

# Benecare Children's Services

'Providing care without compromise'

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

### MULBERRY COURT

SC438648



<b>Date</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2024
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<b>Registration Number</b>	SC438648
<b>Provider</b>	Benecare Children's Services Ltd
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*This document is written as a statement of good practice, as required by The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015*

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## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE FOR MULBERRY COURT, SC438648

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### INTRODUCTION TO OUR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Welcome to our Statement of Purpose. This document aims to provide you with all the information you need regarding the purpose, breadth, and scope of services at Mulberry Court, Benecare Children's Services Ltd.

Our mission statement is to 'provide care without compromise' and we do this by ensuring the highest professional standards of safe and effective care is provided to the children and young people. We make sure that children are at the centre of all we aim to achieve by helping them be as fully involved with their care planning as they can be. The child is at the heart of everything we do, and we make sure their voice is always heard.

We aim to deliver the highest standards of safe and effective care and to ensure that every child at Mulberry Court is given the encouragement and support they need to grow, develop, thrive, and achieve in a safe and nurturing environment. As a company we promote positive relationships which is the basis of our approach in supporting children and young people to develop the necessary skills in order to reach their full potential.

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## **1. WHO CAN THE PROVISION ACCOMMODATE?**

Mulberry Court can accommodate three children and young people of any gender, including non-binary and transgender, within the age range of 8 to 18 years. We have the option to take a young person who is already placed with us beyond their 18th Birthday, this is subject to specified terms. This decision will be in line with the needs of the individual person and the needs of the other children and young people already in placement.

Mulberry Court may provide care and accommodation for children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (EBD).

Each referral we receive is carefully assessed to determine the overall suitability of the placement and level of risk posed. Ultimately, we will only invite a child to join our home if we are entirely satisfied that we are best placed to meet their needs and to help them thrive. We will consider a number of factors via our matching and impact risk assessment including our current resources, the skill base of our team and the impact on, and fit with, our existing children.

## **2. OUR ETHOS, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Our ethos at Mulberry Court is to create an environment where children and young people can develop the skills to sustain positive relationships and secure attachments, based on building trust, providing a high standard of care and support, listening to children's views, wishes and feelings and ensuring they are central to the planning of their own care as well as the running of the home. We also act as advocates for children ensuring that when their needs are not being met, we challenge professionals to ensure that the children have the best care they deserve.

Every young person is supported with positive behaviour and building positive relationships; mandatory training provided to the staff team includes Understanding Child Development, Equality and Diversity and PRICE / Team teach positive behaviour support training. In addition to this, if children require therapeutic support with their emotional wellbeing, we will liaise with external services such as CYPMHS and where appropriate, independent child and adolescent therapists.

We aim to help support children to be able to voice their views, have control over their care planning and be able to develop their own ability to be responsible for their decisions and actions. We will plan and prioritise the development of independence skills for all young people in our care ensuring that the plans are age and stage appropriate and individualised for each young person.

Each young person will be encouraged to set their own individual targets that we will support them to achieve. These will be documented in their placement plan. These targets can include supporting them to re-build relationships with their family to return home, stepping down into foster care, developing skills to know how to keep themselves safe in the community and/or online and getting back into a suitable education provision after a break in learning. (This list is not exhaustive).

Mulberry Court's Strengths and Values include:

- Safeguarding is at the forefront of our daily working practice.
- Advocating for children.
- Building positive relationships based on trust and creating secure attachments.
- Supporting children to make their own decisions and be fully involved with their care planning.
- Building excellent working relationships with professionals, supporting the child as well as parents and other family members.
- Evidencing and celebrating each child's progress, development, achievements, and talents.
- Praising and celebrating children's achievements.

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- Supporting children to engage in education provisions that suit their individual needs.
- Supporting children to engage with therapy and other external services to support their emotional wellbeing.
- Celebrating each child's talents and ensuring these are developed.
- Reducing risk taking behaviour via robust care planning and risk management.
- Ensuring children are consulted in all areas of the running of the home and their opinions are listened to and included in the home's development plans.
- Using physical intervention as a last resort by knowing how to support the child in order to express how they are feeling appropriately.
- Supporting children who are leaving the home, whether this be moving back to family, stepping into fostering or leaving when they are 18.
- Promoting equality and diversity and challenging any discrimination.
- Promoting children's rights and encouraging them to value the beliefs of others.

### **3. ABOUT OUR HOME**

Mulberry Court is a large and spacious detached house that is situated in a quiet cul-de-sac in the village of Cliffsend near Ramsgate in Kent. Upon arrival to the home children are given the option to personalise and decorate their bedrooms.

We are fortunate to live within in a semi-rural location and are situated not far from all local amenities such as shops, cafes, restaurants, and various leisure facilities including a local cinema, gym, indoor badminton, swimming pool, Indoor skate park, indoor climbing wall, and bowling alley. Our young people benefit from having access to various coastal walks and beaches which provide a calming and relaxed environment.

We offer experiences that you would expect to find in a family home; these may be adapted due to the regulations and the needs of the children and young people. The approach to the care we deliver at Mulberry Court is a nurturing, supportive and caring approach, this is evidenced through the support plans, daily interactions and key work sessions that are completed within the home.

Within Cliffsend there are several operations in place to protect young people who are at risk including a local Missing Children Exploitation Team (MCET) who work alongside Mulberry Court when any missing episodes occur. Our local PCSO visits the home regularly to ensure the children are familiar with local police support. Our local PCSO also supports the children with any of their risks such as bullying, hate crime and CSE.

Mulberry Court has a fitness of location review in place which highlights all local risks to the home and has a risk management strategy for each risk. Children, adults working in the home and outside agencies have been consulted on the locality risks. The fitness of location review will be assessed when new children come to the home and is reviewed in line with local risks and the children's behaviours and support needs. A copy is available upon request.

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"I've worked for the company for 13 years. It is a nice working environment, and you are supported by management well and there is a great sense of achievement when you move the young people on to better places".

Staff member

"Working here is a relaxed family environment which is well managed.

I feel supported and I am able to approach all levels of management should I have any concerns".

Staff Member

Mulberry Court provides the following accommodation:

<b>Ground Floor</b>
Home Office Entrance hallway W/C Kitchen Open plan lounge and dining room Sensory Room Spacious Garden Driveway
<b>Second Floor</b>
Adult sleep room with en-suite 3 x Children and young people's bedrooms Children and young people's bathroom with W/C Children and young people's shower room with W/C

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**Pictures of the home:**



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## **4. SUPPORTING THE CULTURAL, LINGUISTIC, AND RELIGIOUS NEEDS OF CHILDREN**

To support the children's cultural needs, we liaise with all appropriate partners such as social workers, parents, family, and friends and speak to the child themselves to identify, and address their cultural, linguistic, and religious needs. This information is then recorded in their individual placements plans and used to ensure that a consistent, reasonable, and appropriate response to the children's and young people's individual needs is maintained.

Places of worship for the major world religions are available locally, but where they are not, provision is made for a child and young person to have appropriate access to necessary facilities.

Mulberry Court ensures that the children and young people placed with us have the opportunity to grow their cultural knowledge and awareness by celebrating different cultures and faiths through planned 'cultural evenings'. The young people are given the opportunity each month to choose either a country or a religion that they would like to know more about, and these conversations will be documented through key workings with the young people. Mulberry Court has an allocated Cultural Awareness Champion who will plan and organise the cultural evenings for the children and young people.

We are committed to:

- Responding to the cultural needs of children from different ethnic, cultural or language groups to include them fully in what we do.
- Race equality, diversity and inclusion for children accommodated in the home.
- Challenging racism, prejudice, extremism, and radicalisation.
- Seeking opportunities to celebrate cultural and ethnic diversity.
- Supporting access to all community facilities for ethnic minority children.
- Supporting the linguistic needs of children who are learners of English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- Seeking opportunities to work with different community groups.
- Identifying areas for development within the staff team that will support inclusion, equality, and diversity.
- Maintaining networks of collaborative support for children as necessary and appropriate.
- Supporting children to attend religious services, or receive religious instruction on or off the premises, in response to their needs and wishes, given their age, stage and understanding.
- Facilitating religious or cultural requirements, including any specific dietary, toiletry, or attire requirements.
- Promoting theme nights, cultural and awareness days and involving children with charity and volunteering.

## **5. EDUCATION**

Benecare is not a registered education provider, we do however work in close partnership with the local authority and Virtual Schools to identify suitable education provisions in the area local to the home. We have excellent working relationships with local schools and education provisions which helps us identify the right education placement for the children and young people.

Our aim is for children and young people to engage in full-time education, and the adults in the home will actively encourage the children and young people to achieve this. We are able to provide home tutoring within fee for up to 6 hours per week.

We understand that some children who come to live with us may not have had the structure of formal education and/or may have had disruption in their education. Each child has an education support plan, and this will link to the



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child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) and Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). For all new children coming into the home, we request relevant information from their social worker and previous school to gain knowledge of the child's educational support needs and key stage levels.

The staff team understand that any transition into a new school or any form of education may be daunting to a young person, therefore the staff team ensure that there is a structured transition plan to support the young person, considering their emotional needs.

Whilst the formal transition is in process, we support the child/young person to engage in some form of education, the team in the home liaise with the school the young person is enrolled at to gain work to be completed in the home. If they are not enrolled at a school we liaise with Virtual Schools and the local authority to identify appropriate tutoring or a different education provision that would suit the child's talents, interests, and support needs.

Mulberry Court has a dedicated young person's laptop and internet facilities available to the children and young people, as well as educational books and DVDs to support them with their education and homework. A staff member is always available to support children during education hours, and we can transport children to and from school where required.

Children aged between 16 and 18 will be supported and actively encouraged to attend further education, training, employment, or an apprenticeship.

## **6. CHILDREN'S HEALTH**

When a young person comes to live at the home, we will ensure that they are registered with the local GP, Dentist and Opticians. Children and young people are encouraged to attend regular appointments as and when required.

The staff team also ensure that children and young people receive annual Looked After Child (LAC) Assessments, and this is cross referenced to the child's health care plan with scheduled targets set. All staff are trained in the administration of emergency first aid as part of mandatory training. All health matters will be referred to professionals to be assessed; staff support children/young people to access health services. Every health concern, appointment and outcome are recorded on the child's health record logs, and social workers and parents are updated with this information.

The staff team act as chaperones to young people and children who require support in attending health appointments. Where possible and appropriate, children and young people will be supported to book and attend appointments independently when needed.

Mulberry Court has a Health and Nutrition champion who ensures that the team in the home keeps up to date with the current guidance on health issues including diet, sexual health, smoking, alcohol, and substance abuse. Key workings will take place with the children in order to educate them on how to lead healthy lifestyles.

We have an excellent working relationship with our local sexual health nurse who can come to the home to speak to the children about puberty, and sexual health support is provided where required. We understand that some young people may already smoke, however this is discouraged at Mulberry Court and smoking cessation will proactively be encouraged by the staff team. We have a large garden that we encourage the use for playing and exercising. There is also a local gym and children can join this to motivate and support them with their fitness and health.

We monitor and record details of the overall health and wellbeing of the young people, we support the children with the following:

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- Health history (past illness, operations, vaccinations, immunisations, allergies, developmental milestones, prescribed medications, current treatments).
- Diet including cooking and menu planning (any cultural dietary needs will be taken into consideration).
- Exercise and keeping fit.
- Teaching children how to cook and eat healthy, achieving their five a day through healthy eating.
- Life Story work (in partnership with the social worker completing this work).
- Dental Care.
- Optical Care.
- Sexual Health Care.
- Side effects of any medication.
- Managing smoking and substance misuse.

We use the support of external services such as dieticians, smoking clinics, 'we are with you' drug and alcohol services, CYPMHS and therapists to support children/young people with their physical, psychological, and emotional health. When a young person is preparing for their independence, we support them to take as much responsibility as they can to managing their own medication and health care; support will always be available to young people should it be required.

## **7. ENJOYMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT**

We recognise the value and importance of enjoyment and achievement. This means supporting children to maintain existing interests and to encourage them to experience new leisure activities and hobbies. We aim to promote a positive cultural identity and belief system, as well as providing opportunities to explore other options and activities (in a neutral, non-partisan way).

### **To achieve the above all staff at the home:**

- Place the child at the centre of all they do.
- Ensure that a culture of valuing the importance of education is maintained throughout the home, this being key to securing positive outcomes and further developing the children's understanding and place in the world around them and essentially, the opportunities that may be afforded to them.
- Respond positively to any specific cultural needs, matters relating to personal identity or issues that may exist for children and families from different ethnic, cultural, social or language groups to raise personal achievement and educational attainment, all of which will pave the way for improving overall outcomes and life chances.
- Will not discriminate in any way against race or ethnicity, religious belief systems or spirituality, as well as other protected characteristics. However, radical or extremist views will be challenged, and appropriate measures will be used to tackle such instances, as appropriate.
- Value and uphold the established virtues of equality and diversity in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy.
- All young people will be supported to explore their own gender and sexuality. Specific work will be done with any young person who has already identified their own sexuality or are exploring what their sexuality may be. Equally any young person who is questioning their assigned gender will be supported to explore who they feel may be. This will allow our young people to understand their identity and help them achieve their fullest potential.

### **We support:**

- Full access to appropriate recreational and leisure facilities for all children.
- Opportunities to better meet the needs of children from ethnic minorities or diverse cultural backgrounds with appropriate support, guidance, and encouragement.

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- Initiatives to improve attainment and opportunity gaps for all children.
- Children in accessing services required to enjoy, learn, and achieve.
- Ensuring that children are supported to conform to appropriate religious obligations or rites, attending church or mosque for example, without prejudice.

## **8. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **Registered Provider:**

Benecare Children's Services Ltd

### **Managing Director:**

Stephen William Richmond

*CQSW. DIP SS. BA (HONS)*

The Thatch, Stockers Hill, Boughton-Under-Blean, Faversham, Kent. ME13 9AB

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E-mail: [sr@benecareltd.co.uk](mailto:sr@benecareltd.co.uk)

### **Responsible Individual:**

Lauren Walczak

The Thatch, Stockers Hill, Boughton-Under-Blean, Faversham, Kent. ME13 9AB

Tel: 07951 720032

E-mail: [lauren@benecareltd.co.uk](mailto:lauren@benecareltd.co.uk)

### **Qualifications and experience of Responsible Individual:**

Lauren studied Public Service Management at Canterbury College where she achieved a Merit at Higher National Diploma Level and then went on to achieve a 2:1 BA Hons. After finishing university Lauren started a career with Kent Police as a Detention Officer working with people who displayed severe challenging behaviours in the custody suite. Working for Kent Police taught Lauren how to manage challenging behaviours including verbal abuse, physical aggression and dealing with people who had committed severe crimes and had high risk warnings.

Lauren began working for Benecare Ltd in January 2014, and over the years has progressed her way up to management level becoming the Registered Manager for a sister home in 2017. Lauren has achieved several 'Good' grading's within Ofsted inspections and has recently become the Responsible Individual for Benecare Ltd, in October 2020. Lauren has good knowledge of each home, the children in the company, and is passionate about developing the service to ensure the children receive the best care and outcomes possible.

### **Home Manager:**

Karma-Li Draper

### **Home Manager Statement:**

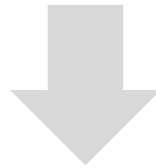
I began my career working in the early years sector, this was split between working in nurseries and as a creche worker. I then decided I wanted a career change which is then when I started to work with adults with learning disabilities and mental health, the ages ranges were from 21years – elderly, where I worked for just over 2 years. I began working at Benecare LTD in February 2019 and over time I have progressed from a residential support worker, a senior in a sister home, a deputy manager in a senior home, and now homes manager at Mulberry Court. I have a strong passion for ensuring the best outcomes are met for the young people and staff. I enjoy seeing the children develop and grow with the support of the adults in the home.

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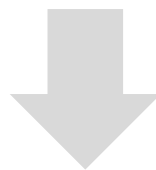
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## 9. MULBERRY COURT STAFFING STRUCTURE, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

**Responsible Individual** – Lauren Walczak



**Home Manager** – Karma Draper



**Deputy Manager** – Larissa Harrison



**Senior Residential Support Worker** – Phoebe Green, Leah Hazelton



**Residential Support Workers** – Ashlea Fisher, Jade Jefcoate

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Name	Position	Qualifications	Experience
KD	HM	<p>Level 3 Diploma in Children and Young Adult Work Force Children's Residential Homes</p> <p>Level 3 early years</p> <p>NCFE Level 2 Mental Health Awareness</p> <p>NCFE Level 2 Medication Administration</p> <p>Level 2 Autism awareness</p> <p>Safer Recruitment Training (CPD Certified)</p> <p>Designated safeguarding Lead (CPD Cert NVQ Level 3 Childrens and Young People's workforce</p> <p>Working towards Children young people and families Level 5.</p>	<p>I began my career working in the early years sector, this was split between working in nurseries and as a creche worker.</p> <p>I then decided I wanted a career change which is then when I started to work with adults with learning disabilities and mental health, the ages ranges were from 21years – elderly, where I worked for just over 2 years.</p> <p>I began working at Benecare LTD in February 2019 and over time I have progressed from a residential support worker, a senior in a sister home, a deputy manager in a senior home, and now homes manager at Mulberry Court. I have a strong passion for ensuring the best outcomes are met for the young people and staff. I enjoy seeing the children develop and grow with the support of the adults in the home.</p>
LH	DM	<p>NVQ Level 3 Childrens and Young People's workforce</p> <p>BSc Honours in Psychology</p> <p>Level 2 NCFE in medication</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Special Educational needs and Inclusion Studies.</p>	<p>I began my career in Early Years over 10 years ago. Prior to this I worked within a spectrum of care roles however supporting young people has always been my passion. Within my previous role I supported SEN need within not only my place of work but also all of the nurseries within our company. My main role as key person has taught me a lot about child centred work and ensuring that everything, I do within my working life is in the best interests of the child. I supported young children to develop within all areas of their learning, however the favourite part of my job had always been helping children and families that are struggling with SEN need. Supporting families to get the support they need and supporting the child to become resilient and confident so that they are ready to take that</p>

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		Designated safeguarding Lead (CPD Certificate)	next step. I have supported with a range of disorders and disabilities from ADHD to cerebral palsy. I've always had a passion for building people up to become better than they believe they can be. Working with young children not only taught me a lot about them, but also about myself and the kind of person I want to be. The kind that will always be there to support when others need.
PG	SRSW	NVQ Level 3 in early years children  Working towards NVQ level 3 in children's and young people's work force	I began my working carers in year years and primary school education from leaving school until I was 21 and able to begin my work in children's residential which had been a strong passion from my childhood. I have been working in this company for over a year and have enjoyed seeing young people develop and move on to different roles in their lives. I have also been developing my own skills and became a senior within the company after my first full year. I've worked with my complex children and young people but I have continued to develop my way of thinking and understanding on different young person's needs  I look forward to continuing to develop my career in this sector and completing my level 3
LSH	SRSW	NVQ level 3 diploma for residential childcare  NVQ level 2 certificate in understanding the safe handling of medication	I first started working in care about 7 years ago I started to work in community care with the elderly, I learnt a lot and really enjoyed this however I felt that I wanted to explore other age groups and needs. After this I did work one summer in America in a special needs summer camp, one of the best things I've ever done I worked with a wide range of ages and people with different needs from physical disabilities, learning difficulties and autism and epilepsy. I worked at a special needs school for almost 5 years as a keyworker, I learnt a lot in this role the young people ranged from 7-19 all with very different needs and capabilities, I loved helping make a difference in their everyday lives and hope I can bring my skills and passion forward. I've just started at mulberry court and I'm looking forward to getting to know the young person and help with future aspirations and life skills.
AF	RSW	-	I started working in adult care to begin with and spent 4 years helping them with their daily routines and helping with family, I thoroughly enjoyed my time working in care but wanted a little change so decided to work with young people.  I have really enjoyed my time here so far and look forward to the future of helping young people.

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JJ	RSW		I started to work in adult care to start off with for about 2 years I then made a switch to agency work and remained working in adult care until I had a few shifts working here which I thoroughly enjoyed and make me want to work here with young people. I enjoy working here as full time staff and thoroughly look forward to helping current and future young people
Post Vacant	SRSW		
Post Vacant	RSW		
Post Vacant	RSW		
Post Vacant	RSW		

## 10. TRAINING

We ensure that all adults have regular face to face and online training in accordance with the homes Training Matrix Requirements. This includes mandatory training, training in line with current themes, patterns, and trends, and also in relation to each child's/young person's needs.

The company ensure an initial four-week induction period which is followed by a three month and then six-month probation review. Mandatory training available to all staff includes (this list is not exhaustive and for a full list of training and qualifications our training matrix is available upon request):

- PRICE training (Physical Intervention) / Team Teach training
- NVQ – Children and Young People Practitioner Level 3-5
- Medication Awareness and Safe Handling of Medicines
- Medication Competency Test
- Whistleblowing
- Safeguarding
- Fire Safety Awareness
- Food Safety Awareness
- First Aid
- Health and Safety
- GDPR – Core for Staff

All training is provided by an appropriately accredited organisation or individuals. Each member of staff has a training profile and a training development plan to ensure continuous professional development. Training needs are reviewed monthly according to the needs of the children and young people. The home also has access to specialist training to ensure that adults are able to meet the needs of the young people that may be outside their normal training and experience.

All staff are enrolled on the Diploma Level 3/5 in Children and Young Adult Work Force Children's Residential Home, after completion of induction training and successfully completing their probation period.

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## Bespoke Training

We commission bespoke training for the homes and use accredited organisations and or individuals.

## Staff supervision, appraisals, and team meetings

### Supervision

The objective of supervision is to monitor individual performance against identified standards, support adults in their day-to-day work and develop them within their role. Supervisions are child focused where the children's/young people's development, support needs, and targets are discussed, and within each discussion there is reflection on safeguarding and any concerns the staff member may have relating to their job role. Supervisees have 'supervision, appraisals and managing staff' training and can offer advice, guidance and identify training and development opportunities for each staff member.

Supervision is completed every two weeks for adults within the three-month probation, this will include formal supervisions and Adhoc supervisions, and then every six to eight weeks thereafter. *Please see Benecare's Policy and Procedure 'Staff Supervision and Appraisal (Performance Management)' for more information.*

### Types of Supervision:

#### Safeguarding Supervision

Within our supervision agenda includes 'Safeguarding' and we believe that regularly discussing safeguarding within supervision brings many benefits including, improving the staff members confidence in safeguarding practice, opportunities to learn from experiences and develop on better working practices, a chance for professionals to seek emotional support and also a chance for employees to share any concerns that could lead to potential safeguarding matters if not identified early.

It's the supervisor's role to ensure that staff are being supported emotionally so that their safeguarding responsibilities can be completed.

#### Adhoc Supervision

In between scheduled supervisions there is the opportunity for the staffing group to ask for additional supervision. There may also be times that the manager feels an additional supervision is required. This will be recorded on an adhoc supervision record template and will be additional to the scheduled supervisions.

#### Debrief Supervision

After an incident takes place there will be a debrief completed with the staff member, this is then recorded on a debrief template and is a chance for the staff member to reflect on the incident with their line manager.

#### Clinical Supervision

We offer clinical supervision to our staff teams via a trained psychotherapist, this can be group supervision where we focus on case formulation of one of our young people. We can also offer one to one supervision for our staff teams who require additional support.



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## Appraisals

The aim of appraisals for staff is to have their general work performance formally evaluated in the context of the home's requirements, for staff personal and career development, to receive a formal evaluation and feedback of work performance, and to plan future training needs. We use a 360 degrees approach during appraisal and collate feedback from the children, the team, and other professionals, relating to the staff members performance.

Supervision and appraisals are used to enhance professional development and reflect on safeguarding strategies and is always practised in a non-oppressive and non-discriminatory manner.

Staff receive a three-month probation review which is recorded in supervision, and a six month probation review in the form of an appraisal, where they will either be signed off on their probation period or given an extension based on performance. Appraisals take place annually.

## Team Meetings

Our team meetings are held regularly, the team meetings are child focused and each month we discuss each child's progress, development, targets, health, and plan any future support plans for them. We focus on safeguarding, regulation 44, Ofsted and research informed practice.

## **11. SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES OF THE TEAM**

At Mulberry Court the staff team have support to develop their skills and competencies by completing face to face and online training, workshops and engagement with scenarios which are observed by managers and senior staff. Feedback and support are provided to each staff member in supervisions and team meetings.

The feedback will include discussions about the staff members knowledge of managing different scenarios and any shortfalls will be addressed with further training or support from line managers. This is to ensure the staff members are fully aware of the homes policies and procedures, risk assessments, children's placement plans and relevant children/young people's regulations. We feedback on any observations, helping the staff member learn and grow. Where good practice is noted, staff receive good work recognition letters.

We assess the skills and competencies of each staff member by using a baseline assessment tool, and we then link the targets from this to supervisions where further training and support is scheduled.

Adults at Mulberry Court are skilled in:

- Safeguarding.
- Creating Positive Relationships.
- Supporting children to enjoy various activities
- Advocating for Children.
- Communication and listening.
- Supporting the Child's Voice to be Heard.
- Partnership Working.
- Promoting Children's Rights.
- Inclusion.
- Supporting Children with Education.

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Each month a staff member will deliver a presentation in the team meeting from a section of the Statement of Purpose to enhance everyone's knowledge of current trends relating to the topic, and ways we can support the children. We sometimes link this to the current themes, patterns, and behaviours of the home.

## **12 ADMISSIONS**

All referrals of children are considered for matching via our matching and impact risk assessment tool. As much information as possible is always requested to enable to manager to assess the highlighted needs of the referred child, and to evaluate and match the placement to the needs of the child already accommodated. The matching and impact assessment also considers the skill set of the staff team, making sure they are experienced to deal with the child's known risks and behaviours and specific training is sought to equip the staff team when necessary.

### **Emergency/same day placements:**

Mulberry Court will consider referrals for emergency/same day admissions and a full matching and impact risk assessment will be completed as per the process for all referral admissions. The majority of our placements are planned, however where there are no adverse implications for the current residential client group we can accept emergency/same day admissions based on the information provided and successful matching and impact assessment outcomes.

### **Admissions process:**

The admissions process is as follows:

- Initial enquiries for referrals made by local authorities should be made to Head Office Benecare Ltd, The Thatch, Stockers Hill, Boughton-Under-Blean, Faversham, Kent. ME13 9AB. Tel: 01227 751783 E-mail [headoffice@benecareltd.co.uk](mailto:headoffice@benecareltd.co.uk).
- Head Office then passes the information to the Registered Manager of the home that potentially fits with the needs and requirements of the referral, the referral is also copied to the Responsible Individual for oversight.
- If the Registered Manager feels the placement is suitable then they will discuss this with the Responsible Individual for possible matching and impact assessment to take place.
- During a planned placement, it will be arranged for the young person to visit the home with support from their social worker and or current placement, foster family, or birth family. This may include an overnight stay if possible.
- When visiting the home children will be given a copy of the young person's guide and our home expectations will be discussed with the child.
- Current children in placement will be encouraged to meet the child visiting so we can assess social interaction, and so the children can get to know each other and feel comfortable.
- Visits to the home will form part of the matching and impact assessment.
- Where visits are not possible to the home we will offer to go and visit the child to ensure we have a chance to meet the child and they have a chance to meet us too. If this is not possible then we will complete further consultation with the social worker and supporting professionals and family members to gain additional information about the child, which will count towards our matching and admissions process. A clear record of why we have not been able to meet the child before placement will be recorded on the matching and impact risk assessment.
- Upon placement acceptance, the matching and impact assessment will be completed by the Registered Manager and signed off by the Responsible Individual.

Following admission to placement, a placement planning meeting is arranged where professionals get together to discuss the needs of the child and placement plans will be put together. This will take place within 72 hours of

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placement commencing. We have our own agenda for this meeting based on the children's quality standards, and we ensure that all discussions and risk management strategies are recorded in the child's placement plan, behaviour support plans and risk assessments.

## **Emergency Departures:**

We will make every effort to maintain placements and meet each child's needs but where this is not achievable, we will consider seeking the closure of a placement and a child moving on as soon as possible. This only occurs where we feel the child, other children in placement, or staff, are in immediate risk of harm if the placement continues.

The decision to close a placement is made by the Registered Manager in consultation with the Responsible Individual for Benecare.

Placement closures must also be agreed with the local authority and a clear plan is to be put into place to ensure the child has a new placement to go to. Where this cannot be achieved within 24 hours, children will be supported to remain in the home with additional support and plans in place to ensure all parties are kept safe.

The Registered Manager reviews the placement closure by completing Benecare's Lessons Learnt document.

## **13 CONTACT ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

We actively promote and support arrangements for communication between young people and significant members of their family and friends. At the placement agreement meeting a list of permitted visits and the level of supervision required are agreed. This will be added to the child's placement plan and risk assessments. Arrangements are reviewed at statutory reviews or as deemed necessary.

We facilitate visits between family and friends and a room will be made available. Activities can also be arranged, and this will be based on how the child would like their visit to look. We only ensure that visits take place to the home if it is safe to do so for the young person, their family, staff, and other children/young people in the home. Where possible we schedule for the child's key worker to be on shift during visits and contact sessions so they can discuss the young person's progress and update family and friends on any information required.

Children and young people can have private access (where appropriate) to a telephone and can send and receive mail in accordance with their placement plan. For those children who do not have contact or support from their family, Mulberry Court will explore the child/young person having the option of regular visits from an independent visitor or advocate if this is what the child wishes.

We understand that upcoming visits from family and friends can be worrying for children, so we complete pre contact key workings to see how the child is feeling and offer a support plan to them. We may need to share how the child is feeling with their social worker and family or friends to ensure that everyone knows how to support the child in the way that they require. We then complete post contact key working to check how the child is feeling and to ascertain whether there is any further support they need. We can facilitate contact out of area and have supported contact at selected activity centres such as zoos.

We actively promote children seeing their friends and ensure a risk assessment is in place to support the child with any time away from the home seeing friends or when having overnight stays when agreed. We encourage, where appropriate, friends to visit the home and the benefit of having such a large house is that there are two lounges to choose from so children can have some nice quality time with friends. We monitor children and their friends when required and contact is only permitted in the main areas of the home and not in the children's bedrooms.

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## **14 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

On arrival, all children are given the 'Children's Guide', which contains information on how to comment upon or complain about the care they are receiving. Each child's key worker goes through the Children's Guide with them, ensuring the complaints procedure is understood. In addition, children's rights and advocacy are discussed, along with the contact details of relevant persons or agencies such as Childline.

There is a complaints folder within Mulberry Court which contains Benecare's complaints policy and the local authorities' complaints procedure, with blank complaint forms for the young person to access at any time.

### **All complaints are treated very seriously:**

- All correspondence will be copied to the social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer and other person(s) where appropriate.
- Our Complaints Process is explained within the young person's complaints forms. These are freely available to the children throughout the home to support those wishing to make a complaint.
- Children wishing to complain have a range of options. They can complain to their Social Worker, Independent Reviewing Officer, Registered Manager, Advocate, Independent Visitor or whomever the child wishes to.
- We ensure that children have access to a phone if they need to make a private phone call (with appropriate numbers of various organisations available (see below)).
- In the case of a serious complaint, Ofsted will be notified in accordance with Regulation 40 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

#### **Advocacy service**

**0808 164 0096**

<https://ylf.org.uk>

#### **Children's Commissioner Help at Hand**

**0800 5280731**

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand/>

#### **Childline**

**0800 1111**

<https://www.childline.org.uk>

#### **Ofsted**

**0300 123 1231**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

As with children's complaints, we treat external complaints very seriously. If a professional, parent of a young person or a member of the public wish to make a complaint then they can speak with the Home Manager, Karma Draper. If they feel that they would like to discuss the complaint with someone outside of the home, they are able to contact one of the following via email;

Lauren Walczak – Responsible Individual for Benecare Children's Services – [Lauren@benecareltd.co.uk](mailto:Lauren@benecareltd.co.uk)

Ofsted – Regulating body – [enquiries@ofsted.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.co.uk)

### **Advocating for children's rights**

If the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, we will challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. This is in accordance with regulation 5 and we have a representations policy in place to evidence any time we make complaints on behalf of children or others.

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## **15 ACCESS TO CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES**

Benecare Ltd has robust, comprehensive, and carefully implemented policies, these are available to all stakeholders. We aim to ensure that support and clarification is readily available to adults and children who experience difficulties in accessing our policies.

Our policies provide advice, guidance, and direction for staff. They aim to be informative, with clear instruction on what action is to be taken, when, how, and by whom.

All policies relating to this home are:

- Written in a clear and easily understandable way.
- Publicised, promoted and distributed to the relevant and appropriate persons and organisations, as well as partners and individuals as is appropriate and necessary.
- Mandatory for staff and volunteers.
- Available upon request at the staff office in hardcopy format, and for distribution via email, in Portable Document Format (PDF).
- Kept under review.
- Benecare Ltd.'s policies and procedures can be accessed any time on the internet via Tri-X on <https://www.proceduresonline.com/benecare/contents.html>

### **Key child protection ('The Protection of Children') and related policies:**

- Relationships and Physical Contact with Children Policy
- Recognising Abuse and Neglect Procedure
- Referring Safeguarding Concerns Policy
- Countering Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation Policy
- First Aid, Home Remedies and Medication Policy
- Missing Children Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People from Radicalisation and Extremism Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure
- Safeguarding Handbook
- E-Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy

### **Key behaviour management ('Positive Relationships') policies:**

Our behaviour management policies are based upon the need to establish positive relationships within the home and wider community.

We have a separate Physical Intervention Policy. The policy emphasises the use of physical intervention as a last resort, and not a behaviour management technique. The Mulberry Court staff team are trained in the Team Teach or PRICE model of physical intervention. We understand that de-escalation of behaviours is not always possible and therefore the remaining 5% is for the use of physical intervention, but only as a last resort or only resort.

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## **Child Protection:**

The staff team are given yearly face to face training in Safeguarding, Whistleblowing and Child Sexual Exploitation. Each child has a CSE toolkit in place and any risks highlighted will generate a CSE risk assessment which all adults will follow. We ensure that all vulnerability risk assessments are shared with Kent Police in order to ensure that we personalise plans to protect each young person.

Each staff member has the autonomy to act as an advocate for children and to act fast to safeguard them. The staff team ensure that the welfare of the children living with us is paramount and are clear about their role in relation to safeguarding. We discuss a different scenario each month relating to safeguarding and discuss procedures adults are to follow to protect children at risk such as missing from care, e-safety, CSE and physical interventions. The scenarios we use link to our Benecare policies and procedures and children's risk assessments.

We ensure that adults are aware that all concerns about children, no matter how small, must be reported via Benecare's safeguarding procedure. Adults are aware of their responsibility to notify other professionals of any safeguarding concerns such as LADO, the front door service, and/or Kent Police.

## **Schedule 2 – Safer Recruitment**

We follow a strict Schedule 2 checklist to ensure adults working for Benecare and at Mulberry Court meet safer recruitment regulations.

All managers are trained in Safer Recruitment to ensure that they are able to identify any gaps within safer recruitment and keep children safe.

Benecare follow their Safer Recruitment Policy, ***this is available upon request.***

**Safeguarding strategies are detailed in our policy and procedures online and are available as hard copies in the homes office.**

### **Benecare's safeguarding officer:**

Lauren Walczak (Responsible Individual) is Benecare Ltd's Safeguarding Officer and has Designated Safeguarding Lead and Advanced Safeguarding Level 3 Training. Lauren should be contacted if you have a safeguarding concern at [lauren@benecareltd.co.uk](mailto:lauren@benecareltd.co.uk) or on 07951 720032.

The Home Manager, Karma Draper, also has Designated Safeguarding Lead training and can be informed of any safeguarding concerns.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) can be contacted on 03000 410 888.

Chair: Clare Bright, Associate Director for All Age Safeguarding., Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

## **16 CONSULTING ABOUT QUALITY OF CARE**

We believe that gaining the children's views, wishes and feelings by a variety of means, is crucial to keeping children safe, developing positive relationships, informing the development of our care, and ensuring we continue to promote effective, child-centred practice. Every aspect of the home's purpose has the facility to ascertain and appropriately act upon the views, wishes and feelings of the children who live in the home.

We support children to express their own views, wishes and feelings at all times, and promote active participation in making decisions about their lives.

Children are encouraged to be involved in their own care by engaging with:

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- Children's wishes and feelings book.
- Key working sessions.
- Manager's Consultations.
- Monthly Reviews of their care planning.
- Debriefing following incidents.
- Inclusion when documents are updated such as Fitness of Location Reviews, Young Person's Guide, Reg 45 and Development Plans.
- Pre and Post Discussions relating to meetings such as PEPs or LAC reviews.
- Development and Target Discussions.
- Children's Consent.
- Participation in the recruitment process of new staff.
- Personalised bedrooms.
- Complaints, Compliments, and Ideas box for the children is accessible.
- Visits to the home from advocates or independent visitors.
- Consultations with Reg 44 and Ofsted visitors.

## **Young People's Meetings/Consultations:**

All children are encouraged to take part in regular consultations with their key workers. The consultations are there to encourage and support the children to speak about their week and any issues they may have, we also focus on progress and development, and their wishes and feelings for activities, menu choices and home development. Safeguarding is also discussed in these consultations; the young people will be asked if they have any concerns relating to safeguarding and their understanding of safeguarding will be supported.

Once a month the Home Manager or the Deputy Manager will have a manager's consultation with the young people individually, away from the home, to ensure that the young people are feeling happy and supported in their placement and address any concerns they may have.

Children are reminded of the complaint's procedure for the home and if they need to make a complaint after the meeting in private, we support them. Children are encouraged to discuss improvements to the home, their daily care, what meals, mood, and activities they would like for the following week. We also discuss house expectations and different topics to support the children's knowledge of safeguarding such as CSE, Substance Misuse, Bullying, Gangs and County Lines, and E-Safety. We encourage the children to work together to complete research and help prepare presentations.

## **Child Focused Team Meetings:**

Our meetings focus on the children and their progression and targets. Each staff member completes a progress and development form for the child, recording the child's progress in different areas such as education, family relationships, and health and wellbeing. Key workers then discuss the outcomes of the meeting with their key child including the progress they have made and positive comments that adults have said about them. The next month's targets are discussed, agreed, and planned with the children.

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The service is good. My young person appears happy in the home; his needs have continued to be met. He has started to form good relationship with the staff. There appears to be a good understanding of the child's needs. There is 1-1 support, and my child is well supported by staff.

Social worker feedback 30.05.2022

The best thing about working here is the team and the young people, watching them progress is a wonderful feeling.

Staff member feedback 09.06.2022

"The placement staff are really committed to my young person ensuring they meet the aims of the placement.

The service the homes provides to my young person is fantastic".

Social worker

## **17 CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE**

### **Promoting Equality and Diversity:**

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice. We aim to ensure equality of opportunity for everyone regardless of their race, nationality, religion or belief, gender, sexuality, disability, age, or marital status. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity, which embraces a broader definition than equal opportunities. This broader definition recognises that everyone has a contribution to make and that services can be improved by promoting the skills and contributions from all sectors of the workforce and community.

All employees are expected to behave in a professional, tolerant, and responsible way that is exercised with respect and without prejudice. Everyone involved with Mulberry Court has the right to be treated with consideration, dignity, and respect and to work in an environment free from sexual or racial intimidation. The expectations are underpinned by the Equality Act 2010.

### **Children's Rights:**

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities for the children and believe children, whatever their background, ethnicity, or gender, have the right to be treated fairly, equally and with respect.

We encourage children and young people to follow the house expectations to educate them of valuing themselves and others and to respect property.

We promote equal opportunities by:



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- Regular discussions in key workings and children's consultations about children's rights.
- Children being aware of the homes complaints procedure and who they can talk to about their concerns.
- Supporting children to make complaints to outside partners if they feel their needs are not being met.
- Advocating for children on their behalf and making representations when required.
- Supporting self-identity by recognising a child's ethnicity, religion, culture, sexuality, and identity needs.
- Community integration.
- Providing training to the staff team regarding safeguarding, equal opportunities, equality and diversity, LGBT, and by supporting the children to also understand these topics.
- As part of promoting diversity children and young people are free to practice the faith of their choice and are encouraged to do so. Where necessary, appropriate support and advice will be provided by adults or from recognised sources within the young person's chosen faith.
- Children and young people will partake in various workshops, individually and as groups, to raise awareness and in order to educate them of their rights and what discrimination may look like.
- Key workings and weekly children's meetings are scheduled to discuss topics such as racism, children's rights, culture, charity, and volunteering.

Children who feel their rights are not met will be encouraged to complain and we act as advocates for them, ensuring that they are supported to complain and raise their concerns. If this is something children struggle with, the staff offer to advocate for children on their behalf and make representations for them. Complaints procedures will be followed, and any outcomes will be shared with children. Should a young person be unhappy with the given outcome then the management team will re-look at the complaint and will liaise with the young persons allocated social worker in an attempt to find a suitable alternative outcome, if possible.

## **Sanctions and consequences:**

Sanctions and consequences are used as a last resort as we believe in promoting restorative justice and in children taking ownership for their behaviour. On occasion, children will behave in a way that may result in a consequence of their behaviour, however, prior to this occurring we will complete a key working with the child discussing ways to rectify the situation. We encourage the child to come up with a solution to the problem independently, whether this be by an apology or replacing a broken item.

When consequences do occur, they are applied fairly and in line with regulations. Children are fully included in the consequence process, and we ensure a key working session is completed with them explaining why the consequence was given. Consequences will be shared with the child's social worker and parents as appropriate. The effectiveness of the consequence is assessed during managers weekly and monthly monitoring of the home.

## **18 PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

We are committed to ensuring that the children and young people in our care live safely free from harm by promoting warm and positive relationships where children are able to feel safe and express how they are feeling. All staff are aware of their responsibility to challenge and manage any harm to children to ensure that they are suitably safeguarded.

## **Safeguarding:**

### **Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility**

Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. Mulberry Court is fully committed to

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safeguarding the welfare of all children who use our services. The company is clear that this expectation is the primary duty of all staff, agency, and volunteers. This duty is also managed in partnership with other relevant agencies.

We are clear in our responsibility to take the views, wishes and feelings of children placed in the home into account, particularly in relation to matters affecting their care, welfare, and their lives. Children have the right to be respected, have their views heard, and to have stable relationships with professionals built on trust and respect.

## **Shortfalls in Staffing:**

Mulberry Court will always endeavour to ensure the team are consistent and have built relationships with the young people. For particular periods where there may be shortfalls like sickness, the home manager will try and look for 'Benecare' staff to support, as they will have the desirable level of training expected to work with Children and Young People. We have created an online share system where managers can access the Schedule 2, Safer Recruitment information for all Benecare staff members who may work across the homes.

At times when it is not possible to find Benecare's own staff, we may consider agency, however we will ensure that we have an agency profile, and the Agency is able to demonstrate that their staff have been recruited in line with Benecare's safer recruitment checklist and Schedule 2.

## **Agency Use:**

As mentioned above, when we use agency, we will ensure that we confirm in writing with the recruitment agency (prior to the agency worker starting) that they meet our safer recruitment and schedule 2 checklist. If the agency cannot confirm this, we will not use them to work in one of our homes.

We have an agency worker pack which includes an induction. This will be completed with the agency worker at the start of their shift, and this will be kept confidentially in the agency staff file along with their profile. Any agency worker who is used for a period of one month or longer will be given supervision by either the Home Manager or the Deputy Manager.

## **At Mulberry Court we promote the following:**

- **Vigilance:** To have staff members notice when things are troubling the children.
- **Understanding and action:** To understand what is happening; to be heard and understood and to have that understanding acted upon.
- **Stability:** To be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
- **Respect:** To treat children with respect.
- **Information and engagement:** To be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns, and plans.
- **Explanation:** To be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions, and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.
- **Support:** To be provided with individual support and as a member of their family.
- **Advocacy:** To be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.

## **Aims:**

**Our aim is to ensure every child in our home is kept safe and protected from harm or potential harm.**

This means harm (or potential harm) from:

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- Emotional, physical, neglect, institutional and domestic abuse, or substantiated indications of bullying, self-harm, and faltering growth.

**This means we will always work to ensure that our children are consistently:**

- Protected from any form of maltreatment arising from harm or potential harm.
- Prevented from suffering impairment of health or development.
- Given every opportunity to grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Given every opportunity to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

**This means that there will be:**

- Safer recruitment practice through checking the suitability of staff, agency and volunteers who work with our children.
- A consistent awareness of child protection issues, which will involve equipping children with the skills necessary to keep them safe.
- Sustained development and implementation of procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Support for any child who has been abused in accordance with individual needs, plans and effective and collaborative working practice.

Our safeguarding policies give clear direction to staff about expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children resident at our home.

## **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**

Each registered children's home has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL. The DSL for the home is the Registered/Home Manager. In the absence of the Registered Manager, the Deputy Manager will assume responsibility in strict consultation with the Responsible Individual who holds overall safeguarding for the organisation in their role as Designated Safeguarding Officer.

## **Managing Allegations:**

At Benecare we take all allegations seriously and recognise that there will be times when a child or young person makes an allegation against a member of staff and other people known to them. An allegation that a child or young person makes will be taken seriously and will be reported to the Designated Safeguard Lead of Mulberry Court, Karma Draper, and Benecare's Safeguarding Officer, Lauren Walczak. We will follow company policies and procedures, liaising with LADO and other professional agencies together to report the allegation. All allegations will be notified to Ofsted via Regulation 40.

Children will be kept up to date with the investigation process and outcomes will be shared with them. For more information, please see our policy on 'Allegations Against Staff'

## **Countering Bullying (Including Cyberbullying):**

We operate a zero tolerance to bullying in our home, whether in relation to children or staff. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone

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physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. One of the most challenging aspects of keeping children safe from bullying is 'cyberbullying.' Cyberbullying is using the internet, e-mail, online games, or any digital technology to threaten, tease, upset or humiliate someone else.

We understand that children who are bullied and children who bully others, may be experiencing and/or go on to experience serious emotional difficulties. Being bullied can impact on a person's self-esteem, confidence, and social skills.

## **In order to address bullying, all staff:**

- Comply with the conditions of the Company's anti Bullying Policy.
- Record any suspicions about bullying and attempt to address any concerns before the situation escalates.
- Take part in all relevant training provided or facilitated by the Company.
- Ensure the designated Bullying Champion completes regular key workings, workshops, and discussions with the children about bullying and protecting themselves.
- Have a good understanding of bullying behaviours among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
- Ensure that the conditions of monitoring and reviewing internet use are applied consistently. Staff are vigilant regarding the potential and real dangers of social media, as well as direct (face-to-face) bullying,
- Understand that under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.'

## **Our Commitment:**

All children will be encouraged to speak up if they feel they are subject to any bullying, both in and out of the home.

- All children will be supported in the above process, including use of complaints.
- All actions will be recorded.
- Both the victim and perpetrator of bullying must be protected and made to feel safe.
- In all instances of suspicions relating to bullying behaviours, immediate action will be taken to protect the children concerned.

## **Children Missing from Care (MfC):**

There are times when a child may take it upon themselves to leave home without the due authority to do so. Staff are fully aware that the children for whom we provide care are particularly vulnerable. This means we aim to maintain a robust and fluid response to all incidents of children categorised as 'missing' from care.

The Registered Manager is responsible for ensuring that all Safety Plans include a MfC risk assessment and protocol that is based upon relevant information from the child's plans. This is reviewed regularly and communicated to all staff.

## **A MfC incident would be prioritised as 'high risk' where:**

- The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child is in danger through their own vulnerability; or
- The child may have been the victim of a serious crime; or
- The risk posed is immediate and there are grounds for believing that the public is in danger; or.
- The child is at high risk of CSE.

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A MfC incident would be prioritised as 'medium risk' where the risk posed is likely to place the subject in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others. This category requires an active and measured response by police and other agencies to trace the missing child and support the person reporting. This involves a proactive investigation and search in accordance with the circumstances to locate the missing child as soon as possible.

## **Our Approach:**

Our approach to minimising MfC incidents is multi agency working and providing a homely environment where children feel loved, safe, and secure and do not want to go missing. **Full details are available in our Missing Children Policy.** Staff understand that when a child goes missing, whether considered at 'medium risk' or at 'high risk,' that it is a priority. Children who leave the home premises without the knowledge of staff will be regarded as at immediate risk of potential harm. This is because the children for whom we provide care for are vulnerable. All staff are fully aware that however 'streetwise' the child may appear, s/he is a child and may be extremely vulnerable to multiple risks.

As soon as staff become aware that a child has gone missing or been missing, they will:

- Inform the Registered Manager (RM)/On call Manager and the Responsible Individual (RI) immediately.
- Contact the Police to report the child as missing and state clearly the child's risk category.
- Contact the child's social worker or the Out of Hours Social Worker (OOH) and child's parents (if applicable).
- Complete a search of the local area and known addresses of contacts.
- Try to contact the child by phone, and/or known contacts and friends in order to locate the child.

## **When a child is found, staff:**

- Welcome the child back into the home, ascertain if they came to any harm whilst missing (acting on information accordingly) and offer them food and drink.
- Ensure safe and well checks are carried out by the police as soon as possible after a child reported as missing has been found.
- Ensure measures are taken to complete an independent return interview within 72 hours.
- Review Safety Plans and Risk Assessments following every MfC incident. This will provide an opportunity to add any information gained through the Registered Managers de-brief.

## **A description of the home's approach to the monitoring and surveillance of children:**

**Door Alarms** (the following arrangements are subject to the approval of each child's social worker);

Each child's bedroom door is fitted with an alarm system when needed. This is to enable greater safeguarding capacity, particularly during the night. This is only be activated where it can be explicitly demonstrated (with the consent of the child's placing authority) that a door alarm system is necessary for protecting and safeguarding the child's welfare. The use of the alarm system is also agreed in the child's placement plan and a risk assessment will be in place to support this measure.

## **Additional Monitoring systems**

If there is a need for additional monitoring system in the home due to a child's condition or suspected condition. This is only be activated where it can be explicitly demonstrated (with the consent of the child's placing authority) that a monitoring system is necessary for protecting and safeguarding the child's welfare.

**The child will be informed of the use of the measures, and these will be kept under review.**

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## **Bedroom Searches**

In accordance with Children's Regulations a child's bedroom should not generally be entered without their permission, though it may be necessary to establish routines to allow for rooms to be cleaned regularly. Usually, rooms should only be searched if the child has been informed or asked for their permission. Immediate searching may be necessary where there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being. Benecare's Room Search Policy must be followed when completing room searches and a room search form must be completed and shared with the child's placing authority.

**Safeguarding Matters addressed through policy, procedures and within staff training and supervision include:**

- Admissions Process
- Allegations
- Behaviour Management
- Bullying (Including Cyberbullying)
- Missing from Care (MfC)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Clothing and Appearance
- Confidentiality
- Drugs (Substance Misuse)
- Duty of Care
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- First Aid and Administration of Medication
- Hate Crime
- Internet Use
- One-To-One Situations
- Photography, Video, cameras, and Images
- Physical Contact
- Physical Intervention
- Placement Matching
- Power and Positions of Trust
- Professional Judgement
- Public Confidence and Conduct
- Radicalisation and Extremism (inc. Prevent)
- Recruitment of Staff
- Safer care
- Self-Harm
- Sexting
- Trafficking
- Transporting Children
- Whistleblowing

## **19 BEHAVIOURAL SUPPORT**

We provide a warm and caring environment and maintain consistent boundaries. We encourage children and young people to develop positive relationships which will allow them to gain a sense of personal worth within a nurturing and safe home. These positive relationships are the predominant means by which behavioural boundaries are maintained. The behavioural boundaries set are both appropriate and realistic, they consider not only a child's age, but also their developmental stage. Some boundaries are in place for the whole home to follow, and some boundaries are person specific, dependant on their needs. If a child/young person does not follow instructions, a reminder will be given. If this fails, the child will be advised to take time out in a safe space to calm down.

Children will be supervised by adults who will monitor their emotional well-being. The ethos of the home is transparent, safe environments where the young people are encouraged to talk openly about the feelings and concerns. Adults in the home monitor themes and patterns of behaviour and subsequently this is discussed in team meetings along with strategies/reward charts that can be put in place to help regulate behaviour.

The child and young person's identified needs and behavioural targets will always remain a central focus of the placement. Issues are discussed openly using a supportive and respectful approach. Our approach is geared towards enhancing motivation to change. Frequent monitoring of behaviour enables us to identify patterns and trends, to measure progress and change.

### **Physical Intervention:**

The use of physical intervention may be considered, and specific holds used as part of the child's individual behaviour management plans. This will be in line with Company policies and procedures and will always be used as a last resort.

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Our focus is to reward positive behaviours and not enforce the negative. Where possible we avoid physical intervention by using de-escalation based on the child's written support plans and behaviour guides.

Whenever physical intervention is unavoidable an incident report and the record of physical intervention log will be completed as soon after the incident as possible. Physical intervention is only used if the child, adults, or peers are in immediate danger of harm or there is a risk of damage to property. Copies of such will be forwarded to the placing social worker. A debrief is held with the adults and the child or young person involved in order to establish their feelings regarding the incident, and to offer a reflection and learning experience to all concerned. Learning points are drawn, and key documents and relevant risk assessments updated. Any events that are deemed as serious by the Registered Manager will be shared with Ofsted via notification procedures.

All measures of control are monitored by management to ensure that they are in accordance with current legislation. We reflect in debriefs, supervision and team meetings about what worked well, and what did not, with each young person. Care plans and risk assessments are updated with new strategies that worked to ensure risk reduction is planned.

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## 20 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AMENDMENT TABLE

Date Reviewed	Description of Amendments	Date Sent to Ofsted	Supporting Documents Reviewed and/or updated
02 <sup>nd</sup> March 2021	Removal of Deputy Manager	02 <sup>nd</sup> March 2021	
22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2021	Removal gym room from SOP	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2021	
19 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Updated with AM and WB new starters. Updated the Mandatory training list	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Young person's guide
18 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	Updated with GB becoming Acting Deputy Manager. Updated with AM and WB being on secondment to WH	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	Young person's guide
18 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	Update to manager's statement. Removal of team members AM and WB. Added Allegation Management to Section 18. Protection of Children.	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	Young person's guide
04 <sup>th</sup> August 2021	Update to staffing, GB to SRSW and added LS as SRSW. Update to complaints procedure. Update to emergency departures. Update to monitoring and surveillance to include additional monitoring.	4 <sup>th</sup> August 2021	Young person's guide
09 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Update to staffing, adding new member of staff CP.  Update to complaints – information on how professional, parents or members of the public can make complaints	09 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Young person's guide
22.11.21	Update to staffing, Removal of staff that have left. Adding ALD, LR and HG	22.11.21	Young Person's Guide
28.02.22	Update to Staffing, removal of Staff that have left. Added AM BB and AF	28.02.22	Young Person's Guide
25.03.22	Updates around schedule 2 Update to staffing list	25.03.22	Young Person's Guide



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	Updates around shortfalls in staffing and agency use		
26.05.2022	Check and updates made throughout document.	27.05.2022	Young Person's Guide
26.06.2022	Information added to admissions section. Information added about challenging professionals to support the children's rights.	26.06.2022	Young Person's Guide
12.07.2022	Update to staffing – removing staff who have left (AM) and adding new staff (DD) and supporting staff (NF)	15.07.2022	Young Person's Guide
10.11.2022	Update to staffing – Removing staff that have left (JG) and adding transferred staff (IW). RG has transferred to OL and new DM (KW)	10.11.2022	Young People's Guide
19.01.2023	Update to staffing IW removed and AF added incoming staff added. Bedroom room searches added	19.1.2023	
06.03.2023	Update to staffing with PG profile and training. Staff section 10 training and staff supervisions.	06.03.2023	
04.05.2023	All sections reviewed and updated. Update to staffing section with KA removed and NF and NC added.	04.05.2023	Young Person's Guide
12.05.2023	Change of Responsible Individual details. Lauren Walczak removed; Trish Clinton added	12.05.2023	N/A
18.05.2023	Section 3 – updated with Mulberry Court being a peanut, tree nut and mushroom free environment.	18.05.2023	Young Person's Guide
18.05.2023	Update to staffing – AFu removed	22.05.2023	Young Person's Guide
07.08.2023	Update to staffing structure KW removed MH, PR, BS added	08.08.2023	Young person's guide
22.08.2023	Updates to sections 3 and 12	22.08.2023	N/A
05.09.2023	Update to staffing – BS removed	05.09.2023	Young person's guide

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20.10.2023	Update to staffing – AF and PR removed, JI added	20.10.2023	Young person's guide
02.11.2023	Update to staffing – NF, MH, JI removed, KD added as homes manager. The home is no longer a peanut, tree nut and mushroom free environment. Responsible individual changed from TC to LW.	02.11.2023	Young person's guide
16.11.2023	Update to section 3 – about the home – to include the current young person being subject to a DOLs order	16.11.2023	N/A
11.12.2023	Games room changed to sensory room. Larissa added as ADM.	11.12.2023	N/A
21.03.24	Added AA and KP to staff team. Removal of JR and NH. Update on Price Training / Team Teach.	22.03.2024	Young Persons Guide
17.04.2024	Removed KP to staff team. Added AF	17.04.2024	Young person's guide
22.05.2024	Removal of AA staff (transfer to Madison House), Added staff JJ and LSH	22.05.2024	Young persons guide.