. This includes observing the young person, to prevent leaving adult sight when they have left home without permission, with the aim of being able to intervene to prevent harm should this be required. This has been a proven effective strategy and reduced incidents of missing from home significantly. This technique has allowed our young people to be given the clear message that staff care and will safeguard them.

The Auton Darlington'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 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 of the dangers. Staff members will use professional judgement as corporate parents to enable children/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 when considering running away from home or upon return from running away. This forms part of our return home procedure. Auton Darlington recognises that young people do not run away for no reason.

Auton Darlington has developed a Missing from Home Return Key working 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 on the behaviour. 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 when missing. This is not an independent interview and does not replace the independent visit required by the home's policies, procedures and protocols.

The main aims of this procedure are:

- To seek an understanding of the pull/push factors involved
- To seek an understanding of the young person's motivation for going missing
- 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 advocates 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 motivation/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

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else putting him/her under stress. Bullying is aggression, physical, verbal or psychological, although not all aggression is necessarily bullying.

St. Cuthbert's Care acknowledges the serious and often devastating nature of bullying and recognises it as a form of abuse. St Cuthbert's Care, therefore, views bullying as unacceptable and seeks to combat it within its child protection responsibilities. The agency 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 Darlington Anti-Bullying policy provides detailed procedural guidance on countering bullying.

Auton Darlington has worked closely with the Bullying Intervention Group (B.I.G) in improving our service further in this area and we are currently in the process of reapplying for 'The Bullying Intervention Group BIG award'. 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 Darlington has provided the young people with age-appropriate information on staying safe from bullying in the form of a child focused leaflet. The young people helped to develop this. It is regularly discussed in house meetings and forms part of the regular agenda.

Views, Wishes and Feelings

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

Auton Darlington is committed to enabling children to develop to their personal potential by providing a staff team who are dedicated to using a child-centred approach in all aspects of their work. We encourage young people at Auton Darlington to recognise their own strengths, individuality and potential for development and independence. All individuals working with the children have adopted an empowerment model of practice, which aims to support them to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way Auton Darlington is run. The young people are central to the decision making of the home.

Practical measures towards ensuring consultation:

- **Communication**
  Auton Darlington will never assume a child is unable to communicate their views and will ensure the necessary means are provided to enable children to express their wishes and feelings. The care team is committed to minimising barriers to communication in all areas of practice. This includes providing a comprehensive service which 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.

- **LAC review process**
  Auton Darlington is committed to working in partnership with local authorities in order to ensure that all formal documentation is completed, including care plan records and review consultation papers.

  The care team recognises the challenge of enabling young people to actively participate in these processes and will work creatively in meeting the needs of individual children.

- **Children's meetings**
  Auton Darlington supports young people to participate in a children's meeting on a regular basis. This is a forum to facilitate consultation about the running of the home. Staff record the contents of the meeting, and actively encourage the children to make their own record of the meeting. 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 ensure that any actions are taken forward and feedback given to the young people about the outcomes of any request. This is recorded within the house meeting file.
  Key workers also ensure they seek consultation with the young people to enable them to participate in staff meetings and add items to the agenda for consideration. This encourages

partnership working.

- **Key worker sessions**
  The key worker or a significant other staff member will facilitate a one-to-one session on a frequent basis with the children. This enables children to give their views through the assessment process and promotes consultation. Their views on their placement is regularly sought. All sessions are recorded and available in a format the child will understand.

- **Care planning**
  Auton Darlington supports the young person to participate in their care planning by giving 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**
  All young people at Auton Darlington will have access to an independent advocate who can be accessed through each placing authority.

- **Independent visitors**
  Auton Darlington 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.

- **Managers consultation**
  The registered manager seeks to gain the children's views of the home and the quality of care offered on a regular basis. When a young person gives feedback or makes suggestions to improve their experience of Auton Darlington, 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 Darlington remains to a high standard. This information is recorded within the managers monitoring reports along with 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 Darlington recognises and values the diversity and the 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 Darlington will actively seek to support the process of meeting such needs by facilitating visits to local places of worship and providing for any specific dietary needs, seeking to enhance understanding of significant cultures and support any appropriate cultural links with the community.

Auton Darlington promotes equality of opportunity for all regardless of our differences. We recognise that equality is not about treating everyone in the same way; it is about treating everyone fairly, with

respect and recognising that children and young people from different backgrounds may have needs that are met in different ways.

Through our anti-discriminatory practise, 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 Darlington.

(b) children's rights.

All Auton Darlington staff ensure that children's rights are promoted through 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.

Education

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

Auton Darlington 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 experiencing severe 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 have an education care plan when accommodated at Auton Darlington. This plan will identify those young people who have an EHC plan. Auton Darlington will ensure that any targets and support plans identified within the child's EHC plan are incorporated into their education placement plan. This will support both the child and 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 Looked After Reviews.

The child's key worker 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 any required reports and 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 Darlington work in close partnership with external professionals and agencies in providing tailored support for each child or young person. This includes the school SENCO, Virtual School, educational psychologists, teachers 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 Darlington 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 Darlington is fully committed to valuing and supporting the education of our young people.

- We have developed an education policy, which clearly outlines the manner in which we intend to promote and safeguard the education of our young people.
- Each of our young people 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 rewards packages. Celebrating all successes, ensuring educational equipment is readily available and developing incentives to engage and achieve in education.
- Each child has an education 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 Darlington will attend local schools or alternative provision made by Darlington LEA (Local Education Agency). Staff at Auton Darlington will provide "in-school" support wherever possible and appropriate. If a child is excluded, Auton Darlington staff will work closely with education placement and virtual school in identifying an appropriate alternative educational package for the child/young person. Auton Darlington 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. An educational package will be provided and implemented by Auton Darlington staff with the support of their previous school placement.
- Auton Darlington work closely with the virtual schools and have linked with the Virtual Heads for the Darlington 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 (Virtual school head), SENCO, learning mentor or teacher.

- The home will challenge a child's education or training provider if we do not receive sufficient support for the child to progress, as outlined in their relevant plans.
- We have a homework room at Auton Darlington 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. These help to build young people's self-esteem and confidence and provide opportunity to help them meet friends of similar age and interests.

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 Darlington believe that each 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 reasonably 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, football clubs and sporting clubs, 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, which has increased confidence and self-esteem 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. This is individualised according to individual preference. 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 are able to 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 Darlington who takes responsibility for co-ordinating activities with additional responsibility for accessing material for holidays, calendar events, and accessing the local community.

Upon admittance, Auton Darlington will seek to 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 children and young people. Our children and young people 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.

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 Darlington currently does not employ any individuals whose role is to provide specific health care for our children in our home. Auton Darlington is committed to working with local services and health agencies in sourcing required identified support our children and young people may need. This includes: CAMHS, SWITCH (drug and alcohol substance misuse workers), therapeutic social 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 Darlington will actively promote the health needs of the children and young people.

All children and young people will be registered with a 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 required 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 and advice in risks such as drug abuse, solvent misuse, use of psychoactive substances, smoking and sexual health matters.

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 Darlington with specific health needs, we work closely with the young person's identified health care team in ensuring that the young person's health needs are met to the highest standards possible. Advice is sought from health professionals in drawing up the child's risk management plan and monthly 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 home's care planning and monitoring procedures, as discussed in promoting positive outcomes. The young people give input into their health care plans and their views are clearly recorded. Once effectiveness has been measured and quantitative data agreed to measure effectiveness, senior staff will then review whether a specific target is likely to be achieved. Where there is concern that the young person is not achieving their health care plan targets, staff will seek support from relevant health professionals and work closely with the child to achieve future outcomes.

The home's 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 all significant care team members and family, as agreed during the child's admittance to the home. It is also included in the child's Looked After Reports to ensure complete transparency when meeting to review the health care of the child and agreeing future plans.

Additionally, effectiveness of the home's 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 Darlington 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.

Promoting Positive Relationships

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

It is recognised that, whenever possible, children and young people need regular constructive time with family, 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 Darlington. 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 incorporated into the child's placement plans and the conditions are reviewed at regular intervals. Any 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 and friends, whether by visits, telephone, letter or email. Auton Darlington has a telephone available to the young people that enables them to 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.

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.

After consultation with the child's social worker, and other appropriate professionals, written guidance will be available for staff in order to define children's and parents' rights and the right of significant others with regards to maintaining contact.

If visits or telephone calls are to be supervised to ensure safety to the young person or to other children, then this will be done in a discreet but professional manner.

If letters or emails need to be intercepted for the safety of the child, a written agreement will have to be in place 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 as long as 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. Contact reports can be provided to the placing social worker.

Protection of Children

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

Each child is treated as an individual within Auton Darlington. 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, support them to manage their behaviour in a variety of different settings and circumstances, supporting them in achieving positive outcomes.

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.

This information is recorded on the child's individual risk management plan, which is reviewed regularly in a multi-agency setting to adapt to 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 each other's 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 illegal entry into 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 Darlington have the alarms explained to them during their admittance procedure and written consent is sought for the use of door alarms. For those young people who do not require high level supervision and for whom this is not a strategy within the child's risk management plan, they are able to request that this is not used on their doors.

This is their choice and this will be respected. 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 Darlington's approach to behavioural support

Auton Darlington 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 the child and give this understanding back to them to encourage the 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 Darlington 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 may be 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.

Auton Darlington's aim is to provide a safe environment through which children/young people can enjoy sound relationships, interact positively with others and behave appropriately.

The culture and ethos within Auton Darlington 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 Darlington recognises that there may be occasions where a young person's behaviour does not meet expected standards and alternative strategies need to be adopted in providing appropriate learning outcomes for the young person. In these situations, Auton Darlington strives to educate the young person on appropriate behaviour and highlight different ways in which the situations could be managed by the child. The young person is given opportunity to discuss the incident/behaviour with a trusted adult when calm to reflect on the incident/behaviour and explore triggers and alternative coping strategies. Within Auton Darlington these are called 'Coping Chats'. This information is then incorporated into the young person's individual risk management plan to support the young person in a more effective manner should similar situations arise.

Occasionally there may be a need to use more formal disciplinary measures. Auton Darlington feels 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 rarely. 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.

Behavioural Consequences

Within Auton Darlington we promote positive behaviour by offering praise and support together with positive consequences such as a reward of an activity or outing of the young person's choice, or gift.

It is recognised that rewarding good behaviour promotes positive behaviour and staff will work with each child to identify individualised strategies to manage behaviour issues and promote positivity whenever possible.

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

The following consequences are used at Auton Darlington and young people give input into this decision making where possible and choose a consequence that is appropriate.

Consequences will include:

- Grounding – the period of grounding should be negotiated with the young person
- Loss of privileges – these will be negotiated with the young person and could involve loss of activity or individual one to one attention

- Reparation – this will usually entail the young person contributing 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. The young person is also encouraged and supported by staff to replace or fix any damaged property where possible and appropriate.
- Extra chores – young people can choose an extra chore as an alternative to a sanction – e.g. picking up litter, gardening, helping the neighbours.
- Internet access ban
- PC ban
- Personal TV in rooms ban
- Earlier bedtime

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

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 consistent implementation. The consequences will be monitored and reviewed each month 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, all 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 improve upon and a clear plan is drawn with 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 the staff feel warrants a reward. 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 privileges – these will be negotiated with the children and young people. This could include later bedtimes, for example.
- Additional activities/holidays
- Agreed financial incentives. These are not excessive and fit the purpose. 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 Darlington 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" (International Institute for Restorative Practice) 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 or wrongdoing.

Auton endorses the Howard League for Penal Reform 'Hearts and Head' good practice principles for ending the unnecessary criminalisation of children in residential care.

'Hearts' Considers the emotional needs of children and includes a person-centred approach asking 'would this be good enough for my child' in relation to Police involvement.

'Heads' Valuing training supporting staff and procedures to reduce the potential for unnecessary use of the Police.

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

St Cuthbert's Care's current practice of CPI Safety Intervention™ is a BILD accredited form of behaviour management. CPI Safety Intervention™ promotes and encourages the least restrictive method in order to avoid risk behaviour with is 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.

CPI Safety Intervention™

The key values underpinning CPI Safety Intervention™

- Best interests of the young person
- 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*™

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 is 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 ongoing competence and assessment. Within St Cuthbert's Care there are currently four CPI Safety Intervention™ certified instructors who are available for support and guidance. CPI Safety Intervention™ is discussed in staff meetings to review and devise strategies to best support and maintain the safety and wellbeing of our young people.

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 (Registered Provider) St Cuthbert's Care
www.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

- 23 years working with vulnerable adults, children, young people.
- Manager of adults and children's outreach service
- Senior manager of a 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

Home Registered Manager:
Amy Ward
14 Cleveland Terrace, Darlington
Telephone: 01325 355 443
Email: amy.ward@stcuthbertscare.org.uk

Qualifications

NVQ Level 4 in Leadership and Management in care services.

Experience

22 years' experience in children's residential care.

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:

Position	Start	Qualifications	Experience
Registered Manager Full Time Female	13/02/2017	• NVQ level 4 leadership and management. • CPI Safety Intervention™ qualified. • PACE	• 25 years' residential experience of which 23 years' children's residential care experience. • Auton (Darlington) experience 8 years.
Deputy Manager Full Time Male	10/12/2012	• MA in Counselling • BA Youth Work • Level 2 Safe Handling of Medication • NVQ Level 3 Children and Young People. • NVQ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management Children and Young People's Workforce. • NCFE Level 2 Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences. • CPI Safety Intervention™ qualified. • PACE • Certificate of Attendance Mental Health First Aider.	• Over 12 years' experience of working with young people in Youth Work Settings, Secure Training Centres and Residential Care. • Previous Registered Management experience • Author of person-centred counselling toolkit and metaphors for work with disruptive young people published in BACP journal. • Author of a chapter describing how Youth Work can help support young people with bereavement, anti-social behaviour and parental addiction issues. Featured in a publication to present the positive influence of Youth Work nationwide. • Auton (Darlington) experience 5 years.
Deputy Manager Full Time Male	05/10/2017	• Level 3 Advanced Diploma in Children and Adult services. • NVQ Level 3 Children and young people.	• 19 years' experience in the care sector and 18 years children's residential care • Auton (Darlington) experience 7 years.

		• CPI Safety Intervention™ qualified. • NVQ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management Children and Young People's Workforce. • PACE	
Senior Residential Care Officer Part Time Female	25/02/2019	• NVQ Level 3 Children and Young people • Degree in Youth Studies. • CPI Safety Intervention™ qualified. • Currently enrolled on NVQ Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management Children and Young People's Workforce. • PACE	• 9 years' Children's Residential Experience. • Auton (Darlington) experience 6 years.
Senior Residential Care Officer Full Time Female	23/03/2026	• NVQ Level 3 Residential Childcare.	• 4 years' experience within a Children's residential setting. • 6 years' experience within an adults' learning disability settings as support worker.
Residential Care Officer Full Time Female	09/12/2016	• NVQ level 4 Children and Young people • CPI Safety Intervention™ qualified. • PACE	• 5 years' experience within a Children's Residential setting as a Domestic. • Auton (Darlington) 3-year RCO experience.
Senior Residential Care Officer Full Time Female	08/07/2017	• NVQ Level 3 Children and Young people. • Social worker degree. • CPI Safety Intervention™ qualified. • PACE	• 15 years' experience within Children's residential and Children's Secure sector within a senior role. • Auton (Darlington) experience 7 years.
Residential Care Officer	04/01/2021	• Diploma in Counselling.	• Education based experience. • Counselling tutor of post 16.

Part Time Male		• NVQ level 4 Children and Young people. • CPI Safety Intervention™ qualified. • PACE	• Auton (Darlington) experience 4 years.
Residential Care officer Full Time Female	10/05/2021	• Degree in criminology • NVQ Level 4 Children and Young people. • CPI Safety Intervention™ qualified. • PACE	• Supported accommodation for post 16. • Auton (Darlington) experience 4 years.
Residential Care Officer Full Time Female	23.04.2026	• 1 year studying adult nursing at Teesside university • 1 year studying childhood and youth studies at Teesside university. • Spent two years studying health and social care level 3 extended diploma. • PACE	• Worked within children's residential care setting since 2022.
Residential Care Officer Full Time Female	06/10/2025	• CPI Safety Intervention™ • Business Degree Marketing BA. • Currently on induction	• Previous practice experience in the in the Youth Services sector and Recovery services.
Residential Care Officer Full Time Female	06/10/2025	• CPI Safety Intervention™ • Bachelor of Science with Honours in Psychology • Currently on induction	• Previous practice experience support of complex needs in a SEN education setting.
Residential Care Officer Part Time	06/10/2025	• CPI Safety Intervention™ • BSC in Criminology, • Post Grad Diploma in Psychology.	• Previous practice experience, supporting Autism and Neurodiversity, Crisis support via a text-based service.

Female		• Currently on induction	
Home's Domestic Part Time Female	08/08/2022	• Safeguarding Children Advanced Level. • CPI Safety Intervention™	• Experience as Domestic in Nursery settings. • Auton (Darlington) 2 years of experience as a Domestic.

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 Darlington current staffing structure is as follows; however, the home is currently recruiting for vacant posts.

1 Registered Manager

2 Deputy Manager

3 Senior Residential Care Officers

7 Residential Care Officers

1 Domestic

We have sufficient staff to meet the needs of the young people.

The staffing levels at Auton Darlington will be determined by the number of young people who are placed in 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 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 Darlington 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.

Auton Darlington ensures that staff at all levels 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 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 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.
- Case management discussion including review of the home's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- To offer professional consultation, with opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice.
- 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 particular 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 monthly supervision from the Director of Care.

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 Darlington has a diverse staff team and has both male and female staff members.

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 Darlington 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 Darlington 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 Darlington 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 a referral form and pre-admission risk assessment 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 group risk assessment will be undertaken to measure the impact of placement on current young people already placed at Auton Darlington. 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 Darlington is a suitable placement to safeguard the young person and achieve planned outcomes.
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 contact 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.
7. 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
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 Darlington 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.

23. 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 young person.

All individual work that is implemented at Auton Darlington 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 Darlington 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 optimum time to introduce this work, in collaboration with the child or young person. Auton Darlington, 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 Darlington staff team then we will 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 Darlington 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 young person'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 young person.

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 each individual's 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 Looked After 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 Darlington will encourage and support each child to attend their LAC 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 Darlington is 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, this will coincide with the LA review
- The 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 send a consultation form to share their comments, views and recommendations for the service.

Review Policy

The concept of review is a continuous process of planning and reconsideration of the care plan of the child. *(The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations, Volume 4. Residential Care), (Chapter 3. Review of Children's Cases).*

Whilst children and young people are resident at Auton Darlington, The Children Act 1989 review requirements will apply:

"Regulation 2 places a specific statutory duty on the responsible authority to review the case of a child who is looked after or accommodated in accordance with these regulations. Regulation 3 sets out the maximum intervals that may separate reviews. The first review should take place no later than four weeks after the date on which the child begins to be looked after or is provided with accommodation. The second review should take place not more than three months after the date of the first review. Thereafter, subsequent reviews should take place at intervals of not more than six months after the date of the previous review". (The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulation. Volume 4 Residential Care Chapter 3.3.5)

Requirement to review and frequency

It is the responsibility of the home manager at Auton Darlington to support this process and ensure that relevant preparation takes place in order to satisfy the requirements of The Children Act and Regulations 4.8,9 and 10 as described below.

- The full participation of both children and parents (where appropriate) in the decision-making process
- A structured co-ordinated approach to the planning of childcare work in individual cases and
- A monitoring system for checking the operation of the review process.

We will ensure that the child participates, as far as feasible, in their reviews assisting them to contribute their views and wishes to the process.

Key Worker

A key worker is a named person who has a central role with a particular young person and who works within Auton Darlington

The Aims of the Role:

- To promote efficient case management
- To create a named link for the 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 young people 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 meet 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 at all levels 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.

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 agency ensures that all staff receive core health and safety training during their induction period. The young people at Auton Darlington 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 recognises 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 Darlington receive first aid training to enable them to take charge in an emergency situation.

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 young persons' health from exposure to substances used in Auton Darlington 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 Darlington 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

In order to comply with Health and Safety Legislation and Children's Home Regulations 2015, Auton Darlington has a fire alarm system and emergency lighting system.

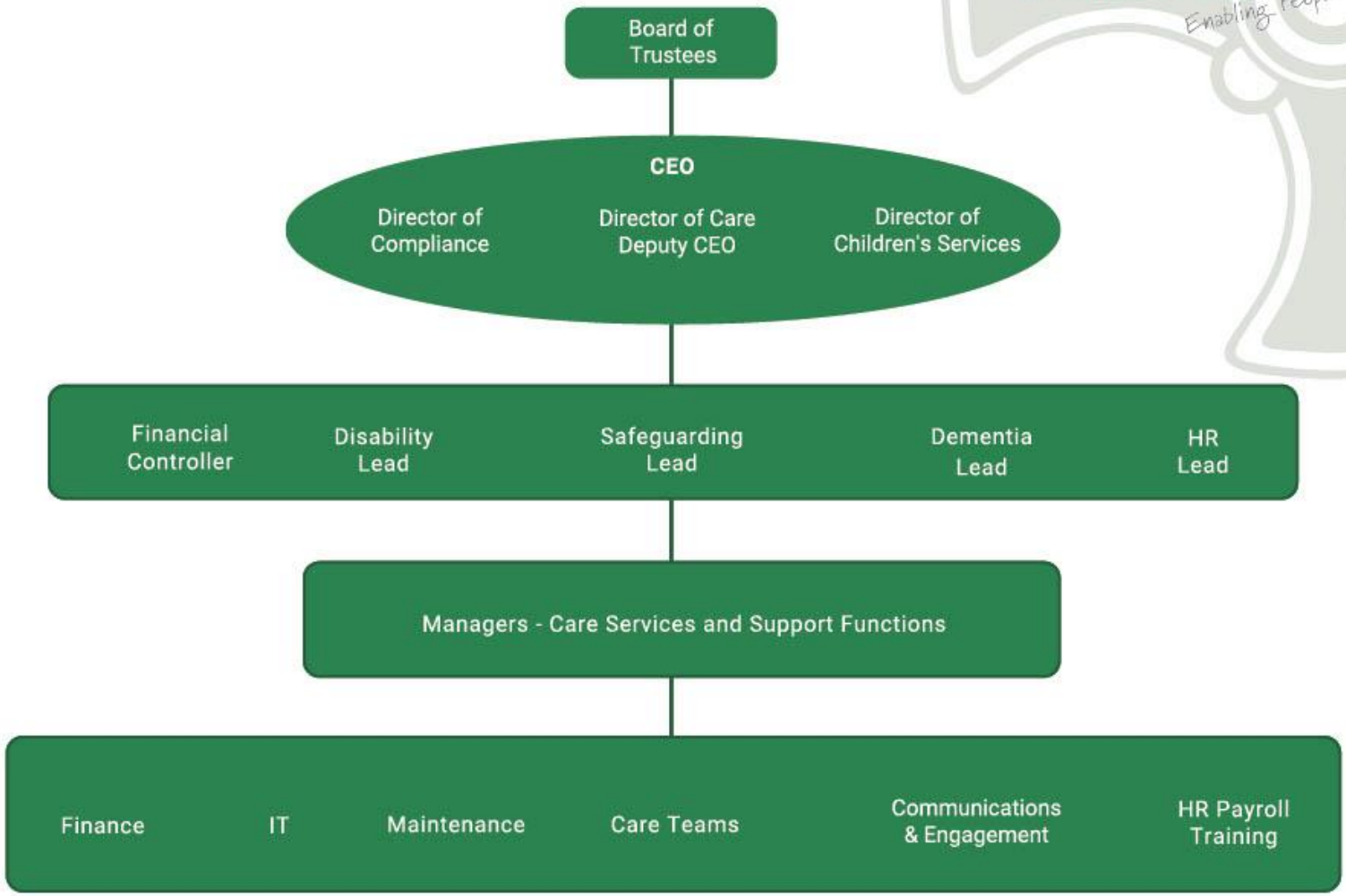
Appropriate fire extinguishers and fire blankets are situated around the home; the type, quantity and location conform to the requirements made by the Local Authority Fire Services. Standard safety checks and tests are carried out by Auton Darlington staff and an external organisation that specialise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

Risk Taking

Although some of the young people we work with present high risks within some situations (going missing, disruption), 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.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HR Lead
Managers - Care Services and Support Functions
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