

LINKWAY HOUSE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

LINKWAY HOUSE LIMITED
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Also at Woodlyn Children's Home, Barrowford Road, Colne, Lancs BB8 9QW

Registered Number: 4703988

School Registration Number: 888/6088

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

CHILDREN'S HOME REGULATIONS 2001 (SCHEDULE)

LINKWAY HOUSE – August 2007

1. Overall Aims of Linkway House

- 1.1 Linkway House specialises in caring for young people between the ages of 8 and 18 who are deemed to have learning disabilities and are unable to be given an appropriate level of support in their home environment.
- 1.2 We therefore believe that there is a need within the care system for a small specialist home which can offer 1:1 support on a high level. We work with individual young people to develop a care package to meet their own particular needs, ensuring that they receive the highest standard of care. We also may be considered to be able to offer short-term respite care.
- 1.3 We believe that residential care purpose as part of the wider care system is to provide care appropriate to the physical, cultural and spiritual needs of each young person.
- 1.4 Whilst it is recognised that many of these young people can have their needs better met outside residential care i.e. foster care or with their own families, it should be acknowledged that for some children the residential placement is both theirs and social services choice.
- 1.5 Our aim is to create an environment that meets each child's individual needs where they are cared for in a non-institutional way. We provide a welcome and homely atmosphere with a friendly and professional staff team and many added recreational resources.
- 1.6 How we can assist local authorities.
1. By providing placements for young people with learning disabilities
 2. By providing support for families who can no longer cope with the disabilities displayed by these young people
 3. By providing respite care to help families cope with stressful times
 4. By providing education in our school and support until the age of 18 years
 5. By carrying out thorough assessments and observations as part of a care plan
- 1.7 Linkway House objective is to meet the needs of each individual which usually corresponds to the following:
- ❖ Intensive staff support
 - ❖ Support and assistance after assessment
 - ❖ Provision of a structured environment
 - ❖ Preparation for the step between child care and adult care

2. The Facilities and Services to be provided by Linkway House

- 2.1 Linkway House is a large five bedroom house set in its own large grounds which aims to provide young people who have learning disabilities with a stable environment for short/medium/long term. With a high staff ratio these young people are offered intensive support to meet their individual needs.
- 2.2 Although we are not a therapeutic home a range of consultants are available, dependent on the needs of the young person.

- 2.3 Education is supplied by our qualified teacher at our other home, Linkway House and education plans are put into place to meet the need of each individual.
- 2.4 Full classroom support is given on a 1:1 basis.
- 2.5 There are local amenities that can be accessed by the residents with the support of members of staff, for the purpose of social and physical interaction. This can be in the form of sport centres, dance classes, youth theatre groups and riding centres for example. Linkway House has its own transport to provide access to these facilities.

3. Registered Provider and Manager

- 3.1 Linkway House is a five bedroom children's home and school for young people between the ages of 8 and 18 who are deemed to have learning disabilities.

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- 3.2 The registered Manager for Linkway House is **Jane Miller**
- 3.3 The registered provider for Linkway House is **Mrs. Trina Link**

4.0 The Qualifications and experience of the registered Manager of Linkway House

- 4.1 The Manager Jane Miller holds NVQ4 Management & Registered Manager's Award, NVQ3 Promoting Independence and is currently undertaking A1 Assessors Award. Jane has worked in the learning disabilities field for a number of years, managing respite services and residential services for individuals with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, Autism and complex behaviours. Jane has had specific training with A.S.D. (Autism Spectrum Disorders).

5. Information about the Staff at Linkway House

- 5.1 The number of staff who will be employed at Linkway House will be 20 full time staff including waking watch. We have 2 male staff and 10 females (2 of which are waking watch) at present

5.2 The Home Manager of Linkway House

Charlotte Taylor has been at Linkway for 4½ years and has 6 years experience in working with learning disabilities. Charlotte has NVQ3 Child Care and NVQ4 Management, training in child protection and first aid at work, safe handling of medication, care and control, managing challenging behaviour, supervision and leadership skills and is a qualified counsellor. Charlotte also has a foundation diploma in Neuro linguistic programming and is a physical intervention trainer for the organisation.

The senior members of staff are:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Bernard Dewsnip | -Team Leader |
| Nicola Stretton | -Team Leader |

The Residential Care Workers are:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Rebekah Djoudi | Andrea Lambert |
| Chantal Torriero | Paul Gaskell |
| Sabrina McGarry | Shelley Basnett |
| Deborah O'Hanlon | Jackie Jackson |

The waking watch staff are:

Mandy Ludlam

Andrea Wilkinson

The Bank Staff are:

Louise Whitehead

Mary Goulding

Terry Barry

Jackie Pollard

Tracey Taylor

Theresa Torriero

Bernie Magee

Joanne Stirling Roberts

5.2 The qualifications of the staff working at Linkway House

- 5.2.1 Bernard Dewsnap (Senior RCW) has been with Linkway for over 4 years and holds NVQ3 in child care. He also has received training in first aid, child protection, MIDAS, recording skills, care and control, managing challenging behaviour, supervisory and leadership skills and food hygiene.
- 5.2.2 Nicola Stretton has been at Linkway for 3½ years and is Linkway House' designated Health and Safety representative and fire officer. Nicky has successfully completed her NVQ3 in child care. She also has received training in Health and Safety, risk assessment, fire training, child protection, care and control, managing challenging behaviour, first aid, food hygiene and safe handling of medication. She has also completed NVQ3 in leadership and supervisory skills award and a special needs teaching certificate
- 5.2.3 Paul Gaskell has been with Linkway for 3 years and is currently undertaking his NVQ3 in child care. He has also received training in child protection, care and control and managing challenging behaviour. Paul is now a qualified trainer for physical intervention and de-escalation techniques for the organisation.
- 5.2.4 Rebekah Djoudi has been with Linkway for 2 years and is experienced in working with the elderly and mental health. She is currently completing the NVQ3 in child care. She has received child protection training, care and control, food hygiene, safe handling of medication managing challenging behaviour.
- 5.2.5 Shelley Basnett has been at Linkway for 3 years and has nursing experience. She has completed her NVQ3 in child care. She has received training in child protection, food hygiene, first aid, safe handling of medication, Makaton, care and control and managing challenging behaviour.
- 5.2.6 Andrea Lambert has worked at Linkway for 6 months and has 3 years experience in working with adults with learning disabilities. Andrea will be undertaking the NVQ3 in Childcare in early 2007. Andrea has received training in first aid, safe handling of medication, food hygiene, care and control and managing challenging behaviour.
- 5.2.7 Sabrina McGarry has also been at Linkway for 4 years and holds her NNEB in nursery nursing. She also has completed NVQ3 child care and has received training in child protection, safe handling of medication, Makaton sign language, care and control and managing challenging behaviour.
- 5.2.8 Chantal Torriero has worked for Linkway for 3 years and has experience in working with the elderly and mental health. She has completed the NVQ3 childcare and has received training in child protection, first aid, safe handling of medication, care and control and managing challenging behaviour.
- 5.2.9 Andrea Wilkinson has been at Linkway for 3 years and holds NNEB qualification. She has completed her NVQ3 in child care and has also received training in child protection, first aid, care and control and managing challenging behaviour.
- 5.2.10 Mandy Ludlam has been at Linkway for 5 years and has vast experience in child care. She has completed the NVQ3 child care and has received training in child protection, care and control and managing challenging behaviour.

- 5.2.11 Deborah O'Hanlon has been with Linkway House Limited since October 2006. She has received training in physical intervention and breakaway techniques and is a first aid appointed person. She is shortly to commence her NVQ3 in Child Care.
- 5.2.12 Jackie Jackson has been with the Company since June 2006 initially as a bank staff member of staff. She is now a permanent member of staff and has considerable experience in working with the elderly and mental health. She has trained in Dealing with Challenging Behaviours, Mental Illness, Moving and handling and also holds NVQ3 in Promoting Independence.

5.3 New Staff – The arrangements for the Supervision, Training and Development of Staff

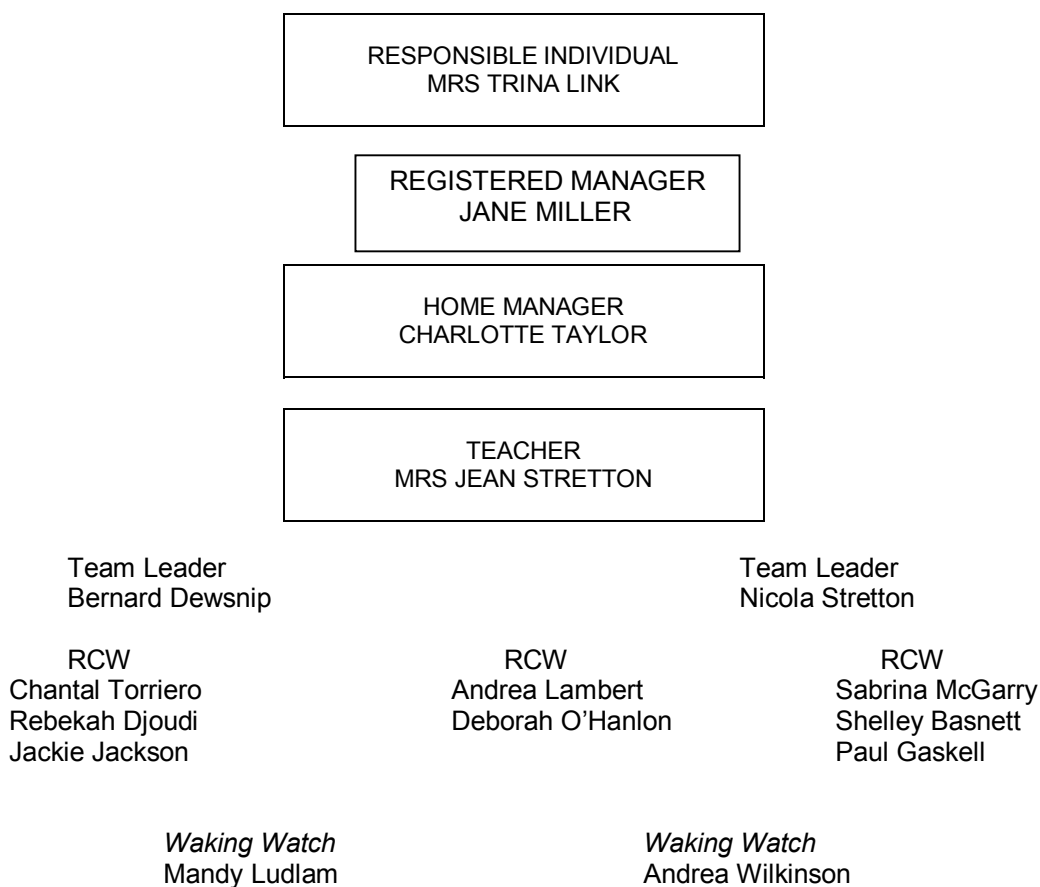
- 5.3.1. The frequency of supervision is monthly for all employees from their line manager (1.5 hours per calendar month) and once a fortnight for all new staff.
- 5.3.2 It is an expectation of Linkway House that all employees will prioritise attending formal supervision. Individual supervision does not remove the need for team meetings which occur once a month and are minuted.
- 5.3.3 Issues raised in supervision of residential social workers will be summarised and will be kept in line with our confidentiality policy. A copy of individual supervision sessions will be kept in personal files and stored in a secure place. Copies of individual supervisions are given to the employee.

5.4 Training and Development

- 5.4.1 Linkway House Ltd recognises that its greatest asset is its staff. Therefore the company gives a high priority to the development of this asset. Staff development and training is a core principle at Linkway House.
- 5.4.2 Each individual member of staff will discuss with their line manager to identify their learning and development needs. A programme of training for staff has been developed as outlined in appendix 2 of the National Minimum Standards.
- 5.4.3 Whilst recognising the strengths of individual staff members, Linkway House is clear that our main strength lies in the recognition of the need to develop individuals to work as a team.
- 5.4.4 Individual learning and development needs will be identified by:
appraisal – supervision – role change – new members of staff
- 5.4.5 Team learning and development needs will be identified by:
review days – team planning – team meetings
- 5.4.6 The organisation learning and development needs will be identified by:
legislation – inspections – government legislation
- 5.4.7 Linkway House offers the following ways for staff to develop:
courses – conferences – workshops – mentor – consultancy – qualification NVQ or part funding of further education
- 5.4.8 Staff will have access to learning opportunities through:
training calendars – flyers – email – direct mail – through appraisal and supervision

6. The Organisational Structure of the Home

LINKWAY HOUSE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



7. The Age-Range and Sex of the Service users that Linkway House provides for

This home specialises in meeting the needs of a maximum of five young people who are deemed to have various learning difficulties. We accommodate both male/female between the ages of 8 and 18. Placement time can be medium or long term.

7.1 The range of the needs that the home is intending to meet are young males/females who:

- ❖ Have moderate to severe learning disabilities
- ❖ Have Autistic disorders
- ❖ Have Asperger's Syndrome
- ❖ Whose parents are no longer able to meet their needs
- ❖ Have Prader Willi Syndrome
- ❖ Who exhibit challenging/aggressive behaviour
- ❖ Who can self-harm

7.2 However we **cannot** offer placements to young people who have:

- ❖ Severe Mental Health disorders
- ❖ Severe physical disabilities
- ❖ Who do not have learning disabilities
- ❖ Made serious suicide attempts

8. The Criteria for Admissions to Linkway House Planned admissions

- 8.1 The first point of contact for the referring authority will be the Placement Officer. Our policy is to receive young people in a planned manner.
- 8.2 When an authority requests a placement at Linkway it is our policy to forward a referral request form. This should be faxed or posted back along with any other relevant information that is available i.e. core assessment, educational reports, social history, psychological assessments, hospital appointments etc.
- 8.3 Following this, arrangements are made for the child to visit Linkway or for the Manager with a Team leader to visit them within their own home or existing residential placement to discuss the placement. The Social Worker will discuss with the Home Manager the feasibility of the placement and relevant documentation will be read. At the subsequent referral meeting a decision will be made as to the suitability of the placement.
- 8.4 Wherever possible a care planning meeting will be held prior to admission so that a care plan may be drawn up and an agreement from all parties is reached about what outcome is desired from the placement.

9. Emergency Admissions

- 9.1 With emergency admissions where time is not available to follow this process, insisting upon a planning meeting prior to the admission will be of little use to the referrer or the young person. At these times the senior in charge will ensure that they obtain the fullest information possible from the referral form details to allow a decision to be made on the spot.
- 9.2. Emergency admissions will be on a trial period basis. During this trial, usually within 72 hours, a full planning meeting will be held to develop a care plan for the young person.
- 9.3 If we are to accept a young person prior to their planning meeting, certain conditions must be made.
 - a) The referring authority must identify a named Social Worker that will take responsibility for the case and who will decide the date for the planning meeting at the time of Linkway House accepting the young person.
 - b) No decision on length of placement or work to be done with the young person outside of the planning meeting.
 - c) Linkway House must be satisfied with the child's legal status and that appropriate paperwork will accompany the young person.

10. Not Applicable

11. Linkway House Ethos and Philosophy

11.1 The Young Person

- 11.1.1 The young persons who arrive at Linkway House will have varying levels of learning disabilities and as such may have many emotional and traumatic times in their lives.
Many will not have been able to achieve the skills required to help them manage their emotions.
- 11.1.2 As a consequence these children have learned problematic ways of dealing with difficult feelings. Therefore our aim is to teach each young person a wide range of methods/skills which they often lack to manage difficulties as they arise from day to day. It is important that these young people can apply these skills outside the home when they are with staff, peers, family and general people.
- 11.1.3 To achieve these goals the young people need to be in an environment that offers the correct and full time supervision so that the child is safe to express their emotions and feelings.

11.2 The Staff

- 11.2.1 Residential staff are the most important element of any successful intervention. It is through well trained and well motivated staff that a high degree of stability and consistency is achieved.
- 11.2.2 Individual workers must have the ability to challenge but not confront, but to hold boundaries for the young person and to show they care about the child.

11.3 Creating a safe environment

- 11.3.1 Routine has to be quickly established for any young person. A structured day helps young people to feel at home and to channel their energies appropriately.
- 11.3.2 Teaching young people the consequences of their actions are vital to establish new skills to deal with their complex emotions. Methods of teaching children new skills can vary from one child to the next. What works with one may not work with the next. Group and individual work, visual aids, drama, play, role playing, relaxation, art and sport, music and dance are just a few examples that are used by our staff to create a range in the individual young person.

12. The Arrangements made to protect and promote the Health of Young People at Linkway House

- 12.1 Although particular significance is given to the young child's emotional health, the child's physical well being is a priority. On admission each child will be registered with a local G.P. and a full health assessment will be completed.
- 12.2 Should a course of medical treatment be prescribed, a record system is in place that ensures that this treatment is safely followed. Similarly children will receive dental check ups and eye tests.
In relation to wider health education issues such as family planning, smoking, alcohol and substance abuse, we will provide education through videos, literature and group discussions with staff.
- 12.3 Linkway House has a no smoking policy and we are committed to an anti-smoking stance that includes no smoking in the building and health education in relation to smoking.
- 12.4 When young people leave our own care we ensure that medical information is made available to their next placement and/or their allocated social worker.

13. Education

- 13.1 Education takes place in our purpose built school building which is staffed by a fully qualified teacher and support staff.
- 13.2 Education is recognised as a fundamental part of the day at Woodlyn, especially during normal term time. All our residents receive education up until the age of eighteen. Our model has been to develop an educational programme with the young person which incorporates life skills as well as academic learning. A work experience programme is in place for all our residents to participate in.

14. The Arrangements to promote Young Peoples participation, hobbies, recreational, sporting and cultural activities

- 14.1 The home/leisure day will include adequate attention to hygiene issues, tidiness in bedrooms and living space, participation in household chores where appropriate and trying to maintain these issues. Group discussions will take place to plan leisure activities for the week as well as other aspects of the home life.
- 14.2 Leisure activities are encouraged to be as wide ranging as the young peoples' interest permits. Participating in hobbies and organised activities are important for children to mix with their peers. As we have our own transport we can ensure the

children are able to access a wide variety of activities where they are fully accompanied by staff at all times.

15. The Arrangements made for consultation with the Young People about the home

- 15.1 Staff and young people have the right to voice and have their opinion heard with regards to the running of the home. Despite having learning disabilities the young people can address this by:
- ❖ Residents meeting
 - ❖ The young person approaching any member of staff or the manager of the home
 - ❖ Through the complaints procedure

16. The Policy on Behaviour Management and the Use of Restraint in the Home

- 16.1 The primary duty Linkway House has is '**duty of care**'. We are committed to deal with all aggressive incidents and only using physical intervention when there are legal justifications for the use of restraint namely:
- ❖ In self-defence
 - ❖ In protection of a particular child
 - ❖ In protection of another child
 - ❖ In protection of property from serious damage
- 16.2 Linkway House uses the Team-teach method of training. Only staff that have completed the approved training and a refresher course within the last two years will undertake the use of physical restraint. The company will endeavour to offer staff regular refresher courses.
- 16.3 It is essential that all residential staff are aware of when not to restrain a child or young person and how to restrain when the need arises. This will be assessed and recorded on the staff member's induction record to show that they have read and understood the home's policy on restraint.
- 16.4 Under no circumstances should restraint be used to enforce compliance with a rule of the home, the instruction of a member of staff or as a punishment.
- 16.5 Staff when using a restraint must be aware of a child or young persons:
- ❖ History (e.g. physical or sexual abuse)
 - ❖ Fears or phobias
 - ❖ Size and maturity
 - ❖ State of health
 - ❖ State of mind. (under the influence of drugs/medication/solvents etc)
- 16.6 It is also important to bear in mind that the safety and welfare of those around must be of the paramount consideration.
- 16.7 The Department of Health differentiates between **restraint and holding** as the 'manner of intervention and degree of force applied as follows':
- Physical restraint**
It is defined as the reasonable application of the minimum force necessary to overpower a child with the intention of preventing themselves, others or from causing serious damage to property.
- Holding**
Would discourage, but in itself would not prevent such action.
- 16.8 The proper use of physical restraint requires skill and judgment as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of restraint.

16.9 Restraint and holding will be most effective if done within the context of a caring ethos where children and young people see the action as that of an adult. Our primary concern is the safety and well being of the young person.

16.10 After the use of physical intervention-administration requirements

16.10.1 The following steps should be taken after restraint:

- 1) After the use of restraint you should discuss and explain to the young person why physical intervention was felt necessary.
- 2) If the young person feels that they are unhappy about the use of restraint they should be encouraged to put it in writing (or if unable to write, ask a care worker to write it for them) and bring it to the attention of the manager. Remember also the young person has the right to complain to the police, their social worker or an independent body such as the National Care Standards Commission.
- 3) Staff should inform the manager with a verbal report as soon as possible

16.11 Recording the use of physical intervention

16.11.1 All incidents that result in a restraint must be recorded in the incident book and given a reference number.

16.11.2 Staff must complete a 'record of incident requiring positive handling' sheet and ensure the member on the sheet cross references with the number in the incident book. Any member of staff who took part in or witnessed the incident should put their signature on the sheet.

16.11.3 The completed report should then be given to the manager to read and sign. A copy of this report is put into the physical handling file. Further copies are sent to social workers, parents or other relevant parties. Another copy is put in the young person's personal file.

16.11.4 The manager of the home will monitor the use of restraint and patterns will be examined.

16.12 Sanctions

16.12.1 The sanction must be relevant to the misdemeanour e.g. financially contributing to replacing broken glass or furnishings and fittings.

16.12.2 Relevance of the sanction to 'normal life' is important. The relevance of any sanction is based on the attitudes and feelings of each individual young person. One young person may welcome a sanction of avoiding group activities whereas another may be devastated. Therefore staff must be aware of each young person as an individual when deciding on a sanction. A young person's age and level of understanding should also be taken into account.

16.12.3 Any child whose behaviour has resulted in a sanction must have the right to make a complaint about the situation. This process is outlined in our complaints procedure.

16.13 Recording the use of sanctions

16.13.1 All incidents that result in a sanction will be recorded in the sanction book. The reason for the sanction must be recorded and when the date of the sanction is to be lifted. Staff should then sign the sanction which will then be read by the manager and signed.

16.13.2 The manager of the home will monitor the use of sanctions and any patterns will be examined.

17. The arrangements for child protection and to counter bullying

17.1 Statement of principle

The prime concern at all stages must be the interest and safety of the child. Where there is conflict of interests between child and staff, the interests of the child must be paramount.

17.2 Child abuse occurs in all cultures, all religions and all social classes. All children have a right to be protected.

17.3 The responsibility to report children thought to be at risk rests with the individual who identifies the concern, regardless of their place in the organisation. The organisation has a responsibility to ensure that the matter is reported to social services and/or the police.

17.4 All workers receiving information in the context of a child protection investigation must treat it as confidential. They must not disclose it for any other purpose without consulting the person who provided it and senior management.

Introduction

17.5 It must be remembered that members of staff are at no time to lead a young person to believe a conversation can be kept secret. Staff must make the young people aware that they will have to share the information about child protection issues with their manager, social services and/or the police.

17.6 If a young person discloses abuse, members of staff must be careful not to ask any leading questions because they may interfere with any future investigation. It is better to listen while letting the young person know that you believe what they are telling you.

17.7 From this point the investigation will proceed in three different ways.

- ❖ An inter-departmental team, including social services and the police, will undertake the child protection investigation.
- ❖ The police will investigate whether a crime has been committed.
- ❖ Woodlyn's own disciplinary procedures will be initiated to see if there has been any misconduct on the part of the staff.

17.8 Child protection policy

All young people living in a residential establishment are entitled to the same level and standard of protection from harm as is provided for a young person living at home.

17.9 Abuse occurs in a range of circumstances. The young person may suffer abuse whilst away from the residential setting, e.g. during a visit to the family home or to friends.

17.10 Policies and managerial procedures must openly recognise the possibility of abuse. There must be clear written procedures on how suspected abuse is dealt with for young people and staff to consult and be available for external scrutiny.

17.11 The local authority procedures for child protection must be adhered to at all times. All staff receive training in child protection related issues.

17.12 Reporting, referral and immediate action

If a child alleges abuse or a member of staff suspects abuse (this may for example a physical assault, serious intimidation, sexual assault or serious neglect) has occurred, the matter must be reported to the manager of the home. He in turn will inform the social services and the police along with the relevant registration and inspection unit.

- 17.13 If a staff member believes that the manager is implicated in this abuse then they are expected to use the **whistle blowing procedures**.
- 17.14 If the incident occurs outside office hours, the emergency duty team will be informed on the placing authority's emergency duty team telephone number.
- 17.15 A strategy meeting will take place under the local procedures within 24 hours of the referral.
- 17.16 **Child protection enquiry**
The inter-departmental and inter-agency child protection enquiry will be undertaken in accordance with local procedures.
- 17.17 If Linkway House receives a verbal or written allegation from a named or unnamed person regarding abuse by a member of staff, then that member of staff will be immediately removed from the home until facts are ascertained and the manager decides that there is a case to answer. If so the manager will report the matter to the appropriate authorities and the member/members of staff will be suspended from duty until the outcome of the enquiry. The disciplinary process will be frozen until the enquiry is completed.
- 17.18 The common facts of the alleged abuse must be applied independently to each strand of enquiry. The fact that there is insufficient evidence for the criminal prosecution does not mean that action in relation to child protection or employee discipline is not feasible or necessary.
- 17.19 The outcome of one strand of enquiry may have a bearing on another e.g. information from the joint child protection enquiry should furnish the decision as to whether to proceed with disciplinary proceedings or not.
- 17.20 **Abuse by a member of staff**
When the alleged abuser is a staff member, the manager will discuss the situation with the police and the manager of the child's authority for the child. They will agree the following:
1. The immediate action in respect of the member of staff: the manager and the police will jointly inform the alleged abuser that he or she is suspended until such time as a child protection enquiry is completed.
 2. Once the employee is suspended, the disciplinary process should be 'frozen' until the child protection enquiry is completed.
 3. Any necessary action to ensure the safety of the child and any other children (and in some circumstances including the member of staff's own children).
 4. The timing of the strategy meeting and who should be invited.
 5. Who is to inform those with the parental responsibility, how and when.
 6. Whether other members of staff may be implicated and what action should be taken in this respect.
- 17.26 **Organised abuse**
Organised abuse may involve several members of staff some of who may be senior.
- 17.27 Where such abuse is suspected, it will be necessary for the investigating police and senior social service staff making the enquiries to weigh the need for all secrecy carefully against the rights of the individual children. These children need to be protected against the suspected abuse.
- 17.28 The enquiry must include an independent element and be co-ordinated by a senior social services member of staff at an operational manager's level.
- 17.29 **Abuse by a visitor, member of the child's family or other person**
Where the alleged abuser is a visitor to the home, a member of the child's family or another person, the matter will be dealt with following the standard procedures for Section 47 enquiries.

Anti Bullying Policy

- 17.30 Principle:
Every young person staying at Linkway has a right to enjoy to living free from intimidation both in the home and the surrounding community. Linkway House will not tolerate bullying behaviour of any kind including unkind actions or remarks, verbal taunting and exclusion from activities.
- 17.31 Our ethos is communicated throughout the home by the attitudes and actions of all staff members.
- 17.32 **Aims**
To be aware of the quality and particular nature of bullying that takes place in our home.
- 17.33 To be aware of areas/times/activities of the school that poses a threat to young people and to take appropriate action to reduce those threats.
- 17.34 To effect all changes to the home which may be necessary to negate bullying
- 17.35 To create a caring community where no pupil need fear intimidation by promoting an open listening ethos and encouraging pupils to support one another by reporting all instances of bullying.
- 17.36 The home will address anti-bullying issues both directly and indirectly. The education within the home will cover specific bullying behaviour and associated areas, such as self-assertiveness and responsibility towards others. The development of these skills is crucial to the anti-bullying ethos.
- 17.37 **Course of Action in response to bullying**
Anyone can and should report any bullying incident i.e. victim, bully, a social worker or a parent.
- 17.38 Young people will be informed that someone wishing to report an incident can approach any member of staff (information is included in the young person's welcome pack).
- 17.39 All staff must be ready and willing to deal with any incident that is brought to their attention. If appropriate a member of staff will handle the situation individually. The manager should still be consulted and a recording of the alleged incident made. The manager will decide who is best equipped to handle the problem.
- 17.40 When consulted about a bullying incident the member of staff handling the matter will interview separately the victim, the bully and any witness in order to establish an accurate account of events. Written reports by those involved should be made.
- 17.41 Sanctions/actions taken for bullying will remain at the discretion of the manager. There will be a uniform but flexible approach to this decision that will usually involve a director (in serious/repetitive cases). All factors will be considered including the nature of the incident and any previous involvement in similar acts. Counselling for the bully may be the more appropriate response. Sanctions will be seriously imposed.
- 17.42 **Training**
Staff will be given opportunities to discuss in team meetings/away days to develop anti-bullying methods. The company will endeavour to identify relevant courses.
- 18.0 The procedure for dealing with unauthorised absence for the young person from the home.**
- 18.1 The police are frequent partners in managing 'missing' children and it is therefore important that staff work with them. Staff need to work with social services and the police in relation to missing persons so that each agency responsible is clear.

18.2 Principles

1. The safety of the child is the prime concern
2. As a corporate parent, the local authority has a duty to care for the well-being and safety of the child. This involves locating and returning of the child.
3. Child protection procedures will be observed in respect of Children under 18 years where prostitution may be a factor. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a missing young person may be involved, or at risk of involvement in prostitution, the Social Services need to consider whether Section 47 investigations are required.
4. Agencies locating and returning the child to a safe environment will be the main objective.
5. Notification to the police will only take place in clearly defined circumstances
6. There should be an opportunity for risk assessment to take place in agreed circumstances with police and social services agreement on this.
7. A system is devised to enable a risk assessment for 'missing' children.
8. Staff will interview children on their return and in addition to this the child's social worker is to be encouraged to speak to the child (or arrange for an 'independent' person to speak to the child).

18.3 Definition

A child (under 18) is to be considered 'absconding' if he/she is absent from his/her place of residence without permission and where the absence causes concern for the safety of the child or there is potential danger to the public. When a child is 'looked after' by the local authority, the police have the power of arrest without warrant when absent without permission from the responsible person for him/her. Only children who are considered 'absconding' will be reported to the police.

18.4 Unauthorised absences which cause concern are those where staff or carers have no indication that a child is likely to return within a short space of time or where there is immediate concern for the child's safety.

18.5 Clearly some children absent themselves for a short period of time and then return, often their whereabouts are known. They are not considered at risk and are usually testing boundaries. Sometimes children stay out longer than agreed either on purpose or unwittingly. This kind of boundary testing should not come within the definition of 'absconding'.

18.6 In assessing the significance of a child's absence, staff will apply the above definition and in addition take the following into consideration:

- ❖ Guidance already agreed and incorporated within a child's care plan
- ❖ The age of the child
- ❖ The legal status of the child in care
- ❖ Previous behaviour patterns
- ❖ State of mind/perceived risk
- ❖ Group behaviour
- ❖ Whether the child is perceived as running to someone or running away from a situation.

18.7 In responding to an individual child absconding, staff should be aware of dismissing potential significance of multiple absconding by a young person. Often such young people are immediately labelled as a problem. In such cases a professionals meeting should be called to consider why they are persistently absconding.

18.8 Risk assessment

At the initial care-planning meeting for a placement, consideration will be given to what risk the young person may place himself/herself at if they are missing.

- 18.9 If through the assessment of risk a child is deemed 'absconding', the police should be immediately notified. Staff should confirm an action plan for a police activity and pass on relevant information concerning the child to the police.
- 18.10 Young people who are remanded to local authority accommodation or are subject to conditions of bail that they are breaching because they are missing, should be reported as absconders to the police within one hour of their absence. Police should be informed of which bail conditions the young person has breached.
- 18.11 As a guide, a score of 'high' in two or more areas should define the child as absconding and will trigger immediate reporting to the police. A score of immediate in any category will trigger immediate report to the police.
- 18.12 Children who fall within the category of unauthorised absence must be the subject of continuous risk assessment whilst they remain absent. During their absence circumstances may change and social services need to be ware of this. Staff should still take all reasonable and practical steps that a good parent would take to establish the whereabouts of a child or places that they may be. If the location of the child is known or suspected then it is social services' responsibility to locate and return the child. However, if there are issues of safety or public order in returning the child then action should be agreed between the police and social services. These circumstances would not mean the child should be categorised as absconding.
- 18.13 Responsibility for the child is not absolved when staff have reported a child as absconded to the police. Until such time as a child is no longer missing, staff regularly liaises with the police and social services.
- 18.14 **Responding to an incident**
Discussions should include the following and be recorded in the care plan.
- ❖ The degree of risk of the child absconding
 - ❖ The level of supervision/support offered to the child
 - ❖ The parents' advice on what action they feel should be taken if the child goes missing.
 - ❖ The level of risk presented if the child absconds
 - ❖ Key information and an up to date photograph
- 18.15 Staff should explain to any child on their arrival what actions will be taken if they go missing.
- 18.16 **Notification of absence**
Action to be taken following the initial risk assessment is set out below.

| Level of concern | Persons to be notified | Actions to be taken by Notified persons |
|------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| LOW | Manager/Senior | Attempt to locate – Review after 6 hours |
| MEDIUM | Inform Social Worker or EDT | Attempt to locate |
| HIGH | Inform police and Social Worker | Attempt to locate and request meeting with Social Worker |

- 18.17 Staff should complete a risk assessment and then consult with the manager about whether the child should be seen as an 'absconder'. If the child is not seen as an absconder staff should take whatever steps are appropriate to secure the safe and speedy return of the child to the home.
- 18.18 If the child is an absconder, staff should without delay inform:
- ❖ The police, who will treat the matter as involving a 'vulnerable missing person'

- ❖ The child's social worker, or in their absence a duty social worker. If out of hours then EDT
- 18.19 Where initially the risk assessment defines the absences as 'unauthorised absence' rather than 'absconding', this decision should be reviewed frequently if the child does not return or his/her whereabouts are not known. If the period of absence continued for EIGHTEEN HOURS then the child will be deemed as 'absconding'. This should be seen as a maximum period and in many situations shorter periods will be appropriate.
- 18.20 **Informing press**
It is for the police to advise the media regarding a missing child. A decision to publicise by press and or television will always be made in consultation with social services so that those people with parental responsibility have been informed.
- 18.21 A full record of all conversations and decisions must be recorded and this recording needs to be on the child's file.
- 18.22 Where a missing child is over 16 years of age and is being looked after by social services, prior discussions should take place with the police and social services about the powers to return the young person if they do not wish to do so.
- 18.23 **The return**
The child should be told that we expect them to talk to staff about their absences. He/she should be also told someone 'independent' will talk to them, usually their social worker.
- 18.24 When the child returns, his/her medical needs should be discussed and medical attention offered to be arranged.
- 18.25 Police, social worker, parents and all others informed of the absence of the young person should be advised of the child's return without delay.
- 18.26 Staff should ask the child's field social worker whether a special strategy meeting is required or whether 'special' strategies need to be put in place. All such conversations should be recorded and decisions carefully recorded. Staff should inform the manager of any decision made by a field social worker.
- 18.27 It is the responsibility of the child's social worker to ensure the child is interviewed by himself/herself or by an independent visitor.
- 19.0 **Electronic surveillance or mechanical means of surveillance of children which may be used in the home**
- 19.1 Linkway House has a CCTV system in operation to monitor both security outside and the cover of the lounge and landing inside.
- 19.2 For the purpose of monitoring restraint procedures, restraints where possible will take place in the lounge. Recordings can then show that no improper means of restraint have been used and Linkway House are quite happy to give access to these recordings to both social services and the young person's parent or guardian.
- 19.3 Owing to the sensitive nature of recordings at Linkway House written consent prior to admission by both parents and social worker.
- 20.0 **Fire precautions and emergency procedures in the home**
- 20.1 Fire drills are practised and recorded regularly. The home has staff members appointed and trained to act as a fire officer. This person has the responsibility for calling fire drills, recording the results, raising any resulting concerns with the manager and checking that appliances are properly maintained.
- 20.2 The local authority inspects the home and ensures:

- ❖ Adequate precautions are taken against risk of fire
 - ❖ There are appropriate fire escapes
 - ❖ Adequate arrangements are made for detecting, containing and extinguishing fires.
 - ❖ Adequate arrangements for warning of fire and for evacuation of the building safely.
 - ❖ Staff and young people understand the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.
- 20.3 Any outbreak of fire requiring evacuation of a building by the young people will be notified to the responsible authorities and the home's CSCI without delay.
- 21.0 **The arrangements made for the children's religious instruction and observance**
- 21.1 A child's ethnic, cultural background and religion are important factors to be taken into account when planning the care for the child. Staff will need to be familiar with the specific needs of children from ethnic minority groups and how to access specialist services when appropriate.
- 21.2 All children's homes have a duty to make positive arrangements to help children observe and preserve their religious, racial, cultural, linguistic identity and heritage.
- 21.3 **Staff duties**
All staff members will need to be aware of the religious affiliation of the child for whom they are responsible and the significance this has for them and their family.
- 21.4 Staff should actively promote the opportunity for children to undertake observance of their chosen religion. This includes assisting in transportation to places of worship where appropriate. Where a child wishes to carry out observance within the home, they should be enabled to do so in private and without embarrassment.
- 21.5 Staff members should be aware of any special dietary requirements for the young person. Arrangements will have to be made to obtain any ingredients (e.g. Halal meat). Staff also need to be aware of the significance of the preparation process and the use of certain equipment for certain types of food.
- 21.6 Staff should ensure that appropriate personal hygiene items are made available to those children requiring them. This also applies to any specific requirements for clothing etc.
- 22.0 **The arrangements made for contact between a young person accommodated and their parents, relatives and friends**
- 22.1 Managers and staff in children's homes have a duty to provide a safe environment for the young people in their care and to ensure that they are protected from harm.
- 22.2 The following people are entitled to have access to a children's home.
- a) The child's parent
 - b) Any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for the child
 - c) The child's relatives or friends
 - d) Any independent visitor appointed for the young person under Schedule 2 of the Children's Act 1989
 - e) Any allocated social worker to the child
 - f) Any guardian ad litem of the child
 - g) Any solicitor for the time being acting for the child or whom the child wishes to instruct
 - h) Inspection of Homes Officer
- 22.3 If the person visiting is unknown to the member of staff, perhaps visiting the home for the first time, ask that person for identification. Staff will check by telephone that the person visiting is bonafide.
- 22.4 If staff are in doubt about the visitor, contact their line manager for a final decision whether the visitor is allowed to enter the home.

- 22.5 Staff should be aware of the need to monitor those persons entering and leaving the premises. Adequate security measures are taken to ensure that any person could not enter the building without the knowledge of the staff on duty.
- 22.6 Staff should ensure that (with exception of those persons in (a) to (h) page 18) unauthorised persons have supervised contact with any child in the home. This requires staff to monitor the presence of repairmen, decorators, delivery people etc. during their presence in the home.
- 22.7 When a visitor is admitted to the building for whatever purpose, that person must sign the Visitor's Book. Staff on duty should note their arrival, their purpose for visiting, who they met with and their time of departure. This should be recorded in the logbook. In addition to the Visitor's Book, visits made by any person should be noted in the appropriate record in a child's individual case file and in the logbook. The purpose of the visit together with a comment on the dynamics of the contact should also be appropriately recorded.
- 22.8 Members of staff should feel enabled to deal with visitors who may present a risk of harm to a young person. When appropriate, visitors causing concern should be required to leave the building. In more extreme circumstances it may be appropriate to speak to a manager and/or seek assistance of the police where a visitor appears to cause disruption/potential harm to a young person.
- 23.0 **The arrangements for dealing with complaints**
Grievance procedure for all young people
- 23.1 The grievance procedure is a device through which young people can raise grievances and where possible the grievance can be resolved quickly through talking and to the satisfaction of all concerned. A grievance can be a complaint or problem arising from the care the young person is receiving at Linkway House and all young people have the right to raise a grievance.
- 23.2 It is expected that some grievances can be dealt with informally, however full recording should be logged of any grievance.
- 23.3 Complaints that involve child protection concerns should be dealt with under the procedure relating to child protection matters.
- 23.4 Staff shall ensure that young people are fully aware both of the steps available to them under Linkway House grievance procedures and external complaints system (a leaflet is available for all young people). Also young people need to be aware of the manner in which such grievances should be made and that no matter what the grievance, staff should treat this seriously and with the correct professional manner.
- Procedure*
Stage 1: Informal meeting to sort out the Young Person's complaint with the manager or senior member of staff.
- 23.5 Where a young person is aggrieved about any matter relating to his/her care, a senior member of staff or manager should discuss the matter initially with the young person as soon as possible; in exceptional circumstances within five working days. It is important that the young person is permitted to raise as part of the grievance a series of directly related incidents having a cumulative effect e.g. being bullied by another person.
- 23.6 The young person may wish to outline the grievance orally or in writing.
- 23.7 The young person may wish to seek advice from another person prior to raising the grievance. An advocate or their social worker and staff should help facilitate this. It would be appropriate for the young person to be accompanied by someone of their choice, but not appropriate to be represented by someone of their choice at this stage, unless it is expressly required, and agreed by the line manager.

23.8 In exceptional circumstances where it would not be appropriate for the young person to discuss the grievance initially with a particular member of staff or the manager, so the person in charge should be informed immediately in these circumstances.

23.9 A record is made of any grievance by a young person in their file.

Stage 2: Formal investigation carried out by the manager. They should write a report (and send a copy to the Young Person and social services) and explain in person their findings. They give their recommendations within four weeks of the start of stage two.

23.10 If the young person is not satisfied with the response from stage one, the grievance should be set down in writing and formal investigation carried out by the manager. They should write a report (and send a copy to the young person and social services) and explain in person their findings to the young person. The young person may, if they wish, be accompanied by a friend/another member of staff etc.

23.11 The manager shall notify the young person of their decision in writing. This notification should be within twenty working days of the start of stage two. A copy should be sent to the person in charge and the social worker. The manager should ensure that they verbally go through their report with the young person.

Stage 3: A complaints panel will be convened to consider a stage three complaint. It must meet within four weeks and the young person has the right to attend. The panel must make its decision within 24 hours.

23.12 If the young person remains dissatisfied he/she has the right within twenty working days of stage two being completed to appeal.

23.13 The matter shall be heard by panel (which should include at least one director and preferably a person unconnected the running of the home) as soon as practicable and normally within twenty working days of the receipt of the appeal. The young person is entitled to attend panel and he/she shall be notified of the panel's decision in writing as soon as practicable and other than in exceptional circumstances within 24 hours.

23.14 An agreed record of the steps 2 and 3 should be kept.

Further stage: If the young person is still dissatisfied staff should encourage the young person to make a further complaint to external sources should they wish (which are listed in the young persons complaints leaflet in their welcome pack).

23.15 **Monitoring and Review**

The operation of the policy and procedures will be monitored. Confidential records will be collated by the director and be reviewed annually.

23.16 **Complaints to Ofsted**

Any complaints/concerns about Linkway House or anyone connected to Linkway House can be made to:

David Sandford
Ofsted
National Business Unit
3rd Floor
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Anne's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA
Tel: 08456 404040

24.0 **The arrangements for dealing with reviews of the placement plans for young people at Linkway House**

24.1 The placement plan for each young person sets out clearly the assessed needs of the child, objectives of the placement and how these are to be met by the home on a

day to day basis, the contribution to be met by the staff of the homes, and how the effectiveness of the placement is to be assessed in relation to each major element of the plan. The plan is to include:

- ❖ Health needs and health promotion
- ❖ Care needs including safeguarding and promoting welfare
- ❖ Physical and emotional needs
- ❖ Educational needs and attainment targets
- ❖ Cultural, religious, language and racial needs and how they will be met
- ❖ Leisure needs
- ❖ Contact arrangements with family, friends and significant others

24.2 Each child's placement plan is monitored by a key-worker in the home who ensures that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of the child. The young person's key-worker also provides individual guidance and support to the young person and regularly makes time available to the child to enable the young person to seek guidance, advice and support on any other matter.

24.3 The manager will regularly and frequently seek the view of each young person, parents (where applicable) and the social worker when initiating and making changes to the plan.

24.4 The manager will contact placing authorities to ensure regular reviews take place and ensure the young person's views are known, and where applicable will ensure that an independent visitor is available.

24.5 Linkway House aim is to ensure that placing authorities follow the statutory review system for example the initial planning meeting within ten days, the first review after placement will be after four weeks, the second no later than three months, and then regularly every six months thereafter. Placement plans are to be in place at ten working days into the placement and are reviewed at each statutory review

For example:

Last review date must take place

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Date of admission | 1st April |
| Date of initial planning meeting | 11th April |
| Date of first review | 1st May |
| Date of second review | 1st August |
| Date of third review | 1st February |

24.6 Due to the nature of our referrals it may be thought necessary to hold reviews more frequently than the legally required time frame. Interim meetings may be called by the manager Linkway House or by the placing authority if there are sufficient concerns about any aspect of the placement.

24.7 A copy of the plan will be kept on the young person's file. A written copy will also be made available to the young person and will assist them in understanding them and to store them safely.

25.0 The type of accommodation and sleeping arrangements provided at Linkway House

25.1 Linkway House is a five bedroom detached house at Clifton Street, Burnley, Lancashire. It is situated in a quiet area of the town. Each young person has their own bedroom and they are encouraged to personalise their rooms. The young people do not at any time share a bedroom. There are two toilets upstairs at Linkway House, one with a bath and shower, the other with shower cubicle.

25.2 At night times there is always a member of staff on sleeping duty and one waking watch.

26.0 Details of any specific therapeutic techniques used at Linkway and the arrangements for their supervision

26.1 Although no specific therapeutic techniques are practised by any member of staff at Linkway House we do use a strategy with the young people called Active Learning

Skills. Used in conjunction with behaviour strategy programmes these help the young people to calm themselves down during and after an outburst. They also develop the young persons listening and concentration skills.

Linkway House has a specially equipped light sensory room where the young people can go to relax to light and music. This room also contains a water bed and soft play furniture. The young people are supervised at all times when using the room.

- 26.2 If any special therapeutic needs are required by young people e.g. consultant psychologists, physiotherapists or aroma therapists, Linkway House has access to a number of qualified professional bodies.
- 26.3 Our remit at Linkway House is to provide the highest quality of childcare.
- 27.0 **A description of Linkway House policy on anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their rights**
- 27.1 Young people should not be subject to any form of discrimination within their home. Young people should be encouraged by staff to bring any such matters to attention. Staff must take any reported incidents of racism or other forms of discrimination seriously, ensuring that the line manager is made aware as soon as possible.
- 27.2 Where such incidents occur, staff will be expected to provide assistance to the young person to cope with such issues. It may be necessary to consider making use of external resources.
- 27.3 The home should enable children to enjoy cultural expression, dress, music, art and design, customs and celebrations in a way that is satisfying to young people from varying backgrounds and which widens the experience of all young people.
- 27.4 Where allegations of racism by a child towards a member of staff, the line manager will explore the issues within supervision and discuss within the staff meeting. Where allegations of racism by a staff member are made, they will be investigated under the company's disciplinary procedures and if proven, may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 27.5 Linkway House operates within a multi-racial and multi-cultural society and accepts the responsibilities that this places upon it, both as an employer and as a provider of services to the public. It acknowledges the evidence that black people are not treated equally as employees in the care system and that black people are more likely to receive poorer service from its agencies. Linkway House believes that the phenomenon of racism creates such inequalities; therefore it must strive to ensure that its own practices and services do not discriminate against staff, and potential staff, and the young people who use our service. Discrimination will not be accepted because of a person's colour, race and nationality, ethnic or national origins.
- 27.6 Linkway House asserts its commitment to the development of a strategy designed to eliminate racist practices, behaviour or the victimisation of staff that have complained in good faith of racist behaviour. It will establish systems to enable staff to complain about racist behaviour and will expect staff that are found to have behaved in a racist way to be disciplined.
- 27.7 Linkway House is committed to ensuring that the young people who are placed in our home are aware of their rights and that they are upheld. To ensure this information, our young person's welcome pack gives information about their rights, an advocacy visitor's scheme is being introduced and a young person's complaint procedure is adhered to.

I have verified that the above statements are a true and accurate reflection of Linkway House. I undertake to review their accuracy on a regular basis.

Name of Manager

Signature of Manager

Date