

# **BLUEBELLS SHORT BREAK UNIT**

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# INTRODUCTION

The Kent County Council Short Break Service is run in accordance with National Care Standards Act 2000. The Handling of Medicines in Social Care (Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain) and Fire and Health and Safety legislation.

The Short Break Service also operate to the philosophy of 'Children First' as advocated in the Children Act 1989.

As a local authority provision, the Short Break Service adheres to the Kent County Council Social Services Directorate policy and procedures. These incorporate written guidance and training in various areas of work, to inform and ensure the delivery of quality residential care for children.

We aspire to work in partnership with Kent Community Health NHS Trust, to provide services for Children with additional or complex health needs.

The purpose of a short break is to provide children and young disabled people with time away from their parents/carers and allow them access to a range of social and recreational opportunities and experiences.

# **BLUEBELLS SHORT BREAK UNIT**

Bluebells is situated in the quiet village of Detling. The village has easy access to the M20 and a regular bus service to Maidstone, the nearest big town. The home has its own minibus.

The unit shares a driveway with a residential cottage but has some allocated parking for visitors. It has security gates which are locked at night and opened during daytime hours.

Bluebells was built on the site of the old primary school and the building has been completely refurbished to meet the needs of disabled children. There is a sizeable garden at the back, laid to lawn, and a smaller outside area which can be used for meals or table play in finer weather.

# **List of Facilities Available**

## **Outside**

The back garden runs along the length of the property and grass with a play area. There is a shed for children's toys as well as a swing and see saw. The garden overlooks the village park, a small area which can be accessed directly from the back garden through locked gates – this affords the children extra space to play and also provides a pleasant and open outlook from the garden. There is a quieter garden situated outside of the play room which has a raised flower bed for children to grow flowers, and herbs.

## **Inside**

On entering the building visitors are welcomed before going through electronically operated entrance doors into the hallway.

On the left the corridor leads to the offices, a staff sleep in room, a laundry and a toilet which can be used by ambulant, more able children. At the far end are fire doors leading outside.

On the right of the entrance doors there is a large storage cupboard, bedroom 4 which also serves as a sensory room on occasion and a larger, fully equipped playroom which houses a 'soft play' corner. The playroom has fire doors leading outside to an area which is covered and be used for children's activities.

There are a few small steps leading to the lower level and a platform lift alongside to facilitate wheelchair users. Once on the lower level, there is a big bathroom comprising specialised toilet, bath and height adjustable changing couch.

Beyond this are three bedrooms –two with height adjustable beds and ceiling hoists and one 'easy clean' room with a specialised soft bed for use by individual children. There is another fire exit leading to the back garden. Also in this corridor is the locked medication area and a large linen cupboard.

To the right of the stairs there is a doorway leading to a lounge, dining room and kitchen which is only accessible to staff. The lounge has doors leading out to the garden.

## **Daily Routine**

Children and young people will be supported to get up and dressed and gather in the lounge.

They will have their breakfast in the dining room – usually between 7 – 8.30 am on school days.

At weekends and holidays breakfast may be later if children prefer to stay in bed longer.

After breakfast school transport will arrive at various times to take children to school. Depending on where they go to school will depend on what time transport is booked to arrive.

During term time there will be minimal staff at the unit after the children go to school, but more are available when children return from school. There will be a range of activities before the evening meal at 5pm. After the meal there is a period of relaxation before the children begin bathing and getting ready for bed.

At weekends and in holiday's staff are available throughout the day to plan activities for children. Lunch will be at 12.30pm and a change of staff will occur shortly after that period.

At the end of the day the night staff arrive and usually all the children are settled into bed by then. They check the children at regular intervals according to their individual needs and a shift leader sleeps in to provide additional support and to meet health and safety requirements.

The unit has an 'out of hours' on call system should any serious issues arise.

## **Philosophy of Care**

The philosophy of the overnight residential short breaks units is of 'children first' – a philosophy advocated in the Children Act 1989.

To facilitate this we aim to offer the following:

### **CHOICE**

We are committed to offering children and families choice in aspects of the service. We can implement this by maintaining good communication with families, keeping them informed of all issues and valuing their contribution to the Unit. On a day to day basis, the children are actively encouraged to be involved in all areas of choice and decision making during their stay.

### **RIGHTS**

We are committed to working in a non-discriminatory way and to challenge any situations which might impede this process.

### **FULFILLMENT**

We aim to provide a service which enables the young people using it to reach their potential and achieve attainable goals which are individual to them and which will promote self-esteem.

### **INDEPENDENCE**

We encourage children to be as independent as they can within a safe environment. This will mean different things for different children and their individuality should not be compromised.

### **PRIVACY**

We will ensure that children's privacy and confidentiality is respected at all times. Personal care issues will be handled in a sensitive, safe way.

### **DIGNITY**

We respect the children in our care for their individuality and ensure that they are valued for who they are and not for what they can achieve.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>AIMS</b> What we aspire to do</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OBJECTIVES</b> How we will achieve these aims</p>
<p>To provide quality residential overnight short breaks for children and their families which are homely and welcoming and tailored to individual needs</p>	<p>We will have a clear referral and admission procedure. Each child and young person will have an individualised Care Plan constructed in conjunction with parents and other professionals. There will be clear service procedures which will ensure privacy, dignity and respect for children and young people at all times.</p>
<p>To provide high standards of physical and emotional care in a safe environment where the welfare of children is paramount.</p>	<p>Our practice will reflect the diverse needs of the resident children in order to promote and celebrate difference and provide good opportunities for all.</p>
<p>To ensure staff are trained to meet the needs of the diverse group of resident children and young people.</p>	<p>Staff will be trained to National Minimum Standards and to Diploma level 3 in caring for children and young people. Ongoing training and development will be consistent.</p>
<p>To provide an enabling environment where children and young people can have a fun time and can grow and develop aided by clear boundaries and a consistent approach.</p>	<p>We will provide a range of social and recreational opportunities which promote fun, engagement and peer friendships within a safe and secure environment.</p>
<p>To provide opportunities where children can voice their opinions, express their needs and exercise their rights.</p>	<p>We will ensure children and young people are encouraged to exercise choice throughout their stay and take part in regular consultation through a variety of means.</p>
<p>To ensure that families who use our service have a clear understanding of responsibilities and expectations on both sides and know the process for communicating, celebrating and complaining.</p>	<p>We will communicate with families through reviews, annual feedback questionnaires and by daily engagement to ensure that all processes are clearly known and understood.</p>



## **Staffing Arrangements**

The home is managed on a day to day level by the Registered Manager, who in turn is answerable to the County Manager, Residential.

The staff at Bluebells are appointed under the 'Choosing with Care' framework – a rigorous selection procedure which ensures good quality staff who are all checked under Criminal Records Guidance.

We have an integrated staff team, comprising both Health and Social Care staff.

Health staff are recruited through an equally robust recruitment process, which includes DBS checks.

There is a Lead Nurse for Residential Short Breaks who oversees issues across the five units in the county. Additionally there is a Practice Educator based in the unit.

The Practice Educator nurse is a qualified and experienced nurse and will work as part of the team, providing expert and specialist advice, up to date and evidence based teaching and assessment of clinical skills competency and support to the whole team including Children's Residential Workers, Shift leaders and Band 3 Children's Support Workers.

They will be responsible for planning, delivering and facilitating all in-house clinical skills training to both Health and Social Care Staff, as dictated by the needs of the children accessing the service, ensuring the clinical care delivered to children accessing residential short breaks is safe, up to date and of a high quality.

The role will also provide ongoing support to the team; provide clinical supervision to children's support workers and the Practice Educator nurse will also act as mentor to nursing students and other multi-discipline learners and lead the induction and orientation for new staff as required.

The Staff Group at Bluebells are primarily female – for no particular reason, and we are aware of the issues this presents for the young people in our care. However, as we provide short-term breaks, we are confident that by being integrated into the community through recreational activity and education, they are able to experience positive male role models too.

As the unit offers short term breaks, we do not operate a key worker system. On occasions when children are with us longer, we will allocate a named worker for the duration of their placement.

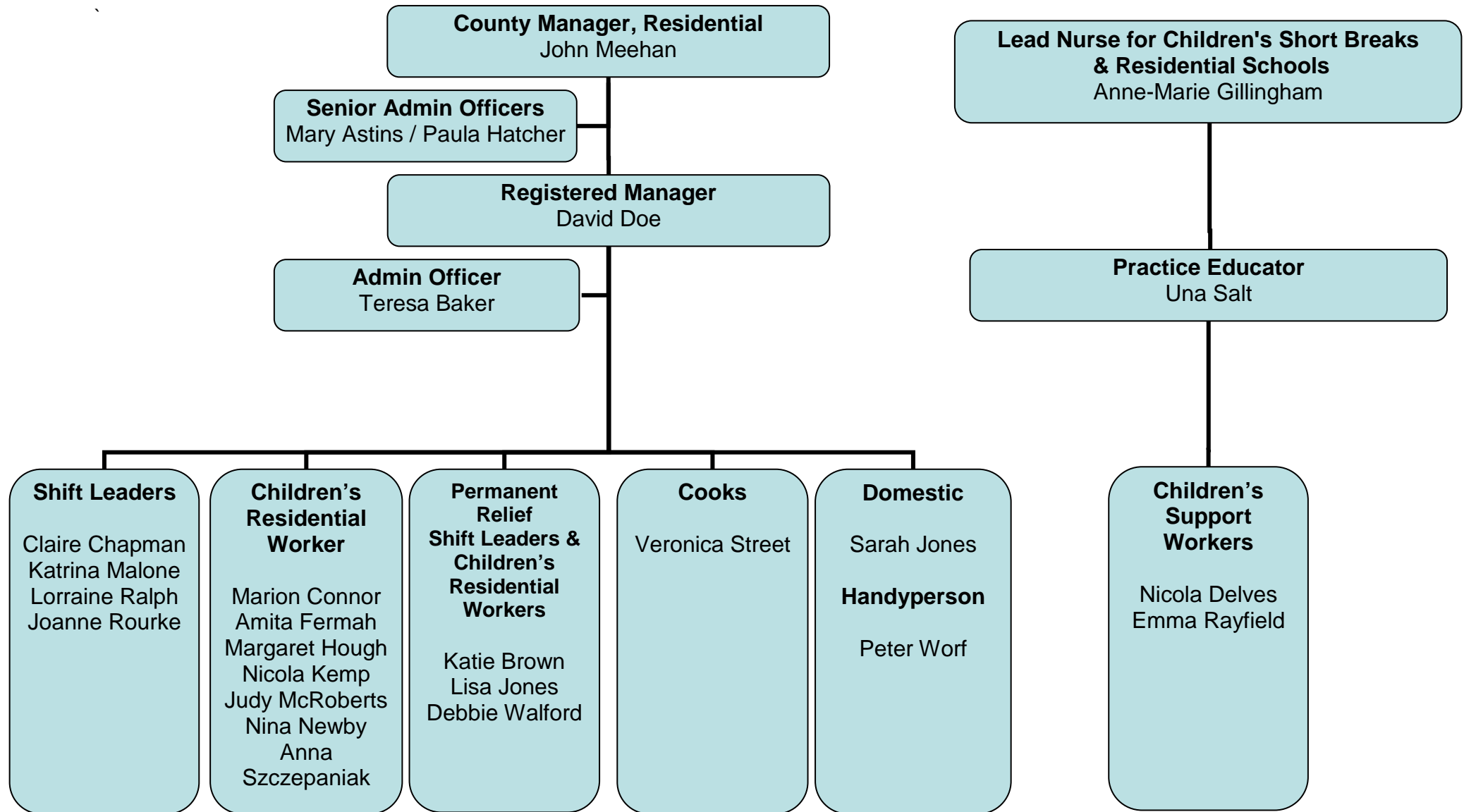
In the following pages there is a list of staff who work at the unit, along with a list of their child care qualifications.

## **Staff List**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Role</u></b>	<b><u>Qualification</u></b>
David Doe	Registered Manager	CMI Level 5 Diploma Leadership and Management Pending
Claire Chapman	Shift Leader	NVQ3 – CCYP 2002
Katrina Malone	Shift Leader	Level 3 CCYP
Lorraine Ralph	Shift Leader	NVQ3 CCYP
Joanne Rourke	Shift Leader	CACHE – Childcare CACHE – Nursery Nurse
Nicola Kemp	CRW	Level 3 CCYP
Judy McRoberts	CRW	Intro to Residential Childcare – Greenwich Level 3 Diploma Pending
Nina Newby	CRW	NAMCW – Childcare NVQ3- Health and Social Care
Marion Connor	CRW	Level 3 CCYP
Amita Fermah	CRW	NVQ2 – Health and Social Care Level 3 CCYP
Margaret Hough	CRW	Nursery Nurse Certificate
Anna Szczepaniack	CRW	NVQ2 – Care Level 3 CCYP
Nicola Delves	CSW	Adv. Diploma in Children’s Nursing
Emma Rayfield	CSW	
Elizabeth Jones	PR Shift Leader	CACHE L3 – Diploma in Child Care & Education 2007
Deborah Walford	PR Shift Leader	RNLD
Katie Brown	PR CRW	
Una Salt	Practice Educator	RNLD
Teresa Baker	Administration Officer	ECDL Level 2
Veronica Street	Cook	
Peter Worf	Handy Person	

KEY: CRW Children’s Residential Worker  
 CCYP Diploma in Caring for Children & Young People  
 NSW Nursing Support Worker  
 CSW Children’s Support Worker  
 PE Practice Educator

# Staff Flow Chart



## **Staff Training and Supervision**

As indicated previously, staff are appointed through a nationally recognised process, 'choosing with care' and many will come with some childcare qualifications already.

The Registered Manager holds the Level 3 CMI Diploma in First Line Management, and is working towards the Level 5 CMI Diploma in Management and Leadership as a requirement of Care Standards.

The Lead Nurse for Short Breaks has a degree in nursing and works with the Practice Educator in planning training and development for the health staff.

The Children's Residential Workers are required to undertake the Diploma in Caring for Children and Young People.

Training is available globally throughout the department for these qualifications. In addition, the unit has in house training provided by specialists in areas such as Moving and Handling, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Behaviour Management and Medication Administration.

Training is an ongoing process and as well as accessing courses available within the Directorate, the unit closes to children for two weeks in the year to undertake and update on specialist areas.

Health staff have an ongoing programme of training, to ensure their registration is up to date.

The Families and Social Care Directorate is 'Investors in People' accredited and committed to providing ongoing training and development for staff, so that high standards are maintained.

## **Supervision of Staff**

Once appointed, staff follow an Induction Programme and thereafter are allocated a supervisor to monitor, review and develop their performance.

This ensures good, consistent childcare practice and also allows staff to develop both themselves and the service.

## **Team Meetings**

Weekly team meetings are held with a fixed agenda, where many issues relating to the children of the unit are discussed. The focus of the meeting is related to Child Care issues. This ensures good communication and sharing of information for the whole staff group including target setting and actions/outcomes.

## **Admissions**

The criteria for selection to Bluebells that the child or young person has a learning disability – they may also have associated physical or health problems. Following our integration with health, many children may have more complex health needs. They may be either male or female and aged between 5 and 17 years. They cannot attend the Unit beyond their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. All children accessing the service are referred by the Disabled Children's Team and attend specialised Educational provisions.

Once a decision is made that the child can be referred to Bluebells the Disabled Children's Team and the family is invited to visit and see the premises for themselves, with their social worker. A planned period of introduction takes place when full information is collected and an assessment of the child's needs is obtained. A decision is made not only on eligibility criteria but also on other factors such as whether or not short break care is the most appropriate service for the individual child.

We have dependency criteria in place – a system whereby children are awarded points to assess their level of ability in all areas of their lives. Once collated, these points provide us with an overall figure for each child which allows us to see which children are more dependent – this may be for physical, emotional or behavioural reasons. We use this information as a working tool when planning our bed space for the year.

When we are planning the groups we work to a maximum number of points per week, which means that if we have very dependent children resident, there will be less of them. Conversely, if we have more able children, the number in the group will be higher. The system of pointing is done in conjunction with parents and social workers to provide a fair and objective result. As a result, the number of children using the unit each week varies and the staff ratio varies to accommodate greater levels of need.

## **Unplanned Admissions**

There may be occasions when we are asked to care for a child on an unplanned basis. When the child is known to us, we are clearly the most appropriate option.

If the child is not already known to us we ensure all necessary information is provided, to guarantee the child's stay is a positive one.

Decisions regarding these placements would be directed through the County Manager, Children's Residential and Short Break Services.

If an unplanned placement becomes longer than anticipated, discussions with regulatory bodies will be undertaken, regarding potential variations in our registration.

In the case of any unplanned placement, it is imperative that regular meetings and reviews occur, to monitor the situation and to consider longer term options.

## **Reviews**

After an introductory period, an initial review is held. At this meeting it is a requirement that 'Looked After Children' paperwork is completed. This includes full information of the child's background and needs as well as an assessment of the family situation.

Built into this process is a written agreement between the child/young person and their family, the Social Worker and the Unit, as to the service we will provide. We construct our own Care Plan with the family, which gives detailed information about every aspect of the child and will also include an individual Risk Assessment and a Positive Handling Plan. These plans are updated constantly, to ensure we acknowledge each child's changing needs.

Thereafter, Reviews are six monthly. Parents, Social Workers and a senior representative of the Unit, use this opportunity to discuss the service and to plan for the child's or young person's needs. The child or young person may attend themselves or alternatively their parent will act as their advocate.

Additional reviews can be called at any other time should there be a particular issue which requires discussion.

## **Quality Assurance**

Inspections of Children's Homes are conducted in line with Children's Homes Regulations 2001.

Statutory (Regulation 33) visits are carried out on a monthly basis, by an independent visitor. These visits are recorded in line with the Ofsted framework.

Unannounced inspections are conducted regularly by Ofsted and the findings are published, along with any recommendations. Copies of the inspection reports are available at the unit in hard copy, or online via the Ofsted website.

In order to provide an effective service, where good practice prevails, we adhere to the following recognised policies and procedures.

## **Health and Safety**

We maintain high standards of physical care and operate within the framework of the Health and Safety at work Act 1974 and other associated regulations.

Regular Health and Safety Audits are undertaken to ensure compliance and monitor standards.

A number of staff are qualified in First Aid and regular updated training is undertaken.

The Unit is inspected by Fire Officers and we operate regular fire drills. Fire Safety Equipment checks are carried out in line with the Fire Safety Risk Assessment.

We maintain documented Risk Assessments on individual children, the environment and activities undertaken. All of these are regularly reviewed and updated.

## **Standard Operating Procedures for the Administration of Medication**

Within the requirements of Ofsted, we have specific responsibilities. Additionally we adhere to guidelines set out in the County Policy regarding administration of medication (Appendix 1)

We keep a Medicines Administration record for each child and young person, regardless of whether or not they are on current medication. This information must comply with all medication packaging supplied to us.

Parents / carers are required to provide us with written information from the GP or Consultant regarding their child's medical needs, including clear instructions for medication and administration.

Staff designated to the task of undertaking administration of medication will be trained and competent in this role.

## **Incidents / Observations / Accidents**

We have a procedure to not or record any accidents or incidents which may occur while the child or young person is resident. Health and Safety regulations require that specific documentation is completed at the time of any such occurrence.

On admission, staff seek information from parents regarding any incidents or accidents which may have happened prior to the child's arrive but which might be relevant for us to know.

Observations regarding behaviour and general demeanour are also noted, as they may be significant.

If may be necessary to notify others of any issues as appropriate. (Appendix 2)



## **Safeguarding Procedure**

We operate Safeguarding Procedures in line with guidelines operated by Kent Safeguarding Children Board.

All staff have a clear responsibility to observe and take action, where necessary, in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the children in our care. (Appendix 3)

## **Anti-Bullying Guidance**

We take the subject of bullying seriously and have a policy outlining how we would deal with these issues, should they occur. These include strategies for the child who is bullied and for the child who has exhibited the bullying behaviour.

We aim to create an environment where staff and children treat each other with mutual respect. Children's Meetings and Team Meetings are forums to discuss these issues and Care Plans and Risk Assessments will reflect decisions about actions taken. (Appendix 4)

## **Behaviour Management**

We operate within the KCC framework and have clear guidelines to ensure matters of discipline are handled with sensitivity and care. Staff will seek to promote positive behaviour by providing appropriate engagement and support in activities and by consistently adopting the strategies identified in each child's Care Plan.

Sanctions can be imposed for some behaviours and as a last resort, when physical intervention may be necessary, staff adopt methods in line with 'Team Teach' which is an accredited method of behaviour management.

Any sanction or physical intervention is recorded on the daily reports for parents'/carers' information and in the appropriate unit logs. These records are also scrutinised by Managers and Inspectors. (Appendix 5)

## **Unauthorised Absence / Missing Child Procedure**

Unauthorised absence (absconson from the unit) will be reported to the Police, recorded and notified to Ofsted and the local authority.

The security of the unit and the practice of close supervision by staff, mean these absences rarely occur. (Appendix 6)

## **Moving and Handling**

The unit operates with the framework of Health and Safety and the Moving and Handling regulations 1992. Regular training and supervision of staff ensures good practice and consistent standards of care are maintained in the physical moving and handling of children. We have Trained Trainers with the team to ensure training is continuous and that practice is safe.

## **Equality and Diversity**

The Families and Social Care Directorate is committed to promoting equality and diversity issues in several areas;  
Age, Disability, Faith, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Sexuality, Social Inclusion.

We promote equality of opportunity for the individuals in our care and encourage anti-discriminatory practice by recognising rights, choices and beliefs of the children and their families.

Any issues of difference should be included in all care planning, to ensure individual needs are recognised and met. This includes any necessary arrangements for the child's religious instruction and observance.

All staff are encouraged to challenge any discriminatory practice they may witness.

## **Complaints Procedure**

The Directorate has a clear complaints procedure for parents/carers and copies of the leaflet are available in the reception area. (Appendix 7)

The unit also operates a complaints process for children. This recognises the broad range of capabilities of children using this service and aims to facilitate the process to achieve satisfactory outcomes. (Appendix 8)

## **Education**

Children attend their usual school whilst resident with us.

Whilst at school, liaison with the unit is maintained via the home/school book or by telephone. Any issues arising are dealt with swiftly.

Our close links with school through meetings and training, ensure good collaborative working toward children's best outcomes. We aim whenever possible to follow management plans initiated by schools and incorporate them into the child's Care Plan.

If a child was excluded from full time education for any reason we would liaise with the Social Worker and seek to make arrangements.

## **Consultation with Children**

It is important that we maintain good communication and feedback with children and their families.

Children's views are sought on a day to day basis and by the relationships they form with the staff.

Wherever possible, we encourage children to attend reviews, although often their parents/carers will choose to act as their advocate.

We have staff trained in a variety of communication systems such as Makaton and PECS and utilise children's own communication systems where possible.

We have a programme of consultation in place, which includes questionnaires to both parents and children as well as feedback forms for children and monthly children's meetings.

## **Contact and Communication**

Bluebells is committed to maintaining honest and effective communication and contact arrangements with families, schools, social workers and any other appropriate agency.

We aim to achieve this by:-

- creating a friendly and welcoming environment.
- maintaining on-going communication via direct contact, letter, newsletter or phone call.
- attending and contributing to the annual review process along with families and social workers.
- encouraging parents to maintain contact with the unit during the child's stay. This may be either with staff or the child – whichever is more appropriate.
- encouraging children to maintain telephone contact with home during their stay (if appropriate).
- facilitating family visits in the event of a child being resident for a longer period.
- sharing concerns and achievements with families
- providing a report at the end of each stay, which details events and activities which have taken place.
- operating a comments book and encouraging feedback
- ensuring complaints and suggestions are listened to and acted on in accordance with Directorate guidelines.