

**STATEMENT of PURPOSE REVISED January 2023**

**THE CHILDREN'S HOME REGULATIONS**

**(Northern Ireland) 2005**

**SCHEDULE 1**

**Regulation 4(1)**

**Matters to be included in the**

**Statement of Purpose**

**Oaklands Short Breaks Unit**

**3-4 Victoria Grove**

**Armagh**

**Co Armagh**

**BT61 9DE**



**This Statement of Purpose will be made available on request to those people and agencies identified in Regulation 4 of the Children's Home Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005:**

Statement of purpose and children's guide

4.—(1) The registered person shall compile in relation to the children's home a written statement which shall consist of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1.

(2) The registered person shall provide a copy of the statement of purpose to the Regulation and Improvement Authority and shall make a copy of it available upon request for inspection by –

(a) any person who works at the children's home;

(b) any child accommodated in the children's home;

(c) the parent of any child accommodated in the children's home;

(d) the placing authority of any child accommodated in the home;

(e) the independent visitor (if one has been appointed), of any child accommodated in the children's home;

(f) the guardian ad litem (if one has been appointed), of any child accommodated in the children's home; and

(g) the Commissioner,

and in this paragraph references to a child who is accommodated in the children's home include a child in respect of whom accommodation in the children's home is being considered.

**Regulation 4 of the Children's Home Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.**

**Statement of Purpose**

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## INTRODUCTION

Oaklands is registered as a statutory residential children's home for children with an Intellectual Disability, operated by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

It is part of a quiet development of semi-detached bungalows on the outskirts of Armagh, which provides care to children and young people with an Intellectual Disability. Oaklands is a Three-bedded unit and was planned to mirror an ordinary living environment. It has three bedrooms, one of which has been equipped with sensory equipment including a ceiling projector and sensory lighting in various colours, shapes and sizes to help stimulate awareness, and also a ceiling hoist. Oaklands also has a substantial play area to the rear of the building.

Oaklands aims to provide regular planned short breaks for children and young people with an Intellectual Disability where this is their assessed need. As the unit employs both learning disability and children's nurses, specialist nursing care can be provided if required.

It is recognised that the mix of young people within residential units can be a significant factor in determining outcomes. In matching young people Oaklands will consider age, gender, experiences, behaviours, risk and need.

Oaklands works closely with a range of health and social care staff, plus education to ensure that the unit provides the highest quality services. Oaklands has established very effective working relationships with the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team, ID CAMHS, Psychology, Community Children's Nurses, Allied Health Professionals, the Children's Epilepsy Nurses and the Special Schools / Units throughout the Trust. Each child placed will have a community Social Worker acting as a key professional.

The management responsibility is delegated through the Southern Health & Social Care Trust to the Chief Executive and the Locality Head Children

with Disability Wraparound Services (Social Work lead). The Head of Service manages the Children's Disability Residential Services Manager, who provides supervision and support and to the Registered Manager responsible for all services provided within Oaklands.

***1. A statement of the overall aims of the children's home, and the objectives to be attained with regard to children accommodated in the home.***

**Purpose:**

Oaklands will provide short breaks care for children and young people with an Intellectual Disability aged between 12 years and up to the day before their 18th birthday. Any exceptions to this age range must be discussed and endorsed by the Head of Service and Assistant Director of Corporate Parenting, Children and Young People's Services, and a notification will be forwarded to RQIA in these circumstances.

Any Child accommodated in Oaklands under the age of 12 will have regular Core group and Multi professional meetings to review progress and to look at other alternatives regarding more appropriate caring arrangements ie family based placements involving the Short Breaks Team.

Some Children (under 12) and young people have concurrent planning within Residential services and the short breaks fostering service regarding placements and these are reviewed 6 monthly at the Overnight Forum.

Oaklands will provide planned and regular short breaks (3 beds) further to a comprehensive assessment and support plan that identifies this as appropriate for the child's needs and the needs of their family/carers. Complexities of some young people may mean that only 2 beds are utilised at any one time and this will depend on their assessment.

Oaklands will consider referrals for short breaks through a multi-disciplinary placement process. Oaklands may also facilitate emergency admissions where a full assessment has been carried out, an appropriate care /behaviour support plan is in place, and an emergency admission is deemed necessary. This must be discussed and endorsed by the Head of Service and Assistant Director of Corporate Parenting, Children and Young People's Services.

Oaklands premises may also be used by other professionals to assist in the provision of a service to children/young people who have additional needs. The Residential Services Manager needs to approve this service and it where possible not impact on the provision of short breaks.

Through the provision of short breaks, it is hoped that parents and families will benefit from the regular and planned breaks from caring, and feel the service supports them effectively in their caring role: that short break provision will “promote the upbringing of such children by their families”

(Children (NI) Order 1995 Article 18 1b).

While endeavouring to support parents and families, the priority within Oaklands is for each child’s individual needs to be met, their wishes and feelings considered, and that attending Oaklands is a meaningful, positive and enjoyable experience for him/her. The Home will provide a safe, comfortable and therapeutic but homely environment which will provide children and young people with a high standard of care.

Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS)

The Mental Capacity Act is designed to protect and empower people who lack the mental capacity to make their own decisions about their care and treatment. It applies to people 16 years and over.

Staff in Oaklands will have the knowledge and skills to safeguard young people and work within this legislation. To adhere to this staff will be provided with appropriate training.

### **Overall Objectives:**

- a) To offer a service to young people with an Intellectual Disability where their right to retain their personal dignity and independence is respected and encouraged.
- b) To offer a service, in partnership with parents, which is designed to meet the assessed needs of the child, and where special consideration is given to the appropriate matching of young people accommodated at the same time.
- c) To provide a high standard of care, which ensures the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual and cultural needs of the child are

met through a holistic approach to “wellbeing”, with particular attention being paid to specific needs.

d) To ensure a commitment to promoting and providing for the on-going educational needs of the individual child, by ensuring that whilst accommodated, each child/young person attends their school.

e) To provide a service designed to encourage and assist young people to maximise their potential and develop greater independence in the skills of daily living.

f) To ensure the young person’s needs continue to be met as identified in their Pre Admission Pathway assessment, through subsequent planning and implementation of same, and through the Looked After Children requirements and processes

g) To provide a copy of the Statement of Purpose to those individuals and agencies named in the regulations upon request for inspection:

(a) any person who works at the children’s home;

(b) any child accommodated in the children’s home;

(c) the parent of any child accommodated in the children’s home;

(d) the placing authority of any child accommodated in the home;

## ***2. A statement of the facilities and services to be provided for the children accommodated in the children’s home.***

The SHSCT aims to provide a comprehensive range of short breaks in Oaklands in order to meet the specific assessed needs of children / young people, and the needs of their parents / carers.

Oaklands provides overnight accommodation for young people aged between 12-18 years, both male and female. Some children/young people who stay for overnights will on occasions stay on for day care if required. Occasionally children under the age of 12 are accommodated but as noted above, only when endorsed by Senior Management.

Oaklands is a single storey bungalow which offers accommodation for up to 3 young people. It is comfortably furnished and comprised of 3 bedrooms in total, 1 of which is equipped with sensory equipment including a ceiling projector and sensory lighting in various colours, shapes and sizes to help stimulate awareness; 2 separate toilet/wet rooms; 1 toilet, 2 living areas; playroom and living room; a kitchen; 1 staff office/clinic room; 1 office and 1 office/storage room. A further bedroom which is used is to be repurposed as a clinical nursing room.

Each young person has their own bedroom with access to toileting /showering facilities. Oaklands also has an enclosed back area that has a summer house and safety matting for safe play. The grounds offer space in which young people and staff can engage in recreational activities. Oaklands aims to provide a safe, homely and caring environment in which young people are provided with opportunities to maximise their individual potential.

The young people are provided with outlets for social interaction both within the unit and in the wider community. A range of activities are offered which are appropriate to the individual and promote social and personal development.

Young people are also afforded the opportunity for religious observance, are encouraged to develop self-care skills, and engage in specifically tailored programmes of development as appropriate, e.g. healthy eating; road-safety awareness; self-protection skills. Communication is supported and promoted through the use of specialist communication systems such as TEACCH, PECS, MAKATON and BSL.

Oaklands aims to provide a service tailored to meet the holistic needs of each young person. To achieve this, short breaks/placements are planned for the individual, and young people are offered a range of activities during their stay. Staff involvement and intervention with young people is guided at all times by the SHSCT values, including respect for the dignity and value of young people and their families, being open and honest, and acting with integrity.

The planning and delivery of the service will be reviewed regularly, taking into consideration the changing demand for and needs of the service.

## **Co-worker**

All young people within Oaklands will be assigned a Co-worker.

The primary role of the Co-worker will be to focus on the young person's development of significant and sustainable relationships in their lives. The key-worker will undertake a number of responsibilities to achieve this goal:

- Be a link to the child and their family
- Ensure that the care plan is implemented, in liaison with and alongside the child's social worker, other relevant professionals, and residential colleagues
- Ensure that issues are brought to the staff meeting for discussion in relation to a specific young person
- Prepare feedback and attend the LAC review and other meetings relevant to the child's care

## **Individual Work**

Individual work will focus on areas set out in the Care Plan and might include:

- Making and sustaining relationships
- Social skills development
- Experiential learning
- Self-esteem / self protection
- Promoting educational health needs
- Behaviour management

Detailed Care Plans are drawn up for each young person outlining a range of needs and what is required to meet them. These include:

- Health
- Social
- Education
- Emotional
- Religious/Spiritual
- Cultural
- Self Care and Protection

## **OTHER SERVICES**

### **Monies**

Young people who are accommodated in Oaklands may bring pocket money with them. Oaklands staff sign pocket money in, receipts are retained and then returned to parents along with any remaining amount. Monies are kept securely within Oaklands in a safe if the young person cannot manage this independently, and managed in line with the SHSCT financial guidelines. Management of monies may be subject to audit and inspection.

### **Play / Recreation**

Oaklands will build positive links with local youth clubs, leisure centres and community projects. Young people are also encouraged to take part in play and recreation activities within Oaklands which residential staff will organise and deliver.

Staff members will be pro-active in ensuring that young people have opportunities to develop interests and hobbies which maintain community links.

### **Transport**

Young people will be encouraged to walk and cycle where appropriate to promote independence. The unit vehicle will be used for outings. A Transport assessment is carried out for all young people

### **Family Work**

The Trust will work in partnership with parents and families of young people placed in Oaklands. Family contact will always be promoted at a level suitable to the needs of the young person during short break stays. Staff will encourage young people and their families to remain in contact by telephone and by visits to Oaklands or the family home.

## **Working with other Professionals**

Oaklands will work within a multi-disciplinary approach and in partnership with other professionals as detailed below.

### **The Field Social Worker**

Field social workers retain case management responsibility for the young people and will be responsible for completing the LAC Review of Arrangements report, along the key-worker, prior to the review. The monitoring officer during monthly visits ensures that statutory visits occur in accordance with the Guidance for Social Workers Undertaking Statutory Visits.

### **ID CAMHS (Intellectual Disability Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services)**

Where a young person is known to ID CAMHS, the designated ID CAMHS professional will play an integral part in supporting the young person in line with the Care Plan.

### **CCN (Community Children's Nursing)service**

Where a young person is known to the CCN service, the designated CCN professional will play an integral part in supporting the young person in line with the Care Plan.

### **Links with Other Services**

The team will also liaise closely with other professionals, within voluntary, private and statutory agencies, in order to provide a comprehensive range of services to meet the needs of the young people. These agencies may include schools, AHPs, Health Promotion, local Councils, Education, community and voluntary sector services and other appropriate individuals and organisations.

**3. The name and address of the registered provider, and of the registered manager if applicable.**



**REGISTERED PROVIDER**

DR Maria O’Kane

Chief Executive

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE’S SERVICES

COLLEGE OF NURSING

CRAIGAVON AREA HOSPITAL

68 LURGAN ROAD

PORTADOWN

BT63 5QQ

**REGISTERED MANAGER**

Lucia McKee

Registered Manager

Oaklands Short Break Unit

3-4 Victoria Grove

Armagh

BT61 9DE

#### ***4) The Relevant Qualifications and Experience of the Registered Provider and if applicable the Registered Manager***

##### **Registered Manager:**

Mrs Lucia McKee

Mrs Lucia McKee is a professionally qualified Social Worker, with approx. 7 years' experience in a leadership /management role.

Lucia McKee is a professionally qualified Social Worker.

After completing her degree in Applied Psychology in University of Ulster Jordanstown in 1992, Lucia worked in the Voluntary and Private sectors with young people through Voluntary Services Belfast, homeless adults with Simon Community and a residential home for the elderly. Following and during her Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work 1995 she has worked within residential respite for children and adults with a learning disability.

When qualified in 1995 Lucia began her Social Work career in Adoption and Fostering moving on to a Children and Family Team (7years). In 2001 Lucia moved to Children's Disability Services fieldwork Team and ACE until March 2015 when she became Acting Team Leader in the Children's Disability Team in Armagh.

In June 2015 Lucia completed a postgraduate Certificate in Children and Loss with the Irish Hospice Foundation through Royal College of Surgeons Ireland and trained as a Cruse volunteer.

Lucia has worked as Manager of Oaklands since July 2016.

In addition, Lucia has completed SHSCT Leadership Programme.

**5. The number, relevant qualifications and experience of persons working at the children’s home, and if the workers are all of one sex, a description of the means whereby the home will promote appropriate roles models of both sexes.**

Name	Role	Qualifications	Length of Experience
Fergal White	Band 8a Operational Manager CWD Residential Services [Interim]	Llb Hons Law Degree Masters’ Degree in Social Work including Diploma in Social Work	Fergal has worked as a Social Worker and Team Leader in Children with Disabilities Services following his graduation in 2005. He is a qualified Practice Teacher also. He was appointed to this post in February 2013
Lucia McKee	Band 7- Manager 37.5 hrs	Bsc Hons Applied Psychology Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work	Appointed July 2016 Previous field Social Work experience and acting Team Lead experience for 1 year
Paula Feathers	Band 7 Temporary Deputy Manager 37.5 hrs	Bsc Hons Social Work	After graduating in 2015, Paula has worked as a social worker in the Craigavon and Armagh Childrens Disability Teams. She has commenced Acting Deputy Manager post 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2023 for 3 month period initially
Laura Kanis-Dickson	Band 6 – Intellectual Disability Nurse  37.5 hours	Registered Intellectual Disability Nurse	Laura had worked in Oaklands (Residential Short Breaks facility for children with ID) since she qualified in 2010 as a band 5. She then moved to working full time in Carrickore on a temporary basis (redeployed Feb 20 to January 21). Laura then moved to the NI hospice but returned to banking for CWD Residential in December 2022. She commenced her band 6 post on 30 January 2022.

Alison Ward	Band 5 Learning Disability Nurse	Diploma in nursery nursing NNEB and NNED in special education needs for children with learning disabilities. Registered Learning Disability Nurse	Castledillon nursing home – elderly Saras sunshine playgroup Meadows private nursing home – LD Longstone - LD Woodlawn – LD respite Dorsy – LD treatment and assessment Oaklands December 2021
Orla Murray	Band 5 – Learning Disability Nurse 37.5 hours	Registered Learning Disability Nurse	Orla has worked in Oaklands 7 years. Prior to this, she worked in a residential respite unit for children with complex needs for 3 years. Previous to this, Orla worked for 5 years with adults with a learning disability.
Victoria McClellan	Band 5 Staff Nurse 37.5 hours	Registered BSC Nursing Science Children’s Nursing 2012	2012-2014 Neo natal Nurse Craigavon Area Hospital. 2014 -2023 Special Care Baby Unit in Daisy Hill \hospital Newry. Victoria also worked in Oaklands a as bank staff.
Bernadette Smyth	Band 4 - Residential Support Worker  25 hours	Hons Degree in Health and Social care NVQ Child Care & Education	Previous experience working in hospital, community and residential settings for adults and children with learning disabilities. Vol work with mencap. She has worked in Oaklands since August 2018.
Teresa O’Neill	Band 4 - Residential Support worker	Qualifications K101 Introduction to Health & Social Care QCF Level 3 Health & Social Care CYP NVQ III Allied Health Professional Support N.V.Q Promoting	Previous experience working in children’s residential setting Teresa has worked in Oaklands for many years before achieving a permanent post in July 16. She has worked in Learning disability Services since 1991. Previous post in ACE Team working with young people with learning/emotional and social difficulties in Mainstream school. Full time in Oaklands from March 2017.

		Independence Level 2 N.V.Q Promoting Independence Level 3	
Valerie Nelson	Band 4 – Residential Support Worker  37.5 hours	NVQ Level 2/3 Health and Social Care	Valerie has been working in the Trust for 25 years she began working in Oaklands from August 2017. She has a lot of experience working with young people in community paediatrics and elderly residential services.
Mary Teresa Mackle	Band 4 Residential Support Worker 18 hours	NVQ level 3 Health and Social Care	Teresa has worked in Oaklands since it opened in 1993. Prior to working in Oaklands, she worked in Longstone and Tower Hill from 1977. She has always worked in the field of learning disability and has a wealth of experience and knowledge.
Marie Donnelly	Band 4 Residential Support Worker 15 hours	Level 3 diploma city and Guilds health and Social Care Children and Young people	Marie has worked in Oaklands since July 2013. Prior to this Marie worked in another Mainstream Children’s Home within the Trust.
Joan Dilworth	Band 5 Mental Health Nurse 37.5 hours	Bsc Hons in Health and Wellbeing. Degree in Mental Health Nursing 2019 Open University	Joan has been in the Trust since 2014 her experience is with, Family Intervention Teams Armagh then CAMHs and ID Camhs. She worked in Oaklands as a Band 4 Residential Support worker for approximately 2 years from August 17. She took up her Nursing post in January 2020.
William Paul King	Band 5 Registered Learning Disability Nurse 1994 Registered Childrens Nurse 2010 37.5 hrs	Registered Nurse (Learning Disability) with Diploma of H.E April 1994, Western Area College of Nursing. Registered Nurse	Paul has a range of experience he has held posts in Stradreagh Hosp LD Children’s ward, Nursing homes, NI Children’s Hospice and the RBHSC children’s ward Gastromony Specialist and the ED.

		(Children's Nursing) with Diploma of H.E July 2010, Q.U.B'	Paul commenced Oaklands as a Staff Nurse in April 2022
Marie Barkey	Band 5 – Learning Disability Nurse  Bank	Registered Learning Disability Nurse	Previous experience in hospital and children's residential setting. Marie works Bank Night Duty Only and has done so for a number of years.
Angela Cullen	Band 5 Learning Disability Nurse  Bank	Registered Learning Disability Nurse	Angela worked for many years in Longstone Hospital/Community sites. After Retirement she commenced Bank and has been working in Oaklands since 2017.
Sara Neville	Band 4 Residential Support Worker 37.5 hours	NVQ level	Sara's experience was in Woodlawn with adult learning Disability. Since leaving this post Sara has been working in Oaklands as a Bank worker for over a year. She obtained a permanent full time post in June 2022
Rory Doyle	Band 4 Residential Support Worker 37.5 hours	NVQ Level 3 in Health and Social care (Children and Young People) 2011 BA Hons In Health and Social Care 2015	Rory has been working with Adults and Young people with Learning disabilities in a variety of residential settings since 2005 giving him over 14 years' experience in this field. He commenced Oakland's in November 2019. Rory is on a career break from September 2022.
Karen Hughes	Band 4 – Residential Support worker 37.5 hours	EDI Level 3 NVQ in health and Social Care (Adults)	Karen worked as a Senior Care Assistant with Adults with learning Disability in The Meadows Richhill from 2007. She has been working in Oaklands from November 2019.
Leah Knipe	Band 4 – Residential Support worker 37.5 hours	Level 5 Childcare Management CACHE	Leah has worked in supporting CCN Team in the community and with young people in a Playgroup setting. She has 12 year's

		Commencing OU Pre Nursing Programme Sept 22	experience. Leah has been in Oaklands since December 2019.
Sharon Johnston	Band 4 Residential Support Worker 37.5 hrs	Qualifications are QCF Level 5 Leadership and management in Children's Care, Level 3 Children's Care Learning and Development. Commencing OU Pre registration Nursing Program Sept 22.	Commenced Oaklands in November 2017. Previous experience working in Intellectual Disability CAMHs service, Childcare/Nursery/playgroup setting. Sharon moved to FIT Team to support with Contact for a period of 2 years and returned to Oakland's October 21.
Wendy Nesbitt	Band 4 Residential Support Worker 37.5 hrs	Level 3 HSC Diploma (City & Guilds). This was completed by March 2020 Wendy also holds an English and History Degree. Commencing OU Pre Nursing Programme sept 22	Wendy has held posts in EMI units for 6-7 years and has also worked in adult supported living (challenging behaviour units) for approximately 2 years at the Heathers (Armagh) and also 2 ½ years in Ardaveen. She commenced her post in Oaklands in March 2022.
Nicola (Nicki) Jenkins	Band 4 Residential Support Worker 37.5 hrs	Adult Access Course Science Route 2016.	Nicki has worked for 15 years in Adult Residential Services (Bawn Cottage) 2 years in Orthopaedics in Craigavon hospital. Nicki commenced her post in Oaklands in March 2022
Katie Whiteside	Band 2 Domestic Support 16 hrs Temporary	Katie is completing her A-Levels She is also completing e-learning to support her role	Katie commenced Oaklands in July 21 as a temporary Domestic support she works 16 hours per week on a temporary arrangement.
Marion Finn	Band 2 cook/ Domestic Support	Health and Safety COSHH Food Hygiene	Marion commenced Oakland's in April 2014 being redeployed from St Luke's. Prior to this Marion worked in

	16 hours		St Luke's for 10 years. She reduced her hours from 27.5 to 16 hrs in 2020.
Geraldine Hunter	Band 2 cook/ Domestic Support 35 hours	705 1 and 2 706 1 and 2 707 1 COSHH Food Hygiene Health and Safety	Geraldine has almost 40 years' experience working within Hospital Catering in the Southern Trust. She was able to increase her hours in 2020 from 27.5 to 35 hours. She commenced Oaklands in 2017.
Vera O'Hagan	Band 3 Facility Administrator 18.75 hours	O'levels	Admin support. Vera has worked in Oaklands since October 2011. Prior to this she worked for 8 years as a senior receptionist for a GP practice. She also has worked as a clinical coder for 6 years (1994 – 2000) Vera has also worked in Carrickore short breaks unit in Newry as Admin support.
Mo Olatunji	Band 5 Staff Nurse Agency Ann's Nursing Care	Registered Nurse (RGN) 1998	Over 20 years Nursing experience Elderly and Learning Disability Has worked in Oaklands from Feb 2020
Pauline Wilson	Band 3 Agency Support Worker Ann's Nursing Care	NVQ level 2 Health and Social Care	20 years experience Nursing Homes and community settings has been supporting
Sharon Dale	Band 3 Agency Support Worker Ann's Nursing Care	Intro to counselling	9+ years experience working in Nursing homes other areas supporting vulnerable Adults.

The SHSCT has a number of core bank staff who are either nursing or social work qualified. The Trust also has a number of core bank support worker staff, who have a range of experience working in childcare and/or disability services.

Oaklands staff also bank in Bluebell House.

The staffing complement on shift in Oaklands will be consistent with the needs of the individual young people, as identified through risk assessment and the Looked After Children Placement Plan

## **Role of Shift Coordinator**

The 'shift coordinator' is the staff nurse on duty in each unit, who is responsible for overall governance within Oaklands out of normal office hours (5pm – 9am Weekdays, 5pm Friday – 9am Monday & Bank/Public Holidays).

All staff have attended mandatory in-service training such as multi-agency child protection and Safety Intervention and additional child specific training.

## ***6. The arrangements for the supervision, training and development of employees.***

Staff supervision takes place on a monthly basis for all full-time staff and pro-rotas for part-time staff.

The Residential Services Manager will be responsible for the supervision of the Registered Manager of Oaklands.

The Registered Manager will be responsible for the supervision of the Deputy Manager, Residential Support Workers, Cook and Housekeeper

Staff Nurses are supervised by the Deputy Manager who is nurse trained.

The Deputy Manager within Oaklands will receive professional supervision twice yearly from an appropriate nurse manager.

Supervision focuses on professional practice management, staff development and training issues. Records of each supervision session are maintained. Staff receive training appropriate to assisting them to effectively meet the needs of the children.

All staff are required to undertake training relevant to their role and the needs of the service.

Examples of training:

- Safeguarding
- Safety Intervention
- Child protection and safeguarding vulnerable adults;
- Moving and Handling;
- Food Safety;
- Fire Safety and Deputy Nominated Officer
- Medication Management
- Epilepsy Awareness

Identification of staff training needs is undertaken during supervision, and once identified, training will be arranged to assist staff in meeting the care needs of each individual child, or in contributing to the ongoing professional development of staff. Oaklands recognises the need for a strong commitment to staff training and development in order to maintain a high quality service.

An annual Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) Appraisal is undertaken with staff, and a Professional Development Plan, with aims and objectives for the forthcoming year, is completed for each.

Oaklands closes for approximately 7 nights each year to facilitate training, 5 of these are usually in September when the above referenced training has been completed. Other training can also be accessed by staff throughout the year as required.

## ***7. The organisational structure of the children's home.***

Director of Children and Young People's Services

Assistant Director Corporate Parenting

Head of Service

Residential Services Manager

1.00 wte Registered Manager

0.80 wte Deputy Manager

6.21 wte Band 5 Staff Nurse

8.45 wte Residential Support Workers

0.71 wte Administrator

1.34 wte Domestic/Cook

Plus 0.52 Temporary

## **8. *The following particulars:***

**(a) The age-range, sex and numbers of children for whom it is intended that accommodation should be provided.**

Children / young people aged 12 years or up to the day before their 18th birthday, may be accommodated within Oaklands. Any exceptions to this must be discussed and endorsed by the Head of Service and Assistant Director of Corporate Parenting, Children and Young People's Services, and a notification will be forwarded to RQIA in these circumstances.

Both male and female children and young people will be accommodated.

Oaklands will provide 3 places for children and young people requiring short breaks - up to 90 days per year, or up to 28 consecutive days.

One of the places may be used for introductory visits for a child/young person - such visits usually take 1 – 5 hours depending on the stage of introduction.

**(b) Whether it is intended to accommodate children who are disabled, have special needs or any other special characteristics; and**

The service has been specifically designed to accommodate the needs of children/ young people with an Intellectual Disability.

Oaklands can also provide a service for a child with a diagnosis of a mental health condition which is secondary to a diagnosed learning disability, when this has been agreed as their care plan.

**(c) The range of needs (other than those mentioned in sub-paragraph (b) that the home is intended to meet.**

Oaklands can accommodate up to 3 young people overnight when it would be operating at full capacity. It should be noted that the complexity of need of each young person, whether physical, medical and /or behavioural, will impact on the numbers of children placed in the unit at any one time.

In the event of a significant change in a young person's needs and care plan, the Residential Services Manager and/or Registered Manager will liaise with the child's social worker about requesting a LAC Review. A Review will help clarify the child's needs, thus ensuring Oaklands can continue to effectively meet the young person's needs.

***9. Any criteria used for admission to the home, including the home's policy and procedures for emergency admissions, if the home provides for emergency admissions.***

All young people admitted will have been subject to a full UNOCINI assessment process which recommends residential short breaks provision. This assessment is discussed at the Children with Disabilities Overnight Forum to confirm if a place in Short Breaks is appropriate. The Forum decides if Oaklands is the most appropriate placement to meet the child's needs.

Each young person will also be subject to a full comprehensive assessment in relation to residential care provision and will be completed by Oaklands staff and the social worker/ short breaks co-ordinator from the Children's Disability Team.

When it is clear that the young person can be accommodated the family and young people will be given information booklets.

The Short Breaks Registered Manager or identified keyworker will visit the family with child's Social Worker, and the child, parents and family members are also invited to Oaklands. This visit provides the family and child with the opportunity to view the premises and to meet with the Manager and staff.

Information is shared with the parents, child and siblings and questions are encouraged. Parents, the child and siblings may choose to visit again before making a decision. Contact with the Unit is encouraged in order to provide the young person and family every opportunity to clarify any areas of uncertainty.

When parents and child decide to proceed, a Pre-Admission Meeting is arranged.

Prior to admission the following documentation must be supplied to Oaklands, signed by all parties:

1. Most recent Unocini Assessment (this can be found on Paris)
2. LAC 0. Essential Information –completed by the Field Social Worker.
3. LAC 1 Agreement: Which includes the medical signed by Parents, Social Worker and Residential Managers.– completed by Field Social Worker.
4. Once placed a LAC Review will take place within 3 months.

A programme of introductory visits for the young person is co-ordinated between Oaklands, the young person and their family and the Social Worker. The underlying principle is that the introductory visits are carried out at the young person's and family's pace.

The introductory visits usually begin with the young person being brought to Oaklands by the parent/carer. The parent/carer may stay with their child during this visit or leave him/her in the care of the staff.

Each visit is closely monitored and reported on. This information is shared with parents and with the young person's Social Worker. When the young person, parents and staff feel that he/she is ready to progress to overnights, a Pre-placement Meeting is arranged.

The young person's placement is subject to a statutory review three months after the first overnight and subsequently every six months. The review is a formal meeting involving the Short Breaks Registered Manager from Oaklands, Social Worker, Team Leader from the Children's Disability Team, other relevant professionals, for instance, Teachers, Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, the young person and the family.

Emergency/unplanned admissions are placements of young people who are already known to Children's Disability Services and assessment indicates emergency placement is necessary. The young person will need

the same documentation as other young people being admitted to the service.

In the event of a request for an emergency placement, parents/carers should contact the relevant Children with Disabilities Team Senior Social Worker/Social Worker/ Short Breaks Co-Ordinator or if it is made outside of normal office hours, the Out of Hours Social Work Co-Ordinator at 028 95049999

The Fieldwork Social Work Team will liaise with the Residential Services Manager/ Oaklands Registered Manager who in turn will liaise with the Head of Service and Assistant Director if deemed appropriate.

Oaklands staff will liaise with the Fieldwork Team/Duty Social Worker and identify who will be discharged to facilitate the emergency placement, based on assessed need.

If out of hours, Oaklands staff will contact the family/families involved and arrange for discharge of child/children and admission of emergency placement.

In exceptional circumstances, there may be more than one child discharged to ensure appropriate matching and manage assessed risk.

***10. If the children's home provides or is intended to provide accommodation for more than three children, a description of the positive outcomes intended for children in a home of such a size, and of the home's strategy***

The capacity of Oaklands is 3 overnight places for short breaks only.

***11. A description of the children's home's underlying ethos and philosophy, and where there is based on any theoretical model, a description of that model.***

Oaklands subscribes to the philosophy and principles of the Children (NI) Order 1995. The welfare of the young person is the paramount

consideration. Oaklands also promotes and adheres to the rights enshrined within The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Human Rights Act 1998. Oaklands adheres to the view that young people and their families should be treated with respect and dignity and should have an active choice in decisions about their lives.

Oaklands involvement with children, young people and their family is underpinned by a range of values:

We will:

- Treat people fairly and with respect
- Be open and honest and act with integrity
- Put young people, clients and carers and community at the heart of everything we do
- Value staff and support their development to improve our care
- Embrace change for the better
- Listen and learn

### **Oaklands Vision:**

Oaklands vision reflects the vision of the Trust:

‘It is the vision of the SHSCT to deliver safe, high quality health and social care services, respecting the dignity and individuality of all who use them.’

### **Oaklands Mission Statement:**

Oaklands aims to consistently deliver the highest standards of quality of care to each young person accommodated. This is achieved through the provision of care which is sensitive to individual needs.

Oaklands follows the U.N. Committee Recommendations on the Rights of the Child (2006), and strives to ensure all children and young people who use the service are afforded these fundamental rights.

When young people come to Oaklands they have the following fundamental rights:

### **Being valued as an individual means:**

- Being consistently and safely cared for

- Being included in conversation and referred to by their own name and never being talked about as if they are not there
- Being given enough time to do things for themselves and to participate
- Being helped to understand and to be understood.

**Being Treated with Dignity and Respect means:**

- Being treated as a person, not as a disability
- Having the young person respected at all times and in all places
- Having all information about the young person treated carefully and confidentially.
- Being involved in decisions that affect the young person, or, where this is not possible, by someone who is close to them, knows them well and can represent their wishes and feelings

**Being Cared for as a Child First means:**

- Being given the opportunity to play
- Being told what is happening before it happens and given explanations.
- Having parents / carers fully involved in any planning for the young person and acknowledged as ultimately responsible for them
- Having access to communication equipment that is needed, and being listened to and heard, even if it takes a long time and if the young person is not easy to understand
- Having the same rights and choices and, as far as possible, the same kind of life as other young people

**Being Safe means:**

- Not being exposed to unnecessary risks
- Being protected from abuse (see Child Protection Procedures)

- Using the least restrictive option to keep the young person and others safe
- Being part of a service that is integrated across professional disciplines and services
- Being part of a service which has adequate procedures and guidelines, including a complaints procedure
- Knowing that all of the important adults in the young person's life are aware of these basic rights and being clear about what can be done if these rights are infringed or not respected

## ***12. The arrangements made to protect and promote the health of the children accommodated at the home.***

Oaklands offers short breaks to a range of young people with an Intellectual Disability, and is responsible for the safety and welfare of the young person during his/her stay. The staff within the Unit strive to work in partnership with parents to promote and ensure the health and wellbeing of all children accommodated there.

In most circumstances, parents/carers will assume responsibility in relation to the protection and promotion of their child's health. Oaklands responsibilities include:

- Monitoring each young person's health and development during their stay and giving clear reports to parents or other professionals when necessary
- Taking appropriate action should a young person become unwell or ill; this may include first aid procedures or referral to a doctor/dentist or hospital and keeping parents/carers informed at all times
- Ensuring that all members of staff are fully informed about the specific medical and health conditions of any particular young person, and have

received appropriate training to ensure their needs are met, e.g. First Aid Training, Moving and Handling Training, Epilepsy Awareness and training including administration of rescue medication

Staff will receive medication management training. The health needs of each child will be reviewed through the L.A.C. Review process. It is important that the child's medical history is shared at the time of placement. In particular, information in relation to any conditions, illnesses, ongoing treatments or allergies is required. This information will be recorded in the Essential Information Record Part 1. Each young person is required to undertake a medical before or immediately after placement, preferably by their G.P; unless the young person has been medically assessed within the previous 3 months, or is able to understand and refuses to consent to the examination. In such circumstances consideration will be given as to how best the health needs of the young person will be assessed, monitored and addressed.

Throughout the placement young people are encouraged to maintain attendance with their own G.P., dentist and optician; this is supported and facilitated by staff. First Aid boxes are held in Oaklands and are regularly replenished as necessary.

## **Health and Safety**

It is the policy within Oaklands to maintain a healthy and safe environment for the young people. Therefore, staff will endeavour to protect all young people from illness and infections which are easily transferred from one to another. Staff wish to provide an environment which is safe, but does not restrict their development in any way.

## **Safety and Protection of the Child**

The safety and protection of the child at the Unit is of paramount importance to all staff. While staff are conscious of the child's safety, they are also aware of the need to encourage the child's independence and help them realise their full potential. The Unit operates within the SBNI

procedures manual (May 2018) and Co-operating to Safeguard children and Young People (August 2018) in relation to the protection of children.

## **Medication**

Within the Unit staff adhere to the SHSCT Medicines Management Procedures for Residential Units for Children and Young People with a Learning Disability (2016). These are to be applied when administering medication in conjunction with the SHSCT Medicines Management Code (2009, revised 2012) and the Oaklands In House Procedure for Administration of Medication (2016).

The staff in the Unit realise the importance of the young people receiving their medication at regular intervals as directed by the young person's GP. The administration of medication requires thought and the exercise of professional judgement. Staff strive to provide a balance between safe and effective care and adhering to professional standards, whilst trying to provide as home-like an environment as possible.

The Shift Co-Ordinator (Registered Nurse) has overall responsibility for administering medication within the Unit. Other staff who are required to administer medication as part of their role attend Medication Management training followed by refresher training. This training is provided by the SHSCT Medicines Management Specialist Nurse. A competency assessment for all staff who administer medication in Oaklands will be carried out annually or earlier if deemed necessary by the Deputy Manager or delegated staff nurse. Controlled drugs are maintained separately in a 'Controlled Drugs' cabinet and their administration is undertaken in line with Trust Medication Procedures. All medication records are audited on a monthly basis.

## **Diet**

Young people are engaged in planning the weekly menu and all preferences are taken into account. This ensures a balanced, nutritious and imaginative diet.

## **Health Education, Promotion & Awareness**

There is an emphasis in Oaklands on educating and raising young people's awareness in relation to maintaining good physical and mental health. Individual work required will be reflected within the young person's Care Plan and undertaken by staff.

## **Moving and Handling**

Within Oaklands, the safety of the young people and staff is of paramount importance. There are specifically devised guidelines to ensure the safe moving and handling of children who have mobility difficulties. The information provided needs to ensure no undue risk is taken by staff when moving and handling a young person. A risk assessment is carried out with each young person on admission in relation to moving and handling. The Unit is committed to ensuring that staff receive regular up-to-date training on moving and handling to ensure overall safety. Advice and support from other appropriate professionals is also available e.g. OT, Physiotherapist

Oaklands operates within the guidelines of the Northern Ireland Health & Safety Order 1995 to ensure a safe environment is maintained at all times.

### ***13. The arrangements for the promotion of the education of the children accommodated there, including the facilities for private study.***

Children who have an Intellectual Disability and who are looked after have the same rights as all children to education and to other opportunities for development.

Whilst the education requirements of a child are the responsibility of parents / carers, staff work closely with parents, social workers and teachers to ensure links are developed and the child's needs are met.

While a child is accommodated in Oaklands, their normal educational arrangements will continue. Only in exceptional circumstances will this change, for example, if a child becomes unwell and with the prior consent of the parent/carer.

Each young person accommodated at the Unit has a Statement of Educational Need.

In cases of expulsion or suspension from school, or in cases of industrial action, Oaklands will endeavour to provide a service. The school must give written notification of the reasons for and period of suspension to ensure the unit is staffed adequately to cover these periods during the day.

Arrangements for transport to and from school are made by the S.H.S.C.T in conjunction with the Education Authority or private providers. Efforts are made to ensure that the child's usual transport conveys him/her to and from school.

### **Homework Arrangements**

Staff appreciate the importance of homework, assisting and encouraging children to complete homework to the best of their ability.

Staff within the Unit will also ensure the provision of activities which provide opportunities for intellectual development, whilst ensuring the child's level of understanding and stage of development is considered. A significant aspect of homework for young people attending special schools relates to carrying out of tasks set by AHPs re. motor skills etc. rather than academic homework, and Oaklands will consider this as part of the young person's care plan.

Young people also have access to a computer, if required.

### ***14. The arrangements to promote children's participation in recreational, sporting and cultural activities.***

Staff encourage young people to exercise choice in terms of activities on a day to day basis, and in all aspects of the care they provide.

The young people are afforded with outlets for social interaction both within the Unit and in the wider community. Our minibus provides us with the means to enable a number of planned and varied outings as a regular feature of the service on offer.

Young people can continue to participate in community activity groups such as Special Olympics whilst accommodated if this is part of their Care Plan.

Their experience during their stays in Oaklands may also be enhanced by the use of the multi-sensory room, sensory Trolley and outdoor toys. Oaklands has an extensive range of toys, arts and crafts, games and computer equipment to ensure options and variety are available to meet the individual needs of the young person.

***15. The arrangements made for consultation with the children accommodated about their future care and the operation of the children's home.***

The Children (NI) Order 1995, states that in so far as is reasonably practicable, the Trust shall ascertain the wishes and feelings of the young person and the young person's views should be discussed, recorded and given due consideration.

Processes are currently built into field social worker procedures regarding Looked After Children, to both consult with and involve young people in discussions / decisions regarding future care.

- The Transition Social Worker and Social Worker from the Adult Disability Team are invited to L.A.C. Reviews to aid future planning.
- Each young person is encouraged to attend their Looked After Child Review meeting and efforts are made to ensure these meetings are child friendly. Young people are encouraged to complete a written/pictorial contribution for their review meeting.

- Each young person has a Social Worker who is required to visit the young person in Oaklands at least once every 6 months.
- Staff within Oaklands make efforts to ascertain the wishes of the young person regarding their future care by either reading behaviours, using communication aids or verbally.
- Advice and guidance from the Social Worker, parents / carers and other significant people is also sought.
- The Unit has on-going Transitional Booklets which are a compilation of individual work, special outings, photographs of the Unit and of other children/staff they have met during their placements. The booklets are intended as a keepsake for the young people when they leave the Unit, and the work in compiling the booklet is completed with the assistance of the young person and their Key Worker in the Unit.
- The views of the young people and parents are of paramount importance in this process, and staff actively encourage and involve young people and families in relevant decisions in relation to the service. Methods used to date have included a questionnaire to parents, discussion with parents/carers and feedback at reviews and social activities including Coffee Mornings and Fun Days.
- Young people are asked if they are happy or sad and helped to express this or other feelings they may have about the service
- A senior officer of the Trust will speak to young people to seek their views on the care being provided during his/her monthly monitoring visit to the facility and details this in the written report.
- The Non-Executive Director for the facility speaks to the young people during his/her quarterly visits to seek their views about the care being received and details this in their written report.

## ***16. The arrangements made for the control, restraint and discipline of children.***

While young people are accommodated within Oaklands, it is the responsibility of those caring for the children to ensure their well-being is safeguarded and promoted and that they do not place themselves or others at risk.

In caring for young people who present with a range of needs and varying levels of understanding, control and discipline is promoted through the high standard of care given, respect conveyed to the child, and a positive balanced relationship developed between the child and staff.

Training is an integral part of the service provided to staff within Oaklands to equip them with the skills and knowledge to provide the best possible care to each child.

All staff are trained in and work within a Safety Intervention framework which promotes mutual respect, encourages young people to take responsibility for behaviour (in line with their level of ability), and for preventing and managing aggressive /challenging behaviour.

The Intervention approach is a set of ideas and skills to help young people who are aggressive or violent to calm down e.g. guiding them to a safe place or holding them to prevent harm. It is used in conjunction with the expertise of parents, carers, and other professionals' guidance, and advice will form the basis of the young person's care plan and risk assessment. Strategies will be developed which best meet the child's needs in relation to their behaviour.

Additionally, the staff-child ratio ensures the children are engaged in meaningful activities and receive a high level of time and attention, which reduces the potential for the child to display difficult/challenging behaviour.

Staff within Oaklands recognise the measures which are prohibited under the Children's Home Regulations (NI) 2005, Regulation 16.

#### Measures which are not acceptable within Oaklands

1. Corporal punishment
2. Refusal of food and drink
3. Restrictions on contact with family or friends
4. Requiring a young person to wear inappropriate clothing
5. Withholding medication or medical treatment

6. Locking a young person in a bedroom
7. Deprivation of sleep
8. Withholding access to any help line providing counselling
9. Any intimate physical examination of a child
10. Withholding of any aids or equipment needed by a disabled young person.

Oaklands policy is that **NO** form of corporal punishment is tolerated.

Permissible sanctions to discourage unacceptable behaviour: Some form of sanction may be deemed necessary where behaviour would be unacceptable in a family environment. The following measures have been agreed upon as 'permissible sanctions'.

If appropriate:

- Remove the child from the situation. Staff member should stay with the child at all times. The time should be used to discuss the child's behaviour if receptive and able to understand, explaining why it is unacceptable. Positive reinforcement should be used.
- Withdrawing/withholding rewards or the curtailment of leisure activities until some form of compliance is visible. Explanations would be given and the child's opinion would be sought. Alternative activity would be offered.

Staff should familiarise themselves with the acceptable measures and exercise discretion in administering them. Frequent expression of approval is encouraged.

Staff need to ensure that all practices being used are:

- necessary and proportionate
- in keeping with a least restrictive/ most effective intervention approach and
- reviewed regularly with the appropriate safeguards in place for everyone.

Records are maintained on the use of the above measures.

Parents / carers will be advised of the sanctions imposed, reason for doing so and the outcome and effectiveness of the sanction.

All bedrooms in Oaklands have fish key switches which cannot be utilised by the young people. The young person's care plan identifies that should establish their preferences at night regarding having some light or no light in their room. Rooms have a window at the top of the door so a room will not be in total darkness. Any issues that are deemed restrictive must be documented with built in review and safeguards.

All staff in Oaklands must adhere to the SHSCT Guidelines: 'When Considering and Reviewing the Use of Restrictive Interventions and Restrictive Practice' (March 2018). These Guidelines promote the reduction in the use of, and avoid the misuse of, restrictive interventions and practices. Guidelines address assessment of a situation, decision making, monitoring and review processes, and methods for recording.

### ***17. The arrangements made for child protection and to counter bullying.***

Oaklands policy is always to safeguard the welfare of the young people being looked after by protecting them from physical, sexual, emotional harm and neglect. To achieve this aim, staff work within the requirements of SBNI procedures manual, May 2018, and Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People, August 2018. All staff adhere to the following safe caring practices:

- Young people will be supervised at an appropriate level in accordance with assessed need.
- On admission all young people will be appointed a Key-worker.
- All children and families will be made aware of the complaints procedure.
- Visiting Social Workers will have the opportunity to see the young person alone.
- All young people will have their own bedrooms.
- Young people are encouraged not to let other young people into their bedrooms after bedtime.

- Staff training ensures that staff are aware of the signs, symptoms and behaviours associated with child abuse and of the procedures to follow where abuse is suspected.

The Residential Services Manager in Oaklands has a responsibility to ensure that staff are provided with the necessary training and guidance in relation to child protection; in addition staff have a personal responsibility regarding their own awareness of the Procedures and for adhering to them. Staff are also responsible for participating in relevant training and seeking guidance when they are concerned about the welfare of a young person.

Where a concern arises about possible abuse of a young person, it is immediately reported to the Residential Services Manager/Registered Manager who informs the appropriate Senior Social Worker and Head of Service.

Staff are also actively encouraged to report concerns about the behaviour of colleagues under the Southern Trust Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedure for Raising Issues of Concern at Work, May 2008.

### **Statement on Bullying**

Bullying is a widely recognised problem in all areas of life including school, home and the wider community. In Oaklands, staff are aware of the potential for bullying within the group context and of the particular vulnerabilities of those with a physical or learning disability.

Staff need to be aware of how technology can provide new and different opportunities for children to bully or to be bullied – abusive e-mails, chat, instant messaging or texting with mobile phones.

### **Staff will respond to incidents of bullying by:**

- Ensuring that their methods of managing children's behaviour and sanctions do not contain any element of bullying

- Agreeing a strategy within the staff team in consultation with the child, their parents, social worker and other appropriate professionals in order to address any incidents of bullying within Oaklands.
- Ensuring that they are aware of their responsibility to report any incident of bullying of or by the child in their care
- Ensuring that the voice of the child or young person is central to any action taken to address incidents of bullying.
- Encouraging children to learn self-protection strategies

**When working with children who bully – staff should:**

- Ask the child as appropriate to their level of ability and understanding about bullying, in a sensitive and non-judgemental way
- Ensure that the child apologises where possible to the child they have bullied
- Agree a strategy within the staff team in consultation with the child, their parents, social worker and other appropriate professionals in order to address the bullying
- Focus on positive aspects of the child's behaviour and give praise whenever possible.

***18. The procedure for dealing with any unauthorised absence of a child from the children's home.***

The importance of close supervision of each child and young person in our care is ensured at all times. Staff within the Unit are responsible for the welfare and safety of the children / young people accommodated.

Within Oaklands, there are appropriate staff-to-child ratios. As a result, the level of child supervision is such that the safety and wellbeing of each child is ensured.

All the children who are accommodated at Oaklands have a disability and therefore have a reduced awareness of danger - so it is vital that staff take immediate action if they ever notice a child is missing from the Unit.

In the event of a child going missing, Oaklands has a Policy & Procedure in place which should be implemented. This in-house Policy & Procedure has been devised in conjunction with the Regional Guidance; Missing Children Protocol (runaway & Missing from Home & Care), June 2015.

***19. A description of any electronic or mechanical means of surveillance of children, which may be used in the children's home.***

Oaklands does not have any surveillance equipment

The need for and use of electronic or mechanical means of surveillance inside the unit, such as epilepsy monitors, will be recorded and agreed within the child's LAC care-plan. Currently there is no surveillance equipment of this type in Oaklands.

***20. The fire precautions and associated emergency procedures in the children's home.***

Fire Evacuation Procedures are in place in Oaklands. All staff will be made aware of these procedures when they complete induction training regarding the unit and they will be expected to ensure they keep themselves up to date with any changes to the procedures.

As Oaklands is a stand alone unit and not be connected to the hospital switchboard, the protocol for reporting fire is a direct 999 call. Procedures for this and an information sheet re the Fire Alarm System is available in the office for events like accidental activation, power failure, fire evacuation.

A nominated fire officer will have responsibility for monitoring all aspects of fire safety including regular checks of fire safety equipment, fire escapes and the Unit fire panel. However as fire safety is the responsibility of all, all staff will be expected to undertake such checks. These are undertaken on an on-going basis.

In the event of a power failure contact is made with Estates and the NIE as Oaklands do not have an emergency generator. If electricity remains off for a considerable time young people would have to be sent home. There is fire training twice a year, which all staff attend. Oaklands staff are all trained as Deputy Nominated Fire Officers. The Shift Co-Ordinator (SHSCT) will be the Deputy Nominated Fire Officer on each shift. Oaklands Manager is the nominated Fire Office and is responsible for all safety matters.

## ***21. The arrangements for the children's religious observance.***

Regulation 18 of the Children's Home Regulations requires that each child is, as far as possible, to have the opportunity to attend such religious services and receive such instructions as are appropriate to the religious persuasion to which the child may belong.

Staff within Oaklands are committed to ensuring each young person's needs are met.

Enquiries are made into the religious and cultural background of each child as part of the planning process. Enquiries are made of parents, and the fieldwork team is responsible for ensuring their wishes are taken into account. This information is recorded on the child's file. Visits are welcomed by ministers, priests etc. and are recorded in the Visitors Book.

The issue of religious observance is formally explored with parents in preparation for and at the statutory review.

Any special requirements in relation to religious observance will, as far as possible, be observed when the child is staying at Oaklands, e.g. dietary restriction, etc.

## ***22. The arrangements for contact between a child and his parents, relatives and friends.***

In respect of children and young people who come to Oaklands for short breaks, the time spent away from parents care is limited.

However, as part of the ethos of the Unit, parents and carers are encouraged to maintain contact with their child, particularly during longer spells away from them.

Contact is particularly relevant when a child has just started short breaks, as parents may be anxious about their child, and the child may be missing their parents/carers. While children are accommodated on short breaks and depending on their level of ability and understanding, children are encouraged to have telephone contact with their parents / carers or other family members.

### **Visitors to Oaklands**

If parents / carers or family members wish to visit their child during their period of accommodation in Oaklands, this is welcomed.

Oaklands staff will try to ensure that a quiet, private area will be available to facilitate any visitors to the unit, but as Oaklands is small this may not always be possible. Oaklands will require visitors to contact staff in advance of their intention to visit to ensure that the young person is not out of the unit when a visitor arrives.

If family members other than the parents / carers visit the young person, then permission by the parent / carer for this visit will be actively sought. Without the parent's / carer's consent or permission, the visit will not be facilitated.

Given that the young person is in Oaklands for a short break only, visits are not a regular occurrence.

## **Contact with Parents / Carers or Family Members**

It is the expectation that parents / carers will supply staff with a contact number so that they are accessible at all times. In situations where parents are not available, i.e. where they are on holiday or away from home, an alternative contact person needs to be available and may be contacted in the event of an emergency or the child becoming unwell.

The Unit will endeavour to facilitate contact by using a range of resources, e.g. telephone calls, letters, providing a room where visits can take place in comfort and with a degree of privacy.

It is recognised that young people may choose not to have contact with significant others and their views will be listened to.

### ***23. The arrangements for dealing with complaints.***

It is Oaklands' policy to endeavour to create an environment and service which will prevent or eradicate any cause for complaints.

It is very important that the views of the young people are sought and listened to and that the opinions of their parents / carers are considered by staff in determining both future developments and improvements with Oaklands and the provision of service.

Staff endeavour to resolve any complaints/issues informally through local resolution in the first instance. If this is not successful the complaint will be managed through the Trust formal arrangements.

All families are made aware of the procedures for making a complaint. Staff will help and support young people and their parents/carers to make use of the Procedure.

All young people and parents/carers on admission to Oaklands are given information on how to make use of the Trust's Complaints Procedure and in the use of the "SHSCT, We Value Your Views" leaflet, should they wish to speak to someone outside of Oaklands. This leaflet will be made available for parents/carers and young people on admission – copies of

this leaflet are also available on the parents/carers notice board in Oaklands.

#### ***24. The arrangements for contributing to the review of the placement plans under Article 45 of the Children's Order.***

Oaklands recognises the importance and benefit of reviews and endeavours to uphold the requirements for review in line with the Review of Children's Cases Regulations (NI) 1996, Regulation 3.

Reviews are carried out in accordance with the Requirements of the Children (NI) Order 1995, The Children Homes Regulations (NI) 2005 and the SHSC Trusts policy in relation to Looked After Children.

The statutory duty for the review is the responsibility of the field social worker and the staff within the Unit will work with him/her in the provision of information.

Each child accommodated in Oaklands will be formally reviewed within three months of the first overnight stay and then at least six monthly thereafter or more frequently if required.

The review is chaired by an Independent Chair of Reviews and Oaklands staff are involved at all stages of the process, and contribute fully through written and verbal reports and attendance at meetings.

Prior to review, staff actively seek young people's views in relation to the service. These views are shared at the review.

Parents are encouraged to attend review and to involve their child in the process.

The review system is seen as an integral part of the continuing process of planning and review of the plan for the child.

There is informal contact / feedback to the relevant fieldwork team about particular children in preparation for reviews.

**25. The type of accommodation, including the sleeping accommodation, provided, and, where applicable, how children are to be grouped, and in what circumstances they are to share bedrooms.**

**Facilities**

- 3 bedrooms, 1 of which is equipped with sensory equipment including a ceiling projector and sensory lighting in various colours, shapes and sizes to help stimulate awareness
- 1 bedroom to be redesigned as clinical space
- 2 separate toilet/shower rooms
- 2 living areas –play room and living room which can be opened up or separated by a double door.
- 1 kitchen
- 1 staff office
- 1 main staff office
- An enclosed back area with play equipment

Oaklands is comfortably furnished, keeping in mind the age range of young people being accommodated. In the living area young people have access to a television, DVD player and computer. The young people also have access to the multi-sensory room/sensory trolley.

Young people within Oaklands will have their own bedroom and their right to privacy will be respected by staff.

**Matching of Children**

Oaklands is designed to meet the assessed needs of the young person. Special consideration is given to the appropriate matching of young people accommodated at the same time. The safety of all children and staff are of paramount concern.

Meetings are held on a regular basis to discuss matching of young people. Staff will take account of the mix of children and make recommendations as to the suitability of young people being placed together.

Parents / carers / young people's views and requests are taken into consideration, and staff's observations on previous stays are all considered and acted on appropriately.

## ***26. Details of any specific therapeutic techniques used in the home, and arrangements for their supervision.***

Any specific therapeutic techniques will only be provided following consultation with parent, young people and relevant professional as part of the young person's Care Plan.

Oaklands uses a holistic approach when working with young people and their families to determine the most appropriate approach to use. Some other approaches used are:

- Music therapy
- Play therapy
- Art therapy is carried out informally

Staff will receive training prior to commencement of these techniques.

Records will be maintained in the young person's file.

Effectiveness will be monitored and reviewed on an on-going basis.

## ***27. A description of the children's home's policy in relation to anti-discriminatory practice as respects children and children's rights.***

Each child has the right to a positive sense of identity, irrespective of race, ethnic origin, creed or ability" (Social Services Inspectorate (1995),

Quality Living Standards – Children Who Live Away From Home. SSI)

The residential team are fully committed to the above standard and to upholding the ethos of the Human Rights legislation in providing quality care and protection to all the young people who are accommodated.

Oaklands staff are committed to the principles of anti-oppressive practice:

- Awareness of dangers of stereotyping
- Importance of role models

- Developing their own self-awareness
- Avoidance of oppressive language
- Challenging discrimination
- Encouraging positive identity
- Discouraging oppressive humour
- Remembering that children are people first
- Working towards empowerment

These principles will be monitored by the Residential Services Manager to ensure the Unit provides for the young person's physical, emotional, social and psychological development and wellbeing.

## **Record of changes**

<b>Date of change</b>	<b>Purpose of review/ change</b>	<b>Variation submitted</b>	<b>Description of change</b>	<b>Approved (RQIA or Trust)</b>
1/04/2023	Annual review	N/A	No changes required, review verified SOP current. Date of SOP updated to 1 April 2023	Approved by Trust 1 April 2023, pending RQIA approval sent 2 April 2023
5 June 2023	One child staying over 90 days in 12 month period	Yes 5 June 2023	One specified child's care plan will exceed 90 days short break period in 12 month rolling period, variation submitted to RQIA with clear evidence for rationale	Approved by Trust 5 June, pending RQIA approval Variation sent 5 June 2023