



Acorns to Oaks
Children's Care & Support

ALDER TREE HOUSE

Registration Number:



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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Persons to whom this statement is to be made available are:

- a) The person in charge of the children's home
- b) The people who are employed to work in the home
- c) The children and young people who live in the home
- d) The parent (s) or person (s) with parental responsibility for the child or young person.
- e) The social worker that holds case responsibility for a child or young person who is planning to live at the home
- f) Ofsted
- g) Independent Visitor - Regulation 44

Ofsted:

Ofsted are responsible for ensuring that the Home operates within the Care Standards Act 2000 and that the home meets the Requirements of the Quality Care Standards 2015. The inspectors have the responsibility to inspect Aldertree House once a year and report their findings in line with evidence from visual observation; written documentation; discussion with young people, staff and management; and feedback from parents and other professionals. They operate as a registration and regulatory body, with the responsibility to ensure the standard of care within all the homes where young people reside, is safe and providing the service to the young people that give them every opportunity in line with their own abilities as they develop into adult life.

Ofsted can also support complaints or comments.

The regional office can be contacted at:

Ofsted

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Children's Rights Officer

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Quality and Purpose of Care

The Range of Needs of Children and Young People

Alder Tree House is owned and managed by Acorns to Oaks Children's Care & Support. Alder Tree House is a new service that will provide a high level of care for up to two children and young people between the ages of 7 and 17 years. Alder Tree House will provide care long term and Medium-term to children and young people of both sexes who have been subject to neglect, trauma and abuse, and will require support related to emotional behavioural difficulties and/or Learning Disabilities. Alder Tree House will ensure that all children and young people coming to live in our home, will have a smooth planned transition. This will not be a home that accepts emergency placements, unless there are no children and young people yet resident in the home. This will reduce the disruption to any other child or young person already residing in the home. Children will be able to remain at Alder Tree House until they have progressed to a level that they can move on, either to a foster home or other identified place of care.

Our Ethos

The ethos of Alder Tree House is to create a centre of excellence that provides the highest level of care possible in the best environment that can be achieved. The Home uses a highly individualised child-centred approach in all aspects of care. We aim to provide excellent care for young people and an opportunity for safety, stability and recovery from any previous emotional trauma, by creating an atmosphere that is safe, welcoming and that feels like a home. We believe that "care", should be more than a word, it should permeate everything we do, and we will strive to make a positive impact to every child and young person living in our home.

Outcomes for Children and Young People and how we will achieve them

At Alder Tree House, we will provide a restorative environment where the children & young people will feel safe, secure and nurtured, this allows for appropriate support and challenge enabling our children and young people to achieve stability, develop independence, become confident and grow as individuals, until such a time, they and all involved adults feel they are ready to move on, in line with their Care Plans and Pathway Plans.

Our children and young people will be supported to achieve positively in all areas of their lives including health, education, social development and independence. We will do this by understanding each child and young persons lived experience, their cognitive ability, any barriers they may face. Our staff team will continuously assess and identify on going needs and support our children and young people to overcome any barriers. We will encourage our children and young people to play an active role in identifying goals and developing their plans. Ensuring they feel included and heard.

Children and young people will be provided with learning opportunities both within and outside of the home and we will make links with education providers to ensure that children have educational placements/ plans that are suited to their individual needs. All children and young people will be provided with laptops (subject to risk assessments) in order to access learning tools and complete work requested by education.

Children and young people who live at Alder Tree House will have opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities in and outside the home. They will also be supported to pursue any interest or hobbies and attend clubs and extra-curricular activities, subject to their care plans

and risk assessments, enabling them to develop socially and form bonds within the wider community.

We will support and encourage contact with families and key people in their lives, in line with their care plan. We will ensure that contact is safe and appropriate and that all risk assessments are in place, up to date and adhered to.

We will work with Social Workers and all other partner agencies to support care plans of reintegration home or to family or to transition to foster care, wherever this is deemed appropriate and safe to do so.

We will ensure that children and young people understand their rights and responsibilities and encourage them to have input into plans for their short-, medium- and long-term care. We will achieve this through regular consultation with children through having children and young people meetings, key work sessions and by supporting children to attend their reviews. Through the process of consultation, we will ensure our children and young people feel listened to and that their views, wishes and feelings are being heard, respected and considered when developing plans, updating risk assessments and writing reports. We will ensure that all children and young people have appropriate access to their Social Workers, Independent Reviewing Officers and Advocates to allow them to share their views independently or with the support of their care workers.

We recognise that for many children and young people, residential care workers can become significant attachment figures.

We believe that the building of positive and appropriate relationships is characterised by shared experiences, consistency of practice and a mutual positive regard and respect. We aim to achieve this by our team ensuring they have a clear understanding of each child and young person's history, their likes and dislikes, their triggers, risks and behaviours allowing for appropriate challenge but also by having shared experiences during activities, sharing their day to day lives, having fun with them and building positive memories. By acknowledging their growth and achievements and praising positive behaviour.

We will ensure that children understand their right to make a complaint about any aspect of their care. Every child will be given information at the point they move in (this will be through the children and young person's guide) to ensure they know how to make a complaint internally and externally and information on how to request independent advocacy and have their rights in relation to making a complaint upheld.

All staff will receive training on Equality and Diversity this will develop their understanding and equip them to manage any issues that may arise. They will support and encourage the children and young people to respect diversity and reject all forms of discrimination or bullying whether that be by, gender, age, ethnicity, physical disability or sexuality. Any issue of discrimination or bullying will be dealt with immediately and in line with the company's policy and procedure. Children and young people will receive information about this issue upon moving into the home.

The ethos and practice at Alder Tree House is to work jointly with our children and young people, all other professionals, agencies, and significant people when managing risks, concerns and meeting the needs of the children and young people. The aim being to have a joint approach to the care of the children and young people in the home. We will adhere to our confidentiality policy and share information on a need to know basis in order to safeguard, identify and meet needs and promote holistic planning in order to achieve positive outcomes.

We will achieve these outcomes by:

- Working with children and young people for however long it takes for us to meet their identified care needs whilst remaining adaptable in our approach, including working with agencies and Ofsted when incidents take place in order to develop resilience and provide consistency and reduce the risk of disruption.
- Ensuring that we are working together with the Local Authority in order to be able to move the children and young people on to a future home or provide long term care until they reach independence
- When considering children and young people coming to live at Alder Tree House, we will assess each young person's needs and risks to ensure they are compatible reducing the risk of disruption.
- Ensuring that there is a robust rota system in place with adequate numbers of staff on duty reflecting gender balance and experience
- Continually assessing the emotional and behavioural needs of our children and young people in order to ensure they receive the correct and appropriate levels of therapeutic care.
- Having key work systems in place to reflect on the care needs of our children and young people and how these will be met.
- Ensuring that we have up to date records and correct documentation for each of the children and young people in our care, including risk assessments, care plans, placement plans, pathway plans, education (Peps') and planned key work sessions, this will ensure we are meeting their identified needs in line with their daily and long-term plans
- Maintaining quality assurance systems to continually evaluate our current services, staff performance and compliance. We will in turn use these evaluations to continuously improve and develop our service.
- Encouraging our children and young people to contribute to their plans and attend meetings, including reviews and the homes young people's meetings and group and individual activities.

Our Home

Alder tree house is a detached property located on Wood Close, Kirkby. The home comprises of: Small entrance Hall that leads directly into the lounge. Following on from the lounge is the adjoining dining room, and kitchen to the ground floor. To the first floor there are three spacious bedrooms with en suite to master bedroom and a family bathroom. Outside is a driveway for two to three cars and a garden with patio area to the rear. The property further benefits from Upvc double glazing, gas central heating, and security lighting.

The home will be registered with OFSTED as caring for children and young people who have experience neglect, trauma or emotional harm and can present with behavioural difficulties

and/or Learning Disabilities. The home and staff are equipped to work with children and young people who experience these difficulties, through training, nurture and planned care with other professionals.

For security and safeguarding all the bedrooms have key locks on the outside and thumb locks on the inside, plus lockable window restrictors.

All staff will have keys to every lockable room. Each child/young person will be given their own key to their bedroom. In addition to the locked door young people will also have a lockable space to keep any personal possessions.

Discreet door alarms are fitted to the bedroom doors that are not visible and emit a low-level alarm that sounds off in the staff sleep in rooms. These are only used when there is an identified risk subject to a risk assessment and all children and young people will be notified.

When the children and young people move into Alder Tree House, they will be advised that staff have a responsibility and duty of care, and there may be times when staff need to enter the young person's room without their permission, such as to meet health and safety requirements, safeguarding or in the event of an emergency. The child/young person will always be informed of this as soon as possible. The reasons for this will be fully recorded and discussed with the child/young person and the Registered Manager as soon as possible.

The bathroom and toilet are shared by all children, young people and staff. The door is fitted with an appropriate lock to ensure privacy and dignity to all parties. This will be a lock that can be opened from the outside in case of an emergency.

The staff office is permanently locked as it contains confidential and private information for all children, young people and staff; medication and cash are also stored and handled in the office. Information for the young people will be stored within a secure and lockable fire-resistant cupboard that staff will have access to. Information about staff will be kept securely in a fire-resistant cupboard that the RI, RM and potentially the DM will have access to. Young people will be discouraged from accessing the office and it would only be deemed appropriate in exceptional circumstances.

Both the front and back external doors have thumb locks and key locks, key locks on external doors will only be used during the evening, during the day thumb locks will be used.

There is an intruder alarm that would be found on any residential home in order to prevent intruders, ensure the safety of staff and young people and ensure that the property, belongings, private confidential paperwork, computer equipment and money is protected and part of insurance and data protection safeguards.

There is a fitted CCTV system for the front and rear of the property.

These measures are used when the house is unoccupied and when staff and young people go to bed at night for safety and will never be used to manage behaviour or restrict any young person's free movement around the home.

The children and young people along with their key worker, will be able to choose a feature wall which they can wallpaper or paint in a colour of their choice, they can also choose their curtains and accessories. There is an expectation that they look after their own belongings and respect the belongings and privacy of the other children and young people living in the home.

The home will provide a high level of care for up to 2 children and young people between the ages of 7 and 17 years. We will provide medium to long term care and support for children and young people that may have been subject to neglect, trauma and abuse, and will require support to manage and/or cope with emotional behavioural difficulties.

The home is situated close to the beach and lots of other attractions. It is close to local amenities, shopping centres, cinemas, bowling alleys and New Brighton is a short journey away which is full of fun packed activities to do.

In the event of an emergency, the hospital is approximately 2 miles, and the local GP and dental services are within walking distance.

More information about the location of the home and the suitability of the location in respect of young people's safety, achievement and enjoyment can be found in the Location Risk Assessment for the home.

Cultural, Linguistic and Religious Needs of Children

Consideration is given to any additional requirements in relation to race, religion, culture or methods of communication prior to a child/young person coming to live at Alder Tree House. Any additional training needed, or support will be identified in the Impact Risk Assessment.

When it has been agreed for the child/young person to come and live at Alder Tree House, all practical support will be in place to ensure the child/young person has all the requirements that meet their cultural, linguistic and religious needs. Any dietary requirements based upon religious grounds will be adhered to and children and young people will be offered support to access/ attend places of worship and cultural events of their choice within and outside of the community if deemed appropriate and subject to risk assessments.

The children and young people in the home are given the choice to enhance their knowledge around equality and diversity and are offered a variety of cultural activities. These include activities within the home or visiting places of cultural interests and celebration events.

Children and young people within the care system will, to varying degrees, be viewed and treated differently due to them being "children in care". Within this group of children and young people, some will face further discrimination due to their racial identity, religion, culture and/or sexuality. The ethos and practice within Alder Tree House is to promote respect, understanding and acceptance in regard to equality and diversity which contributes to our young people becoming well rounded individuals who can achieve and reach their goals.

All staff are supported to challenge other services and /or professionals when they believe the young people in our care are being discriminated against, harassed or bullied due to their looked after status, disability, gender, race, culture or identity.

Complaints

The formal complaints procedure that is in place within the home is child friendly with clear details of what they need to do, what they can expect, who will be involved and the timescales in which their complaint will be dealt with. The formal procedure is given to the children and young people when they come to live at Alder Tree House and can be found in their children and young people's guide/ pack.

Additionally, concerns and issues raised by young people that do not meet the threshold for a formal complaint, will be recorded by staff and Management and a plan of how this can be addressed and resolved will be made.

If the young person is not happy with the outcome, they can appeal and seek independent guidance to which they will be supported.

Alder Tree House acknowledges the significance of children and young people feeling able and comfortable when raising any concerns or submitting a complaint if they are unhappy with a situation, or issue within the home, and as such the children and young people are encouraged to make their views known to staff or management. There will also be a link to the website where children and young people can raise a complaint if they do not feel able to approach a member of the staff team.

If children and young people are not happy about any aspect of the care, they receive they will be supported to make a complaint which will be investigated by an Independent Complaints Manager. The complaint can be verbal or written and both methods will be taken seriously and dealt with under the formal complaint's procedure. Staff will work to ensure that children and young people who make complaints do not feel stigmatised or guilty in any way.

Alder Tree House staff team believe it is important to help Children and their families understand why the complaints procedure exists and that they are aware of how to use it. When children and young people move into our home, we will discuss the complaints procedure with them as well as advocacy and the independent visitor services. The children and young people's guides for the home also detail how and to whom children can make a complaint to.

Children and young people and their families will be kept up to date with the progress of any complaints and will be supported to understand the actions taken in respect of this including the outcome.

Weekly house meetings will be held and run by the children and young people and supported by staff. This provides a consistent safe space for them to discuss their views. They will be encouraged to discuss what's working well, what's not working well and what would they like to change. This can include issues relating to the home that they would like to change or any suggestions they would like to put forward for consideration. This promotes the children and young people's participation and engagement and reduces lower-level issues escalating and empowers children and young people to have a sense of belonging and say in their day-to-day care.

Access to Our Policies

The staff at Alder Tree House are proactive in promoting the welfare of our children and young people. Safeguarding is a priority and is integral to every aspect of the care and support provided. All staff will have completed Child Protection/ Safeguarding Training and will receive updated and ongoing training in this area. They will also receive Training specific to identified risks, such as CSE, County Lines, missing, substance misuse and suicide/ self-harm to name but a few.

Children and young people at the Home are kept safe through high levels of supervision and comprehensive updated risk assessments, as well as ensuring that all staff are checked and vetted in accordance with Safer Recruitment guidelines.

Our safeguarding arrangements comply with the Children's Homes Regulations and include child protection procedures, bullying prevention, missing young people, sexual exploitation and self-harm.

The child protection policies and behaviour management policies can be shared upon request by any person, body or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child/young person who lives at Alder Tree House.

As part of the staff induction, they will be expected to read the Child Protection/ Safeguarding Policies and will have on going access to these policies at any time on the secure server for the company, and in the home where all policies will be in a file.

Staff will discuss any safeguarding concerns immediately with their Manager to ensure these are acted upon, the appropriate agencies are notified and steps are put in place to safeguard any child or young person involved.

How we consult with our Children and Young People

For us to understand where we need to improve and develop our service, it is crucial that we enlist the help of our children and young people to give us their views. The home will seek to appoint an identified member of staff as their **"Consultation Champion"**. The **"Consultation Champion"** will ensure that they take every opportunity to consult with our children and young people. These consultations could be around issues within the home or community or on a wider basis to ensure that they are actively seeking the views of the children and young people as a priority, recording these views, sharing these views and acting upon these views wherever possible.

Alder Tree House aims to ensure that children and young people who live there feel that their views, wishes and feelings are sought and listened to, that they contribute and influence the running of the home, the development of their day-to-day planning and lived experience. Consultation around decisions made in the home are made daily, such as planning activities and menu's, weekly food shopping, purchasing new décor for the home and any other decisions and discussions that make up the daily routine of the home.

Additionally, children and young people are involved in the home's children and young people's meetings. Throughout these meetings we discuss decisions that need to be agreed and made in the home, how they are finding living at Alder Tree House, house rules and expectations as well as planning holidays and big activity days.

The Registered Manager or Deputy Manager will also chair a children's meeting once a month or take the young people away from the home for an activity to discuss the young people's views and consult with them on issues around the home and their care experience. Young people can also request to speak to the Registered Manager at any time to express their views or feeling and a 1-2-1 meeting can be arranged.

Each one of our children and young people will have a designated key worker. The key workers also plan key work sessions with young people to address issues that are happening with them as individuals and to reflect on things that may have happened or decisions and choices they have made. These sessions are also another opportunity to express their wishes and feelings.

Consultation, as with all aspects of the care in the home, is based on the individual child/young person, their communication skills and the significance of the relationships they have with adults in their lives. Consultation can also be achieved by the young person speaking to other

adults in their lives including social workers, family members or other professionals; or by staff speaking to those people on behalf of the young person.

Anti-Discriminatory Practice

The home is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families, and for the staff at the home and visitors to Alder Tree House.

We aim to:

- demonstrate in our practice, a commitment to treating others in an anti-discriminatory way regardless of gender, age, disability, race, sexual orientation or faith and will encourage the children to learn these values.
- provide a secure and safe environment in which all children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued.
- include and value the contribution of all families where appropriate to our understanding of equality and diversity.
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles and diverse family structures, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people.
- improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity.
- challenge and eliminate discriminatory actions.
- foster good relations between agencies and families where appropriate

Children's Rights

The children and young people that come to live in Alder Tree House will have a right to be consulted about the level of care they will receive from us. This does not mean that the children and young people will get what they want, it means that they will be fully consulted, and their views wishes, and feelings listened to and taken into consideration.

There will be times that the wishes and views of the child/young person will not be in their best interests or comply with their Local Authority plan, so it is important that we record clearly these differences and why decisions have been made, we will always include where a child/young person has expressed that they do not agree and give children and young people the opportunity to add their views.

Children and young people have the right to be told that information has been written about them, and depending on their age and understanding, for that information to be explained to them and or copies of minutes and plans given to them. We will offer support to young people who wish to make a request to view their full written files.

At Alder Tree House, all our children and young people will have the following rights:

- to be treated with respect, care and kindness
- to have their say about decisions made about them

- to be involved in the planning and preparation of their care, lived experience and their future
- to have information shared in a way they can understand
- to have a say in the way the home is run, such as being involved in deciding the menu, discussing rules, and having children's meetings
- to be given access to speak to their Social Worker and Independent Reviewing Officer as and when they need or want to.
- to be informed about local and national advocacy services and how to contact an advocate to support them and have their say
- to be supported to have relationships with family and friends (as agreed in their care plan)
- to receive education or training and be supported to attend school or training
- to have opportunities to socialise and pursue interests such as music lessons, sports activities, art or drama groups
- to have regular health checks including dental, eye care and access to a GP, Looked After Children's Nurse or specialist health support
- to be supported to develop age-appropriate independence life skills including self-care, cooking, washing their own clothes, shopping and managing money
- to have a plan for leaving care that identifies their on-going needs and who can support them.

Education

Education is high priority for all young people living at Alder Tree House. Where required children and young people are enrolled in schools or colleges in the area and are encouraged and supported to attend. In some instances, young people may attend alternative educational provisions or have alternative education plans, in those cases the team at Alder Tree House will ensure these are supported and adhered to.

Keyworkers will promote education with young people and seek to create aspiration towards positive achievements for each young person.

Laptops, Internet access (subject to risk assessments) and educational websites are provided for children and young people to complete homework in either their own bedrooms or a quiet area of the home, whichever they prefer. Staff will always provide help where required in the completion of homework/study tasks. All children and young people will have access to local libraries to assist them in their studies.

We recognise that the children and young people who come to live at Alder Tree House will likely have experienced a different and often a more difficult start in life. Those experiences in themselves can create barriers and so need to be understood in the context of learning and education. We also recognise that some children or young people who come to live at Alder Tree House may have Special Educational Needs, health or emotional and behavioural development needs that could also create barriers to learning.

We seek to actively work in partnership with all professionals including, education, social care, health professionals, voluntary agencies and families (where appropriate) to promote a more cohesive system where education is an intrinsic part of the care environment and where all

key people in a looked after young person's life understand and actively participate in their education. We believe that with this approach we can support the child or young person to achieve their learning and educational potential on the basis that considers their own ability and attainment.

Our Team at the home will attend parent's evenings, sports days or other events to support the children and young people and ensure achievements are recognised. Where appropriate their families are also encouraged to attend such events.

Children and young people are encouraged and supported to engage in extra-curricular activities with their education providers, this promotes social skills and contributes to their emotional wellbeing.

Issues relating to education are discussed at all reviews and planning meetings, as well as individually with the young people and families. Liaison is maintained with the Virtual Head for Looked after children and where appropriate with individual designated teachers within the schools. Staff will advocate on the young persons behalf to ensure their educational rights are being upheld.

An up-to-date copy of the young person's Personal Educational Plan (PEP) will be maintained, as will other relevant documentation and records of achievements, needs and targets. These are completed three times a year and the Virtual Head as well as Alder Tree House will quality assure these documents. Where there are difficulties obtaining an educational placement, the Registered Manager will liaise with the Virtual head and Social Worker to determine a way forward, if the situation continues this is escalated to the relevant Senior Manager.

Enjoyment and Achievement

All children and young people that come to live at Alder Tree House will be encouraged to participate in activities. These activities could range from things such as, going to the cinema, bowling, swimming, outdoor adventure parks, indoor sports centres, the local gym, in house arts and crafts, baking, football, netball, dance, music lessons, singing, this list is endless, and all our children and young people will be encouraged to take part in as many hobbies as possible.

There will be a weekly activity allowance for each child/young person who lives at Alder Tree House, and this will be used for them to enjoy and pursue their hobbies and interests. Our home will spare no expense for the enjoyment and achievement of all our children and young people. We believe that they should have a positive lived experience throughout their childhood that allows them to develop a strong sense of self.

During school holidays, Alder Tree House will look at holidays, short breaks away for the children and young people and fun days out to theme parks and other enjoyable ventures. All our children and young people are involved in the choosing of activities and holidays and will sit and plan the week ahead with Alder Tree House staff team, where they will complete their activity planners.

Birthdays, Christmas and other multi-cultural festivals are celebrated with children and young people by having birthday parties in the house and to celebrate special occasions, events and achievements.

Educational activities will also be promoted within the home. These will include trips to local museums, library visits, purchasing newspapers and magazines for the children and young people to read and enjoy. We will also encourage cooking skills through fun activities such as having 'come dine with me' nights and having regular cultural themed nights within the home.

Health

Staff at Alder Tree House will make huge efforts in the promotion of health for all our children and young people. When children and young people come to live at the home, we will ensure that they are all registered with their own GP, Dentist and Optician. Staff at the home are all aware of the importance their role is in promoting awareness of health issues and healthy lifestyles. Each of our children and young people will be provided with guidance, advice and support in line with their age, needs, wishes and culture in relation to health, emotional development and social issues.

Alder Tree House supports children young people in undertaking activities that would promote their long-term health, such as taking part in team sports, attending a gym or going on regular walks. It also actively promotes healthy eating. Menus are planned with the children and young people on a weekly basis in preparation for the following week, and we provide good-quality, home cooked meals, taking time to teach them how to cook and sit together at the table to eat our meals together.

Alder Tree House will develop strong partnerships with local services such as The Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), The local authorities designated Children in Care Nurse and the local drug and alcohol service. We will draw on these to ensure that staff are trained in key health issues and can pull on professional support and advice when it is needed. Professionals from local health services will be invited to team meetings on a regular basis and this forum is used to inform better practice, gain knowledge and provide consistency.

Each of our children and young people living at Alder Tree House will have their own individual health plan in place. The health care plan will be designed around their identified individual health needs including their physical, emotional and sexual health needs. Identified health areas of concerns or development are outlined in the plan and how positive outcomes will be achieved and measured. The plan is written in consultation with the child/young person, and with their consent the involvement of other relevant professionals and adults who care about them. This is kept in the young person's health file and is accessible to all members of staff.

The child/young person's keyworker will ensure that all relevant information is listed in their healthcare plan. This information will include:

- All immunisations had and any due
- Any known allergies
- Optical health needs
- Dental health needs
- Audible health needs

- Any involvement from outside agencies such as CAMHS
- Any dietary requirements
- An overview of the child/young person's medical history
- Any medication requirements

All medication required for each child/young person is ordered, stored, administered and disposed of in line with the General Pharmaceutical guidelines and the homes Administration of Medication policy and procedure. Records of administration of medication are kept by the home including non-prescribed medication, where prior agreement has been sought with the Parent and/or Local Authority.

Positive Relationships

Alder Tree House promotes positive contact with the children and young people's families wherever possible. We understand the significance of family contact throughout the child/young person's life journey. Depending on what care plans are in place for each child/young person, will vary the nature of engagement with their families.

The team at Alder Tree House will make positive relationships with the children and young people's families in all cases where it is appropriate. Communication between the team and the children and young people's family members, or any other significant people in the child/young person's life is key to promoting problem free contact.

All contact will be managed in line with the Local Authority Care Plan and any subsequent Care Orders and Risk Assessments.

All contact arrangements are reviewed and discussed at the children and young people's statutory review meetings. At Alder Tree House we will ensure that we work with the child/young person, their families and professionals to ensure that their contact plans are safe and appropriate. No changes to contact will be made without the approval of the Local Authority.

At Alder Tree House, we also place a significant emphasis on enabling children and young people to lead normal lives in terms of establishing and promoting new friendships. Where possible, we aim to promote support and enable the children and young people to engage in friendships through out of school activities. We create an environment in the home where friends of the children and young people can visit and come for tea, if it's appropriate to do so.

Protection of Children and Young People

All staff at Alder Tree House are required to undergo specific training courses for them to safeguard our children and young people. Safeguarding our children and young people is the paramount concern and the objective of the home is to keep children and young people free from harm, whilst allowing them to develop through adolescence, taking managed risks and learning from their decisions and choices. Some of these courses will include Safeguarding, Missing, CSE/CCE Gangs and County Lines, Self-harm, FGM, Radicalisation and Extremism and many more.

All staff at Alder Tree House are required to undergo training in Positive Behaviour Management and Trauma Based Practice. This aims to give them the skills, strategies and confidence in managing behaviours associated with children and young people that have experienced some level of harm. Ensuring the staff take part in a structured training framework which promotes a consistent approach from the whole team. The team will actively manage

behaviour using preventative and de-escalation techniques which rely on the reinforcement of positive behaviour and will use sanctions/ restraint only as a last resort. All behaviours which our children and young people display will be discussed within supervisions, 1-to-1 discussions and our team meetings where Individual Behaviour Plans (IBP) can be developed and will ensure all the team use a consistent approach. The IBP will identify behaviours and triggers and inform our responses, avoiding any response that could impact negatively on any child or young person.

In line with Alder Tree House Policy and Procedure, the focus for staff will be in diffusing, distracting, and de-escalating any incidents but in the event, incidents escalate to a point where the child/ young person or staff member are at risk of significant harm, all staff will be trained in de-escalation methods of physical intervention, this as mentioned previously would be a last resort. Here at Alder Tree House, restraint is only used to safeguard and is in no way used as a form of discipline.

All DSKL8 trained staff receive refresher training when required and routinely every two years to ensure they remain competent and are up to date with new legislation and any new techniques introduced by DSKL8. The Registered Manager monitors staff on a regular basis to ensure they are working to agreed Team-Teach techniques which are available to staff if they have any questions about restraint or other physical interventions.

To develop confidence in the team around restraint practice sessions can be undertaken in Team Meetings and during team building events.

At Alder Tree House, we employ the PACE model to support and inform our practice with the children in our care. The PACE model was developed by the Clinical Psychologist Dan Hughes, and looks at Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy to help carers form secure attachments with children and develop a safe space for open communication. Thus, creating the ideal environment to support positive behaviour change.

Playfulness

Playfulness is about us using a light-hearted, reassuring tone, similar to parent-child interactions to create an atmosphere of safety and reassurance, where no one feels judged labelled. This helps the staff to support the child to better cope with positive feelings.

Acceptance

Acceptance is about actively communicating that you accept the feelings, thoughts and internal struggles underneath the child's outward behaviour. It is not about accepting the behaviour, rather, helping teach the child not to feel ashamed of their inner turmoil.

Curiosity

Curiosity, without judgement, is how we help children become aware of their inner life. It's about wondering out loud without necessarily expecting an answer in return. Phrases like "I wonder if..." will help the child to name their thoughts and emotions.

Empathy

Feeling a child's sadness or distress and being emotionally available to them during times of difficulty shows the child that they are not alone and that the adult is strong enough to support them.

Bullying

The home does not tolerate any form of bullying. Staff at the home play an important role in the early detection of bullying and it is their responsibility to act quickly to minimise any distress that others may be causing children and young people in our care. Alder Tree House has an anti-bullying policy, which strives to support children and young people who are bullied and offers suitable guidance to staff in relation to challenging and modifying bullying behaviour. The policy includes definitions of all types of bullying with specific reference to race, gender and sexual orientation.

All staff will also attend anti-bullying training.

We believe that young people accused of bullying may need help just as much as those being bullied. Their behaviour may be connected to hidden personal and social problems. Other children may manipulate them, or they may be falsely accused. Working with a team of professionals around the young person then both bullies, and those who are being bullied can be supported to have a positive outcome to any identified episodes.

Care Planning

The care plan of each child/young person, as designed by their placing authority, this plan shall be the basis for initial service provision but will be reviewed as the child/young person settles and develops.

Daily records will be completed about each child/ young person and a progress against the plan report will be written and sent to the Independent Reviewing Officer prior to any review.

Ideally, we shall endeavour for all children and young people moving into our home to be planned. This will present the following opportunities:

- Reduces the opportunity for disruptions to other children and young people already settled in the home.
- The child/young person is able and will be supported to arrange pre-planned visits where they would have insights of what their new home would look like for them, meet some of the staff and meet the other children and young people they will be living with should they choose to make their move, and what would be expected of them for their stay with us to be a success.
- They will be issued a copy of the Children and Young People's Guide/ pack and encouraged (supported) to air their views and have any of their questions answered.
- Both young people (moving in and already moved in) will have an opportunity to air their views regarding prospects of having another child/young person living in the house. These views will be taken seriously, and clarifications will be made to provide assurances to all concerned.
- It also provides an opportunity to clarify the best possible matching of young people to the home.
- Each child/young person will be allocated a named key worker who will play a central role in the coordination of all services as well as overseeing the records pertaining to their young person.

Outline of our planned admission process

1ST STAGE - INITIAL REFERRAL

Placement Prospect Assessment (Responsible Individual and Registered Manager)

- Upon receipt of referral paperwork (and any further information from agencies supporting the prospective referral) the matching process will begin, a thorough Impact Risk Assessment is carried out to inform a decision on whether the child/young person's needs are relative to the capacity of service and what, if any, impact there would be on other children and young peoples who live at the home.
- Discussions will be facilitated with already settled young people in the home, as well as the staff team to discuss the prospective admission. The outcome of the meeting confirms whether or not we progress to the 2nd Stage.

2nd STAGE – INFORMAL VISITS

Introduction and Fact-Finding Registered Manager Visit (Registered Manager and Team Member)

- If appropriate the Registered Manager (with another staff member) will arrange to visit the young person in their current home to meet and introduce themselves
- This provides us with an opportunity to outline/scope our provision and service.
- We will encourage, support, and arrange for the young person and their parent/Carer or Social Worker to have an informal visit to the home. This affords them an opportunity to look around their potential new home and meet some of the staff as well as the other young people.
- A positive visit outcome where both the child and our staff team take a view that the placement will best serve the prospective young person's interests, would result in the referral progressing to 3rd Stage.

3RD STAGE – INFORMAL VISITS

Key Worker Identification and Pre-Admission Care and Placement Planning Meeting (Young Person, Social Worker and Staff Team)

- When suitable, an opportunity for further visits will be offered.
- Putting the child/young person at the forefront of their care planning, a Key Worker will be identified in a process of consultation involving the child/young person and their Social Worker.
- Arrangements for a pre-admission care and placement plan meeting will be organised.

Emergency Placement Procedure

The Registered Manager will only accept children and young people to live at the home, where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to their assessed needs, as recorded in their relevant plans, these decisions will be recorded through pre-placement planning and impact risk assessments.

- Alder Tree House will not accept emergency referrals from the Police or YOT, this would be unfair and disruptive to the other children and young people who reside at the home.
- Accepting an emergency placement will take away the ethos of a homely environment for the children and young people in our care.

Transition from their Home

Based on the children and young people's care plan/pathway plan, a transition strategy shall be put in place to enable them to have the confidence and ability to move on to independence. Using our knowledge of each child/young person we shall contribute to the pathway planning process working with other relevant persons unless there is urgent need to move the children and young people because of concerns for their safety or others.

We acknowledge that circumstances around the transition may be lengthy or may be a relatively quick process. In addition to the transition plan, any key work sessions completed with the children and young people must be fully recorded and used as evidence towards what support has been offered.

If a child/young person is moving to another home, then a thorough handover shall be completed. This can be recorded on a transition handover sheet. This provides the new home with information about the child/young person to enable them to build positive relationships and support planning. Wherever possible planned visits will also be undertaken providing the opportunity for information sharing and for the child or young person to ask any questions and to meet with their new team and see their new home.

Leadership and Management

Our Home:

Alder Tree House
20 Reedville
Oxton
Wirral
CH43 4UH
Telephone:

The Registered Provider of the home is:

Acorns to Oaks Children's Care and Support
Suite 3
125-129 Witton Street
Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 5DY

The Responsible Individual of the home is:

Helen Johnson
Suite 3
125-129 Witton Street
Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 5DY

Telephone:

Email: Helen.johnson@acorns2oaks.co

The Registered Manager of the home is:

NAME
Telephone:
Email:

The Registered Manager is responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient numbers of experienced and trained staff in order to meet the needs of our children and young people. The staff group at Alder Tree House will consist of both Male and Female workers.

All staff working within the home are employed by Acorns to Oaks Children's Care and Support and shall be appropriately trained to undertake the various tasks and responsibilities associated with providing an excellent residential service.

The carers at Alder Tree House will be motivated to be passionate about their work and have an overriding commitment to the children and young people in our care.

All our carers at Alder Tree House will receive regular supervision from the Registered Manager or the Deputy Manager. Supervision shall afford the opportunity to discuss in detail the needs of the children and young people and how they could best be met, how well staff are meeting the expectations of their performance, and what assistance they may require supporting the children and young people effectively.

Our staff shall have regular team meetings and team days where we will come together to share practice, develop ideas, and undertake group training. The Registered Manager shall be supervised by the Responsible Individual and attend regular Management Meetings.

Training is not limited to the achievement of specific qualifications, important though these are. Alder Tree House has a training matrix and workforce development plan which focuses on the priorities for staff training over a twelve-month period. As well as mandatory training, the staff team shall be offered additional specialist training to meet the needs of the children and young people in our care at that time and to offer more support to themselves. The Manager shall invite trainers or experts from partner services to staff meetings to share knowledge or offer training or support to the staff team to increase and keep up to date with our knowledge, skills, and training.

There will be always a minimum of 2 staff on shift, including sleeping in. This will vary dependent on the numbers of children and young people living in the home at any one time and on their individual needs.

The Manager, Deputy Manager and the Senior Support Worker will be available for on-call duties and all this information will be listed on the staff rota. The Manager's working hours will be predominantly Monday to Friday 9-5, however there is a flexible approach to the hours dependent on the needs of the children/young people and service.

Staffing

Job Title and Name	Professional Qualifications	Relevant Experience
Responsible Individual		
Registered Manager		
Deputy Manager		

