

# Woodside 16+

## Statement of Purpose

Manager: Lindsey Day

32 Christ Church Street, Sheffield, S3 9HN  
Tel & Fax: 0114 2788 881

For all new referrals/enquiries please contact Referrals on **0114 2800 230** or **07790 883 956**

## Contact Details

### **MANAGER**

**Lindsey Day**

Woodside

32 Christ Church Road

Sheffield

S3 9HN

### **MANAGING DIRECTOR**

**Shabir Ali**

Progressive Care, Fusion House

51 Attercliffe Common

Don Valley, Sheffield

S9 2AE

# Progressive Care

Woodside is operated by Progressive Care Limited, which is an established independent provider of high quality innovative and specialist care facilities for adults and young people. The Company has developed, and operates, the following care provision:

- Accommodation and care for people with a range of learning disabilities
- Children's Homes
- Residential and Dementia Residential Homes for the elderly
- Mother and Baby units
- Residential Family Centre's
- Supported Housing
- Domiciliary Care
- Assisted Living
- Bridging Support

Our aim is to work in a person-centred way to ensure we meet the needs of each individual who we work with.

Our Head Office is located in Sheffield and is the central hub of all our operations, utilizing the very latest technology, a strong infrastructure and highly experienced multi-disciplinary personnel. With around 200 employees we nurture innovation through a flat management structure, with much of the decision-making process devolved to the homes, the young people and their Managers. Extensive investment is given to staff training and development. Our high standards and our focus on quality are monitored through clinical effectiveness. Care benchmarking and audits are regularly undertaken to identify our strengths and weaknesses and to plan improvement and so facilitate the implementation of effective and constructive change. We are a forward-thinking organization which continues to grow and strategically plan for future developments on a national basis.

Our accommodation is in keeping with the high standards of all the Progressive Care facilities. The individual apartments are all equipped to a high standard. We believe that people respond more positively to high quality surroundings, care and education.

## Ethos & Philosophy

As an organization our aim is to provide the highest standards of accommodation and care. We seek to promote and maintain independence and ensure privacy and dignity is maintained. We treat everyone with respect, regardless of age, sex, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or abilities. We provide activities and avenues for the social integration of our young people within the local community. We provide comfort, safety and security for all our young people. Our philosophy of care is achieved through a culture and environment which places the young person first. We pride ourselves on our Person-centered approach.

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# Our Accommodation

In keeping with all Progressive Care services, the facilities at Woodside are equipped and maintained to an extremely high standard and quality. It has always been our belief that the young people placed with us respond more positively to high quality surroundings, care and education.

Woodside comprises of six 1 bedroom apartments and 3 studio apartments. They are equipped and furnished in a way that provides the young people in our care with a level of resources and comfort that will be a positive influence in their development and progress towards a successful, independent life.

## Bedrooms

Six apartments have a separate well-furnished bedroom with carpets, curtains, single bed, wardrobe and dressing table etc. The remaining three units are studio apartments and have a single bed and storage incorporated within the lounge.

## Lounges

Each lounge is well furnished with carpets, curtains, sofa, chair, coffee table, dining table & chairs

## Kitchens

Each kitchen is fully fitted and equipped to a high standard with fridge, cooker and storage cupboards.

## Bathrooms

Each unit has its own bathroom, all of which are equipped to a high standard.

## Laundry

There is a well-equipped communal laundry room with a washing machine and tumble dryer.

## Office Accommodation

There is a fully equipped office staffed 24 hours per day.

## Car Parking & Gardens

There are well-maintained gardens on three sides with ample secure private parking to the rear.

## Security

The entire development is under the 24 hour supervision of our experienced staff using technology to ensure the protection of the young people who live there and to minimize the risk of them being led astray by those who would seek to exploit their vulnerability.

There are CCTV cameras at strategic points around the ground and internally covering communal stairways only. All security arrangements are deployed to be protective without being intrusive. We always respect the basic rights to privacy and dignity of our young people.

## Anti-discriminatory practice

At Woodside we recognise that we live in a multi-racial and multi-cultural society. We also recognise that prejudice and discrimination can exist within society at all levels; therefore we challenge inequality at any level.

At Woodside we believe that we have a responsibility to provide an environment that is free from discrimination and prejudice for staff, the young people, and visitors.

Woodside will seek to appoint staff that reflect the racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the young people being cared for.

There are many ways in which discrimination can be experienced and it is everyone's duty to ensure that this practice is not allowed to continue. We have clear policies on challenging discrimination and promoting practices which recognise the individuality of each young person and the fact that the young people who come to Woodside are from many different backgrounds and cultures. On the other hand it is also important to emphasise that all the young people have a right to feel safe and to be protected and that genuine concerns about the young people are not ignored or dismissed as cultural differences. Racist language from any source must and will be challenged as will any remarks that are targeted at a particular group in society.

Staff will be challenged about any kind of prejudice or derogatory comment. This will be dealt with in supervision and if it persists will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

## The fire precautions and associated emergency procedures

All new young people are made aware of the Fire Precautions as soon as is practicable after admission to Woodside. The Project is inspected by an appropriately qualified individual to carry out fire risk assessment at least annually and any recommendations made are fully instigated.

We ensure that all precautions are taken in order to avoid a fire and that there are adequate facilities for the warning of a fire and evacuation of the building.

All furniture, textiles, bedding, carpets and curtains in the unit comply with the British Standard of Flammability requirements. When any items are due for renewal or replacement, it will be the responsibility of the Manager and owner to ensure that this safety level is maintained.

Part of the staff induction process includes fire prevention, procedures and evacuation processes including the format for recording fire records. Staff also receive training in resuscitation techniques during their emergency first aid training. At Woodside there is an allocated First aider on shift each day.

## Confidentiality

Trust is an integral part of our ability to provide consistent high standards to care and as such it must not be broken.

A person's trust is not a right but a special privilege, which means you must exercise care and thought in your handling of confidences. You must never divulge a confidence placed in you by a Service User, colleague, relative etc.

Only where the nature of the confidence may have a detrimental impact upon the standard of care should you consider passing it on and then only to the Manager, never anyone else. The Manager will determine the best way to handle the matter.

The records of each young person are maintained in a locked cupboard. The young person has access to their own file and can request to see the file once they have given staff notice to arrange a planned Key work session to do this staff will discuss privately all written reports with the young person and record their views. When a young person arrives at Woodside clear guidelines are agreed with them and their Social worker about who should receive access to their individual records and agreed plan.

These high standards of confidentiality apply just as much to information recorded in care plans and client records. Breach of confidence may constitute gross misconduct and as such may lead to dismissal.

This does not affect the rights regarding 'Whistle blowing', for which there is a separate policy in place which protects your right to expose unsound practice without detriment to yourself.

## Dignity and Privacy

Maintaining a young person's privacy and dignity is of paramount importance at all times. This includes speaking to the young people in a courteous manner, addressing a young person by their preferred name, asking permission and knocking on their door before entering their room/accommodation.

Confidential information about a young person will not be disclosed to any other young person or visitor. If assisting a young person with personal care all measures will be taken to maintain their dignity, ensure privacy and to respect their wishes. All of the young people are encouraged to feel empowered are assisted to express any concerns they may have to the Manager.

## Quality Assurance

Providing the best standards of care to our Service Users relies upon managing our activities with a built in emphasis on quality.

No one person with a stake in our care provision has the absolute perspective on quality – it has input from several sources.

In order to achieve quality standards of care, we adopt the following:

A person is nominated for implementing our quality standards

Where a team approach is adopted, one person is in charge of the team

An annual audit of our entire activities

A development plan from that audit which requires implementing

Surveying our stakeholders to enhance that development plan

Setting expectations for the future direction of our business

Determining quality approaches to implement those expectations

Ensuring all staff are assisted to work within these expectations

# Support Available

- Preparation for move to full independent living.
- Group Work
- Weekly Activities available on site with staff
- Work with families and partners in order to establish a network of support during and after placement.
- Assessment of needs and capabilities
- Risk Assessments
- Weekly Update Report
- Registration with local GP
- Encourage dental and ophthalmic tests
- Health & well being discussions with key worker around issues such as drugs, safe sex, diet, etc.
- Ensuring all health checks/medical appointments are kept.
- Monthly planning meeting

## Key worker

Each young person has an allocated key worker who works closely with the young person and their Social worker. The role of the key worker is to ensure that the agreed plan is implemented; that reports are prepared as necessary and that the young person has a special member of staff on whom they can rely for guidance and support.

Each week the key worker will carry out a minimum of 1 key work session. This is on a 1-1 basis. The key worker will complete weekly reports for the social worker, to ensure updates are maintained.

## Relationships

All the young people at Woodside are encouraged to develop social contacts and personal friendships/relationships away from their accommodation as a means of enlarging their social circle and preparing for the future. However, it is inevitable that young people with common features in their backgrounds will form friendships. This is all part of growing up and learning to live side by side with your neighbour, even if you do not like them.

## Rights of the Young people

- The young people's rights are always given every consideration at Woodside
- To feel safe and protected
- The young people are given a key to their own apartment, Should any young person lose the key provided they will be charged to replace the key.
- Staff will always knock and wait to be invited in
- Staff will only enter an apartment/room uninvited if they believe the young person is at risk.
- Staff are available to accompany the young people to appointments/ meetings such educational, medical and contact and also appropriate adult for legal appointments.
- In accordance with each young person's agreed Pathway Plan, we seek to instil a sense of responsibility in all the young people. They are encouraged to make staff more aware of their movements and particularly to inform staff if they are planning a trip or intend to stay away from Woodside for an extended period. Young people who are absent without informing staff of their whereabouts will be classed as unauthorized absent and missing should this be over 24 hours with no contact. (See procedure for dealing with unauthorized absence).

## Personal Development and Growth

One of the most important aims at Woodside is to ensure that each young person is helped to grow in confidence and in self-esteem. Many years in the care system on top of previous difficulties within their family can leave young people anxious, angry and lacking in trust, especially towards adults, who as far as they are concerned have let them down over and over again. At Woodside we create opportunities for young people to succeed and praise them when they achieve success. Incentives and rewards are put in place to for encouragement and recognition in attending education/Training/Employment This can be a

long slow process but our commitment to the young people is to sustain our efforts even when they are rejecting, angry and hostile.

## Life & Personal Skills

Preparing for the future is an essential part of our work at Woodside. Some young people who have grown up in the care system can often present as much younger than their chronological age. Their immaturity is confusing to them and to those who come into contact with them. While they may present as streetwise in many areas and have vocabulary and knowledge of certain things way beyond what you would expect, in other areas of everyday life they do not have the most basic of skills. They may know how to hitch a lift, take risks with their own safety but they do not have the skills to go to the railway station, buy a ticket and board a train. Giving young people the skills they will need to succeed in finding a job, maintaining a home, paying bills, developing friendships and intimate relationships and possibly bringing up children of their own is a key objective. It is what will make the difference between success and things going wrong.

# Our Client Group

## The service is available to:

Young men and women between the ages of 16 - 24 years who have been in care or family breakdown and need/would benefit from continued support while they progress towards full independence.

## They may have multiple needs as a result of:

- Problems caused to themselves by others over many years and yet never addressed.
- A number of placements which have ended abruptly
- A sense of unworthiness and lack of self esteem
- Difficult or even fractured relationships with their families
- The everyday pressures associated with any young person's move towards independence.
- Such young people often need support on different levels and on demand. Their lifestyle or their emotional development is such that they cannot plan ahead and so when they ask for help they expect and need it to be there for them at the right time.
- Speedy and friendly intervention can often prevent a problem turning into a crisis. Having experienced staff available 24 hours per day is the next best thing to a caring family.
- It is almost impossible for some of these young people to engage properly in education, training or employment without the kind of support that is available at Woodside and the input of our experienced staff encouraging them into action. Without that level of support they lack the motivation to get out of bed in the morning and get on with the day ahead. They lack the motivation that comes from knowing that someone cares because the reality has often been that there is no one to care. The young people quickly come to learn that at Woodside we care.

# Referrals & Admissions

We recognise that each new young person should have the right to choose accommodation which suits their choice, their needs and their abilities. We provide detailed information on Woodside by publishing our Statement of Purpose and our Service User Guide, which we make available to prospective residents, their families and significant others. Prior to admission we carry out a detailed assessment of need and discuss this with relevant and interested parties, to ensure that we offer the best package available to meet the individual needs. The multi-disciplinary meeting which follows the assessment enables all involved with the person being referred to discuss needs and ask any questions which may be of concern. We also like to plan a structured programme of transition.

In some cases it may be necessary to accept a person on an emergency admission. We do not do this as a matter of course but we recognise that there are times when people need to be accommodated at short notice. In these cases we always request as much detailed information as possible to inform staff briefing. The staff are well trained in the management of behaviour and their caring and consistent approach is usually successful with most young people. However, there are occasions when dedicated training is required to meet the specific needs of individuals and we endeavour to provide this training prior to admission whenever possible.

# Care Matters

## 1a. Pathway Planning

Planning is an essential part of quality care. Every young person at Woodside has a Pathway Plan to address their individual needs. This is initiated prior to admission and is built upon during the first few weeks of occupancy with us. Whenever possible we encourage each young person to be involved with their pathway Planning and we also involve other professionals and family members, as appropriate. The Pathway Plan is available to the young people or their representatives at any time. It includes any psychological and physical needs, which have been identified, and provides a plan of care to meet those needs. Pathway Plans are completed by the social worker and the Keyworker will share any relevant information which is vital towards the Plan Full Reviews of the Pathway Plan (Person-Centred Plan) take place either every six months, as agreed by the multi-disciplinary team.

## 1b. Planning, Assessments & Reviews

Planning is an essential part of quality care. It avoids drift and keeps everyone focused. In order to help the young person to achieve the objectives identified in the Pathway Plan, staff at Woodside need to incorporate specific actions into a detailed plan and then to implement them. The young person and the Social worker are fully involved and the young person's views are listened to and respected. It is essential that everyone understands who is expected to do what given the number of different people and agencies involved. Effective partnership working is the key and staff at Woodside have an important role to play in tracking the implementation of the Pathway Plan. Anticipated outcomes need to be understood by everyone concerned so that the plan and its progress can be monitored and time scales or indeed the plan itself adjusted in light of experience.

At Woodside we continually assess the progress being made by the young people to ensure that their move to full independent living occurs at the right time for them. Our staff are experienced at working in close partnership with the Social worker in making decisions as to precisely when the young people are ready and able to move on to full independent living in terms of financially, practically, socially and emotionally.

A Plan is reviewed monthly initially to ensure that it is up-to-date and on target. The Plan may need to change in light of experience or timescales may need adjusting. The young people may falter along the path or indeed they may have chosen entirely the wrong path. However, there must always be a fall-back position so that they can get started again. At Woodside we do not give up at the first hurdle. The path to independence is never going to be a smooth journey and it is definitely not going to be a straight road, but progress does need to be made. Building in regular reviews ensures that the process is continuously monitored and kick started when necessary. Staff also contribute to any statutory reviews which the Local Authority arrange and assist the young person to contribute in a positive way to their own review since they may have painful memories of reviews in the past.

Prior to or upon admission, the DATE, TIME and LOCATION of the first review must be agreed with all concerned.

**First Review** Must take place no later than 4 weeks after the date which the placement starts

**Second Review** Must take place no more than 3 months after the first

**Subsequent Reviews** Must be held at no longer than 6 monthly intervals

Reviews should be held in settings which are conducive to the relaxed participation of all present. In some circumstances it may be inappropriate to hold a review at Woodside, e.g. where travel is a problem. Woodside are flexible in their approach and would consider participating in a review at a venue situated in the young person's home area.

Where the review is held at Woodside all staff will strive to make participants feel welcome and relaxed. The young person should always be consulted regarding the venue.

## 2. Education

Woodside recognise the need for a young person to have access to education. As these young people will be in different age groups, education, training and employment packages must be tailored to individuals. In formulating the package these guidelines will be followed:

- Pathway Plans will include education and training
- Case records will include the young person's education history and current progress
- Where English is not the young person's first language, they will be assisted in gaining the necessary help.

Services available within many settings in the community. However, some young people will need specialist and sustained support from staff if they are to benefit from the many opportunities available. Staff at Woodside are there to support the young people as they try out new training opportunities or take the first step in a new job.

### **3. Healthcare**

At Woodside we recognise the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles in the young people. Staff are pro-active and liaise with relevant agencies regarding matters of health for individuals. It is important to ensure health issues are addressed and considered at reviews.

We have excellent links with the local GP practice. There is also a local dentist who offers excellent care. Ensuring that the young people have access to all healthcare services is given priority.

Healthcare issues that come under the umbrella range include:

- HIV/sexual healthcare education is part of the healthcare programme
- Diet, including cooking and menu planning, food shopping, safe storage and preparation of food
- Exercise and physical education
- 'Keep-safe' work
- Self esteem, self image and presentation
- Sleeping patterns
- Any on-going treatment/medication and possible side effects
- Dental care/hygiene
- Specialist areas of help – drug, alcohol abuse, death and bereavement
- Dealing with stress / anger management
- Self-care skills – personal hygiene, laundry, ventilation of rooms, cleaning
- Relevance of keeping a self health history
- Dangers of smoking

### **4. Promoting a young person's participation in recreational, sporting and cultural activities**

Woodside recognise that the young people come from a variety of different backgrounds and racial origins. Each young person is encouraged to respect the needs, beliefs and views of others and to learn about each other's way of life.

Enquiries are made into the religious and cultural background of each young person as part of the admission planning process. Positive steps are taken by the key worker to assist the young person to practice their religion by:

- Assisting the young person with the preparation of special diets for religious observance
- Assist the young person in making contact with the local place of worship or community group
- Ensure effective arrangements are made for the young person to observe their religion according to their own wishes and without embarrassment
- Ensuring they are able to receive religious instruction as appropriate.

All staff, if they are unaware of the relevant information regarding a young person's religious or cultural background, will actively seek the required information. There are many festivals and cultural events in Sheffield and the young people are encouraged to join in such events.

Each young person will be encouraged to take part in leisure activities. Staff will accompany the young people to activities if this is needed. This can range from a trip to the cinema or ice rink to going swimming. The young people also help staff agree a programme of activities within the Project which can range from hiring a movie to a health and beauty ,Cooking, Gardening, Arts & Crafts . Young people who have particular hobbies are encouraged to follow these.

### **5. The arrangements for contact between a young person and their parents, relatives and friends**

Maintaining family links is important to the young people who are starting on the path to an independent life. Relationships are often complex and fragile. Time may have deepened the hurt and pain particularly if angry feelings have never been dealt with. Every effort is made by staff to help the young people create a welcoming atmosphere for families visiting. Staff are also on hand to deal with any emotional aftermath.

### **6. The arrangements made for the control, restraint and discipline of people**

At Woodside we have a policy on the use of restraint and records are maintained and monitored by the Manager. The methods of control and discipline will reflect the age, circumstances and maturity of the group and those within it. At Woodside the following will be the appropriate tools regarding control and discipline:

- Rules of behaviour are an essential part of the structure of any group. It is vital that any prospective or current young person is aware of the behaviour expected of them, especially in terms of mutual respect. Expectations regarding behaviour should be fully discussed with each young person.

- Forming healthy relationships, and discussing any concerns regarding a young person's behaviour, negotiating and agreeing change is an essential part of the work undertaken with each young person.
- Clearly the encouragement of good behaviour and developing skills is a disincentive to inappropriate or 'bad' behaviour. Praise and acknowledgement communicates what is acceptable and skill developing. This is vital to the growth of self-esteem in the young person.
- There is no point in having a 'one rule for you and one rule for me' system. This will lead to resentment and will not assist the process of understanding why an aspect of behaviour is unacceptable. Therefore, staff whilst at work, need to be subject to any basic ground rules laid down at Woodside e.g. no swearing. Staff must display the aspects of behaviour they wish to encourage in the group.
- The physical presence of a member of staff in a room is an essential part of establishing control and concern. A few well chosen words may be enough to calm a situation.
- A young person may be prevented from disruptive behaviour by being led away from the situation by an arm around their shoulder which still requires their co-operation.

The use of restraint is a very serious matter and should only be used to:

- Prevent serious injury to a person
- Prevent serious damage to property

Restraint is an act of care and control, never a punishment. Minimum physical control will be used and for as brief a time as possible. Staff are trained in the use of restraint by a qualified instructor. Staff on duty at the time of an incident make the decision on the use of restraint but must be able to justify their actions to the Manager.

Staff must appreciate that when the incident is over and done with, the subject must be closed.

## 7. Working in Partnership with Other Agencies

### Social workers

Each key worker works closely and effectively with a young person's social worker to ensure that the young person receives co-ordinated services. This includes sharing information about the young person with their consent. Regular and effective cross agency communication is essential if the young people are to achieve a successful outcome.

### Other Outside Agencies

Woodside is committed to developing a good quality service, we will work in partnership with the young people and significant others. We will work closely with other professionals and agencies and within the community in which we live in order to develop essential skills and to build a shared bank of experience which the young people can draw on and take full advantage of whilst at Woodside and thereafter.

This is achieved by:

- Allocation of a key worker for the young person
- Individual work undertaken.
- Group Work to improve interpersonal skills to develop self-confidence, self-awareness and self-esteem.
- Empowering the young people to take responsibility for decisions that affect their lives.

Other methods of intervention may be used as and when it is felt appropriate, in order to meet the needs of the individual. This may include the services of Health Visitors, Dentist, Doctor, Schools, Colleges, Careers Service, Drug Counselling, Youth service, Family Planning, Sure Start, Connexions, Sexual Exploitation Service, Therapeutic Team or any other specialist service.

# Staffing Matters

## Qualification of Manager

Lindsey has attained Level 3 NVQ Children & Young People. Leadership & Management Level 3 NVQ . Advanced Level apprenticeship in Management and currently completing Level 5 Leadership & Management C&YP.

Lindsey has over 8 years experience working with young people with a range of difficulties ranging from Emotional and Behavioural difficulties. ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Substance Misuse, Offending behaviours. Sexual exploitation and self-harm

## Training

Progressive Care is committed to staff training and development for each member of the team.

A varied training programme is available to ensure staffs are equipped with the skills and knowledge to provide a quality service to the families, and children, in our care and/or accommodation.

Through the Training Facility, Care2Succeed, and in conjunction with the manager, Progressive Care seeks to ensure swift access to initial induction/s and mandatory training; as well as service specific training throughout staff's employment.

	Week 1	Week 2
<b>Monday</b>	Company Presentation Level 2 Health and Safety in the Workplaces	Medication Infection Prevention & Control Moving & Handling Theory
<b>Tuesday</b>	Safeguarding Children & Young People Safeguarding Adults	Fire Safety Awareness Information & Recording
<b>Wednesday</b>	Positive Handling Approaches	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Meeting with Managers
<b>Thursday</b>	Level 2 Food Safety	
<b>Friday</b>	Emergency First Aid	

**In addition to above, all staff are trained in the following:**

- Service Specific
- Drugs and Substance Misuse
- Self Harm
- Sexual Exploitation
- Awareness of Domestic Abuse
- Lone Working
- Team Teach

In addition to operating a full staff appraisal system, we constantly monitor/support the professional development of each and every member of the staff team via regular supervision.

Our overriding objective is to promote best practice at all times and so to ensure that Woodside remain a centre of excellence where our vulnerable young people are assured of the highest standards of support and care.

## Core Staff Profile

The staff at Woodside are a dedicated team, supported by the Management Team at Head Office.

The staff team consists of:

<b>Project Manager</b>
Deputy Manager
Senior Residential Care Workers
Residential Care Workers

The Project Manager is supported by a team of professionals at Head Office, including the Director of Operations who is a specialist in the area of learning disabilities and has completed a Doctorate in the field. All Seniors and Deputy Managers have at least Level 3 in Care and the remainder of the support staff either has that qualification or are working towards it.

## Staffing

The Project Manager is responsible for the appointment of staff. To achieve this he has the support of the HR Manager. The Project Manager is responsible for the decision-making regarding referrals and overall management of the unit. also responsible for ensuring appropriate staff cover at all times and that all statutory duties are complied with, including writing reports and attending review meetings.

The Project Manager is responsible for ensuring appropriate supervision and appraisal of staff.

# How to make a complaint

This procedure is Woodside's way of responding to any complaint which expresses dissatisfaction about any part of our service.

Any placement with Woodside which is made by a Local Authority and, where relevant and appropriate, the procedures of Social Services and the Placing Authority will take precedence over Woodside's procedure. The complainant may choose the route by which to make a complaint. The complaint may be made directly to Woodside (a form will be provided), to the Placing Authority or to Social Services.

### Woodside undertake to:

- Take all complaints seriously;
- Deal promptly and fairly with any complaint;
- Resolve any complaint as quickly as possible;
- Take into account the views of the young person and provide them with the support they need in order to sustain their complaint;
- Record and acknowledge all complaints in writing;
- Keep all involved parties informed of the progress of a complaint;
- Inform the Placing Authority of the complaint;
- Notify all relevant parties, in writing, of the outcome of the complaint.

### Notification

All the young people and, where appropriate, their families and significant others are provided with information on how to make a complaint. The young people will receive this information in the User's Guide; others will receive a copy of this procedure on admission.

### What constitutes a complaint?

A complaint is a written or oral expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual service user accommodated in the unit. A complaint may arise as a result of an unwelcome or disputed decision, concern about the quality or appropriateness of services, delay in decision making about services or about their non-delivery.

### Dealing with an Informal Complaint.

It is inevitable in residential work where users and staff are in constant contact that occasional problems will arise. The majority of these can be satisfactorily resolved through discussion and reconsideration as well as explanation of decisions made and actions taken. This procedure is not designed to undermine or divert an eligible person from lodging a formal complaint, and the form of resolution will be recorded in the user's case file and Complaint Register.

### When a Complaint is taken outside the Unit

The designated person for co-ordinating the handling of complaints will receive and investigate all complaints which cannot be resolved informally. They will identify and inform an independent person (from a pre-arranged pool) with the particular skills or knowledge that may be required. If the complaint remains unresolved the young person can request that it can be considered by a panel. The panel consists of three people, at least one of whom is independent.

## Procedure to be Followed

A person other than those covered by the categories that are automatically entitled to complain, e.g. a friend. Consideration has to be given to whether that person has sufficient interest in the young person to determine their eligibility. Where it is decided that an individual is not eligible to pursue a complaint on behalf of a young person, consideration should be given to whether the substance of the complaint needs to be addressed as if the young person had complained.

The designated person acknowledges all complaints received by sending the complainant an explanation of procedure and offers any assistance or guidance. Oral complaints are recorded in writing agreeing them with the complainant.

An independent person is appointed to consider the complaint. They will take part in all discussions the unit may hold about the complaint, interview the complainant and any other involved persons including relevant staff members in order to form an independent perspective.

They will be given access to relevant parts of the case file and provide written comments to the unit.

The complaint will be considered with the independent person and a written response will be sent to the complainant within 28 days of the receipt of the complaint. This notification will be clear, simple and give reasons, whether or not it changes an earlier decision which gave rise to the complaint, and a proposed action. It should also remind the complainant of their right to request that the complaint is considered by a panel and if they so wish, a written formal request should reach the unit no later than 28 days from the date on which the letter of notification was sent.

When a complainant remains dissatisfied and requests the complaint be reviewed by a panel, arrangements are made for a panel to be appointed and meet within 28 days of the receipt of the complainant's request. The panel consists of three persons, one of whom must be independent. The complainant, the unit and the independent person can make oral or written submissions to the panel only if the independent person is not a member of the panel. The complainant may be accompanied by a person of their choice who may speak on their behalf.

The panel's recommendation is recorded in writing within 24 hours of completion of their deliberations and is sent formally to the unit, the complainant, their first stage independent person and anyone acting on the complainant's behalf.

A decision must be made on the response to the recommendation of the panel after consideration with the independent person from the panel, and the decision is made known in writing to the complainant, the first stage independent person (if different from the panel) and any other persons who are involved or affected. This notification should be made within 28 days of the recommendation and should explain the decision, reasons and any action taken or proposed.

Records are kept in the complaints register of all complaints received and outcomes. Cases where time limits were breached will be identified separately.

Staff must be willing at all times to explain the procedure in the users guide if a young person is expressing difficulty in understanding. A young person must never be penalised for attempting to or making a complaint

## Complaint against a Staff Member

If a complaint is made against a staff member, it is acknowledged that this is a difficult process and that the staff member will need support. Residential work is stressful, workloads can be heavy and staff can be vulnerable to unfounded complaints. If staff are interviewed during a formal complaint investigation, they have the right to be accompanied by an independent person. N.B. The complaints procedure is not a disciplinary procedure.

## Complaints and Child Protection

Whenever a complaint is made, the implications for child protection must always be considered. If the complaint falls within the jurisdiction of child protection or disciplinary procedure, these steps must be taken immediately to formalise the complaint through local authority child protection channels and to ensure the safety of the young person making the complaint.

## Progressive Care has a comprehensive Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

Progressive Care's Safeguarding Officer is Anne-Marie Jones

Email: [Anne-Marie.Jones@progressivecare.co.uk](mailto:Anne-Marie.Jones@progressivecare.co.uk)