

Staff Handbook

Thorndale House Children's Home



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THORNDALE HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOME STAFF HANDBOOK

This handbook is written to give staff a more concise overview of the way we work in Thorndale House Children's Home and it is not intended to replace Northumberland County Council Staff Handbook.

The handbook also gives some practical guidance on how to deal with some of the behaviours displayed by the young people we work with; it also offers advice and suggestions on other aspects of practice and information needed to enhance our working practices.

INTRODUCTION TO THORNDALE HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOME

Thorndale House Children's Home provides placements for four young people of either gender. The age range is 6 to 12 years on admission. The placement period will be dependent on the identified Care Plan and ongoing requirements of the young person.

Thorndale House Children's Home endeavours to provide a safe environment for all its residents, meeting their requirements through individually tailored packages to address their presenting risks and/or social needs.

Aims

Through a committed and well trained staff team we aim to provide residential care in a stable environment which supports young people, their individual rights, their individual needs and encourages them to make positive choices to reach their potential.

Objectives

- To deliver the service through a diverse, caring and skilled staff team.
- To offer opportunities for young people to access external services supporting their health, social and educational needs.
- To provide a positive group living experience, allowing young people to develop relationship and social skills.
- To enable either a return home or to develop skills for the young person to have accommodation choices in the future.
- To work alongside Families, Education, Health, Youth Justice and other bodies involved with the young person, to gain an understanding of their needs and plan for appropriate intervention.
- To provide clear care plans for young people throughout their stay, in

conjunction with their social worker and family.

- To involve the young person in taking an active part in their care planning process.
- To act as “good parents” during the young person’s stay.
- To protect the young person’s rights: to choice, privacy, independence, respect, dignity, partnership and liberty, whilst developing their understanding of responsibility.
- To provide a quality and best value service within the expected standards and regulations, as required of the monitoring bodies.

PARKING

Staff must park in the designated areas of the Thorndale House Children’s Home car park.

DRIVING

County vehicles may be driven by staff after they have shown the Registered Manager a copy of their driving licence.

Drivers are responsible for the vehicle, ensuring fuel and fluid levels, cleanliness, use of personal car fobs and passenger safety. When staff are driving a County Car they are legally responsible for its road worthiness i.e. car tax and tyres. Staff are also responsible for the speed at which they travel.

Fuel is purchased using the fuel card at the local council depot.

Any accidents or faults should be reported immediately and arrangements made for repairs.

Staff are not expected to use their own vehicles, but in emergency situations staff must have fully comprehensive insurance with business insurance.

Prior to a child being transported in a County vehicle staff should on all occasions thoroughly check the interior to ensure security and safety is maintained.

NO SMOKING POLICY

Thorndale House Children’s Home is a non-smoking building; this applies to both young people and staff.

INDUCTION

All staff will have a comprehensive induction to help inform them of the practice and procedures of Thorndale House Children's Home.

The induction will usually last four weeks, with ongoing training plans linked to National Children's Homes Quality Standards and Regulations 2015.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

After three months all new staff will receive an interim probationary interview. This interview will normally be with the Children's Services Manager LAC or Registered Manager and identified supervisor.

The purpose of this interview is to discuss the new member of staff's progress, identify any areas of practice that need to be developed and set targets, to support the member of staff and ensure they can successfully complete the six month probationary period.

The six month probationary interview is to confirm whether the new member of staff has reached the competency standard to do the job.

Should the probationary member of staff fail to meet the required competency level, a further period of probation may be negotiated. Where it is deemed the probationary member of staff will not reach the competency level, a capability investigation may be deemed necessary, possibly leading to the termination of employment.

DRESS CODE

When dressing for work, staff should always consider their own and indeed the department's professional image and are strongly advised to consider, not only their own health and safety, but their responsibility to their colleagues, especially with regard to the more physical aspects of working with young people in Thorndale House Children's Home. Thought should be given to footwear, which should be appropriate in the event of physical intervention situations and kitchen safety i.e. flip flops, high heels and open toed shoes are not advisable.

Staff are requested to dress practically and appropriately to the dual role of service representative and practical carer e.g. no low cut tops, no tight fitting clothing, no low slung trousers, no underwear on display for both genders.

Jewellery

Staff should only wear limited jewellery i.e. a watch, wedding ring and one pair of stud type earrings (in the ear lobe). No other facial or body piercings are

allowed and should be removed before coming to work due to Health and Safety.

STAFF ROTA

The Thorndale House Children's Home staff team work a rota to cover every hour of every day. Staff are required to work day shifts, evenings shifts, and sleep-in duties. Thorndale has 2 staff dedicated to waking nights, however on occasions in their absence you may be expected to cover their shifts.

Staff may be asked to change their shift in the event of sickness and other staff shortages. Where possible, this will be with reasonable notice.

The early shift starts at 07.30 and finishes at 15.15. The late shift starts at 14:30 and finishes at 22:15. There are fifteen minutes allocated for each handover.

Usually on a Wednesday there is a Staff Meeting. For those staff on a late shift they should start at 14:00. For those on an early shift the finishing time is 15.30.

Prior to commencing your shift we ask staff to allow time for entering the building and preparing for work i.e. putting personal items in lockers and turning off mobile telephones.

SICKNESS MANAGEMENT POLICY

All staff will receive a copy of the County Council Absence Management Policy and Procedures, which details the approach that will be taken within Thorndale House Children's Home to support and help colleagues who have health problems.

Should a member of staff feel unwell and is unable to come to work, they need to phone the Registered Manager or most senior member of staff on duty and inform them they are unable to attend work because of sickness. The member of staff need to report why they are sick. If a manager is unavailable the member of staff should speak to the next most senior officer. When the staff member intends to return to work, they should inform the most senior member of staff on duty of their first available date for shift. Staff must keep in touch regularly throughout their sickness period.

On their first shift, the staff member should report to the manager to complete a return to work interview. This is recorded on the member of staff's personnel file at County Hall and also in the member of staff's supervision file.

STAFF MEETINGS

The staff rota is organised in such a way to allow Staff Meetings to take place every week. Certain circumstances may dictate that on some occasions e.g. in-house training, the meeting may have to be cancelled. However, we do aim to meet once a fortnight.

Such meetings are important for the cohesion and development of the staff as a group and for group supervision.

The meeting also allows staff to contribute to decisions affecting the running of the home and encourage the development of a common awareness of the needs of young people. It also gives everyone the opportunity to contribute to the future care planning for the young people resident.

The Staff Meeting is on a Wednesday afternoon, starting at 14:00 and finishing at 15:30.

An agenda sheet is located on the staff office notice board for staff to raise appropriate issues for discussion.

All meetings are minuted prior to the next meeting, to ensure they are a correct recording of the meeting. All staff should read the minutes and initial to say they have read and understood the minutes.

PREPARATION FOR SHIFT

When starting shift, it is vitally important that staff make an entry into the logbook of their starting time, with their signature. Following this, staff will sign for a set of keys which must be secured. It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that children do not have access to any keys.

At the end of the shift the reverse of the procedure should be followed; keys signed back in and finally make an entry into the logbook stating finishing time.

If a member of staff accidentally takes a set of keys home, then these must be returned to the home immediately, as it is a breach of security.

All of the roles of the staff on duty are identified on the at a glance rota. These roles consist of Shift Coordinator, Fire Response and First Aider.

HANDOVERS / COMMUNICATION

Handover periods should last no more than fifteen minutes starting at 14:30 and finishing at 14:45.

It is important the oncoming shift is in the home to begin the handover on time. The handover is of paramount importance for staff working in an environment where effective communication and consistency underpin good practice.

A member of staff on duty meets with the incoming shift at 14:30 prompt and discusses the relevant issues from the previous two shifts. (There may be times when issues from other shifts are relevant to discuss). The Handover Sheet should be brought to the meeting containing all pertinent information for the next staff team.

The incoming staff team should then plan their shift, taking into consideration appointments, meetings, transport, meals and wishes of the young people. Also taking into account the previous shift information and what has happened over the last twenty four hours. Discussing risk assessments, activities and meetings are crucial to managing the shift coordination. The handover should finish promptly at 15:00, allowing the previous shift to go home.

Staff can greatly influence each other during handovers and meetings. An approach that is less than professional can have the effect of bringing the incoming staff down, for example;

"It's been a terrible shift, they've all been disgusting and horrible, it's all yours and good luck!"

Negative moods, tone of voice, language used, sarcastic and/or derogatory comments can all have a demoralising effect on staff and young people, not to mention creating an abusive environment.

Good communication and positive environments are created with confidence in a system that is clear, consistent and fair. This is maintained by all staff moving in the same direction, ensuring they are familiar with the guidelines, maintaining consistency in their approach and communicating with colleagues on decision making.

Working in isolation, deviating from acknowledged guidelines or changing rules to suit the staff member create confusion, uncertainty mistrust and disharmony for everyone.

RECORDING

Any form of recording by staff should be legible, factual and child centred, it should not have opinion unless this is stated by the individual.

Other staff will need to read what is recorded, as will other agencies e.g. Ofsted and members of the Monitoring and Review Team. The young people will also read their reports and have access to their files. It is important to ensure language and presentation of all written work is to a high standard.

Good, clear recording is essential when communicating information to others.

All recording should be signed by the author; they should also print their name and date the entry.

When applicable, the author should also note the time.

Log Book

- Each new log book is numbered with a start date.
- All staff names, signatures and initials are entered into the front of the log book. This enables identification of signatory entries.
- Start each new day on a new page. This aids easier referencing.
- Each page is numbered, to ensure that there are no missing pages.
- Staff on duty are identified at the beginning of each day for early, late, twilight and waking night shifts
- The name of the person and time of log entry are entered into the first two columns of the log book i.e. times of a young person's comings and goings from the home, staff leaving/returning, visitors to the home, telephone calls etc.
- Every entry is signed by staff making the entry. The signature should be consistent with the specimen signature in the front of the log.
- Leave a line between entries for ease of reading.
- It is helpful for staff if their name is identified and highlighted in the left hand column if there are any messages.
- Entries should be as short as possible. Contents of entries should be clear, concise and correct and not contain any information of a confidential nature.
- The log book should be a source of information of a non-confidential nature and a directory to where the reader can find further information i.e. daily notes, main file.
- If the page is not fully complete, draw a diagonal line across the remainder of the page before commencing a new day with a new page.

Diary

The home diary is integral to the smooth running of the home and must be kept up to date and checked regularly. Appointments that are missed from the diary can be frustrating for the young person and both internal and

external providers.

- The diary must be used to record all events concerning the young people i.e. appointments to see a doctor, review dates, meetings, sessions, Social Worker visits etc.
- Diary entries should also be signed/initialled.
- The waking night staff should copy all diary entries onto the Handover Sheet for each new day.

Files

- Each young person has three files; a daily file, a main file and a care plan file.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that files are kept tidy and are sectioned correctly. Individual Linkworkers/Managers should regularly check this is the case.
- Young people can have access to their file; however any information in the confidential section should be removed first. Permission to see information in the confidential section would need to be sought in writing from the Social Worker.
- If young people wish to see their Social Worker's file, then this request must be put in writing to the Social Worker.
- After a young person moves on, Linkworkers need to dismantle the files by sectioning it off into envelopes and taken to Administration for archiving.

LINKWORKER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

To act as the corporate parent during the young person stay. To ensure the young person is inform about Thorndale House Children's Home and to support the young person to understand Thorndale House Children Home's young person's handbook and assist them in reading if necessary.

To be fully conversant with the young person's file, wants, wishes and needs.

To be an effective link/co-ordinator for all those concerned with the young person, taking appropriate action to ensure the young person is supported to meet positive outcomes and aspirations. To ensure the young person's voice is heard and that they actively participate in the development of the service delivery.

To be a link person for the young person, their family and other colleagues; monitoring the care of the young person within Thorndale House Children's Home and their education development.

The Link Worker should actively contribute to any identified assessment work making a formal contribution to reviews and planning meetings. To be responsible for collating and co-ordinating written reports, with the support of the identified Case Manager.

The Link Worker should work directly with the young person to ascertain their wishes and feelings in respect of all plans relating to their care and to encourage them to be involved in the planning process. The Link Worker should maintain a close working relationship with the field social worker/parent/carer/YOT workers and other professionals.

The Link Worker should at all times be acutely aware of the young person's needs including their presentation and clothing.

The Link Worker should work closely with and offer regular updates to the young person and their work colleagues regarding need to know information to support the young person's care.

It is paramount the link worker ensures special days e.g. birthdays and other celebration days are celebrated within the cultural and religious needs of the young person they are link working. To be attentive to the young person and ensure the young person is valued.

The Link Worker should liaise with, develop and maintain a close working relationship with education staff; to support and develop the education outcomes for the young person.

To monitor and assess, taking the appropriate action where necessary to support the young person's health, development and emotional well-being.

Ensure that plans agreed and recorded are carried out within given timescales.

The Link Worker should at all times be encouraging to all young people and their link child consistently supporting and helping, acting as an advocate for the young person.

STAFF SUPERVISION

All staff will receive regular formal supervision. Staff will receive other forms of supervision, i.e. group, informal and ad hoc supervision.

The purpose of supervision is to help staff develop to their full potential and ensure good practice in Thorndale House Children's Home. Areas for discussion will include, training needs, the setting of aims and objectives, issues regarding young people and any issues regarding staff progress and development.

Supervision will offer support and encouragement to staff and discuss any issues of concern for the supervisor or supervisee.

The management of sickness will also be discussed. Time will always be available to discuss any personal issues if the member of staff chooses to. Supervision will be the responsibility of the member of staff's identified supervisor.

Appraisal

Staff appraisals will be carried out on a yearly basis.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All written material concerning our young people will be filed in their own specific case file and kept in the staff office. Under no circumstances will any young person's case file be allowed to leave the building without the permission of the Registered Manager, this also applies to all other documents with written information i.e. diaries, daily log and sanction records.

If a young person wishes to access their file, they should be supported to put this in writing to their Social Worker, Registered Manager or Service Manager (LAC).

Any matters concerning the operational management of Thorndale House Children's Home, including specific case material, should not be discussed outside of Thorndale House Children's Home. Remember, if we cannot secure our users' confidentiality, we cannot expect trust or respect from the young people.

Staff should be aware of the NCC code of conduct including the use of Facebook, Twitter and e-mail. Furthermore staff should familiarise themselves with the Data Protection Act.

GUIDANCE ON ADMITTING A YOUNG PERSON TO THORNDALE HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOME

Points to Consider

- That the young person has visited the home and been introduced to their peers/linkworkers.
- That consideration has been given to which is the most appropriate bedroom.
- That their bedroom has been made up and is in a good state of repair.
- That a 'bedroom' allowance has been allocated, in order for the young person to be able to personalise their room with posters/bedding.
- Particular food preferences/needs have been established and alternative meals have been prepared if necessary.
- Any cultural needs have been identified and plans put in place if needed.
- Files have been set up.
- Contact details have been clarified and agreed with Social Workers and recorded on file.

ADMISSIONS

Remember, a young person being admitted into Thorndale House Children's Home will experience a pyramid of thoughts and feelings such as anger, fear, suspicion, hostility, uncertainty, rejection and bitterness, but also possibly relief, gratitude, resignation and hopelessness.

It is crucial that staff understand that such feelings are normal and that they make a concerted effort to allow and deal with these feelings in an empathetic and sensitive manner. The approach of staff will determine, to a large extent, the manner in which the young person deals with their feelings and the manner in which the reception is conducted.

Staff admitting a young person to Thorndale House Children's Home should be warm, welcoming, receptive and empathetic, without relinquishing their authority.

As the young person settles into the home, staff will make available a personal copy of the young person's handbook. Staff will spend time with the young person going through all of the handbook, outlining all significant and pertinent areas while trying to gain a sense of what is important to the young person.

The manual is an informative booklet, which aims to cover all necessary information a young person needs to know about their new home. Typically this will include information on linkworkers, confidentiality, meetings, pocket money, and complaints procedure, religious and cultural issues. For most young people this generates questions regarding the home, education, and

social welfare and it is an opportunity for staff to explore any pre-conceived ideas the young person may have about the home.

As part of the one to one work undertaken with young people any issues the young person may have will be addressed as they arise, allowing the young person to settle into their new environment and focus on the care plan and areas of work which will support their return to their community.

BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

At Thorndale House Children's Home we consider transitions to be very important and, as a group, we think about the impact of beginnings and endings.

Not all young people who come to Thorndale House Children's Home have forewarning of what is about to happen to them; they are occasionally placed in crisis.

Beginnings and endings are such a major part of everyone's life that they deserve a lot of time just thinking about how we do them. We need to consider some of the following issues regarding beginnings and endings and, as a team, we can hopefully make transitions as important to us as they are to the young people we care for.

Firstly, consider what the young person may have experienced in their past. How have endings been for them? - rejection, removal from home, no contact, devalued, low self worth, death of a parent or significant other, abuse - all very negative and traumatic.

Think about your own endings. What might the young person be going through right now? - Self doubt? Untrusting? Let down? Rejected? Confused? Scared?

Think about what message we want to give the young people. We want them to know they are valued, they have succeeded and that they are important.

It won't always be possible to be in control of what happens to a young person in our care. We are not always going to be able to plan the endings, but we should strive for the best.

We need to think of how we acknowledge the success moving on is about, the worthiness of the individual, the shared memories and the relationships that develop.

The Link Worker should consider types of contact after the young person has left. This could be planned and time limited and with the agreement of the Social Worker. The home and individual staff members should be aware of

the commitment expected, what is practical, issues around letting go and whose needs are being met in maintaining contact. What input have the next placement/carers had in agreeing contact with Thorndale House Children's Home. Any arrangements should be recorded and clear in the purpose. Memories are very important to young people. Link Workers should consider creating a permanent record or visual memory of their stay at Thorndale House Children's Home.

Should a young person contact individual staff either directly, by email, telephone once they have left the service and are no longer subject of a contact plan, the member of staff must immediately bring this contact to the attention of the Registered Manager or supervisor and ensure they follow the expected "contact policy". No staff member should share personal contacts with young people and should not make contact with young people from a personal mobile, telephone or email address.

BEGINNINGS

To ensure that the placement begins positively, the staff on duty need to be prepared and be aware of the admission procedure.

Remember, the young person is likely to have been in crisis and they may be scared, anxious or even feeling numb. Remember also, the young person is dealing with an 'ending' and may be feeling rejected, let down and uncertain about their future.

Important issues are:

Staffing	Identify staff to carry out the admission and include linkworker if possible.
Environment	Ensure rooms are prepared i.e. bedroom.
Knowledge	Read the information in the referral; where possible be aware of the young person's needs and likes. Give the young person support and answer questions as they arise, ensure the young person is given a booklet and explain you read through it with them later.
Needs	Ensure the young person has a welcome pack ready i.e. information and toiletries. Have food and drinks prepared as part of welcome.

Be calm and confident with the young person, create a sense of safeness.

ENDINGS

We have acknowledged as a team that there must be some certainty to ending the placement and that all young people receive the same regard.

Therefore we will always:

Make linkworkers responsible for planning the young person's ending. Aim to make a 'memory book' of photographs and keepsakes for the young person to take away.

Ensure a celebration leaving card is purchased and signed by as many staff as possible and peers if applicable.

The Link Worker should prepare the young person's favourite meal on the last night and make a cake (or provide a buffet tea party).

The Link Worker should enable the young person to say goodbye to peers, care staff and teaching staff wherever possible. Consider individual wishes and feelings of the young person when planning a leaving party.

It is of paramount importance that a discharge checklist is completed and that the young person has all their belongings.

When packing a young person's belonging it is not acceptable to use plastic bin bags. The Home should ensure the placing social worker is aware they must provide suitable luggage at the onset of the placement. The home's aim is for young people to experience a positive ending from a successful placement enabling them to move on and continue with their achievements.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is one of the major aspects of our practice which underpins the work we do in Thorndale House Children's Home.

Basically what it means is, if anyone's safety could be at risk by using a piece of equipment, doing an activity, being with another young person in the group or being in a particular room, then staff would need to consider the risks and make appropriate management decisions or ultimately not allow the activity to occur. Any change of risk planning should be at all times discussed with the Registered Manager or case manager.

Staff need to be vigilant and concerned about risks and must bring them to the attention of the team leader, shift coordinator or a manager any matter or situation that they believe may constitute a risk.

Every young person should have written risk management strategies. These strategies should be discussed at staff meetings and any changes proposed should be agreed by a manager.

FIRE PROCEDURES

Fire drill procedures are on display throughout the home. It is the responsibility of each staff member to be familiar with the procedures. **Take**

time to read the procedures and understand them.

All staff within the home are required to complete Fire Warden training, which ensures familiarity with fire applications and safety requirements whilst on shift.

Each shift will have an identified Fire Response who will take the lead in the event of a fire alarm.

Fire tests are carried out weekly and recorded in the Fire Log. Fire equipment is checked on a monthly basis and also recorded in the Fire Log. Any faults are reported and repaired immediately.

Fire procedures should always be followed, even if it is a false alarm.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY

We all have a responsibility to ensure that the building and environment we work in is safe and secure for ourselves, our colleagues, the children and young people we work with and visitors to Thorndale House Children's Home.

Northumberland County Council has a Statement of Policy on Health and Safety at Work. This Statement can be found in the Personnel Staff Handbook, which will be given to you during your induction.

CCTV

C.C.T.V cameras are in place to monitor the entrances / exits to the home. Cameras are not in place in the living areas of the home. Images are monitored for the purposes of security, ensuring the safety of young people and the general public. This scheme is controlled by Northumberland County Council managed on site by the Registered Manager.

ALLOWANCES

Pocket Money/Birthdays/Christmas/Clothing/Toiletries

Young people receive pocket money each week and then other allowances on a monthly or annual basis: Dependent upon Individual Risk Assessment Young People can have this money given directly to them or it could be supervised spend.

AGE	Pocket Money (Weekly)	Birthday (annual)	Christmas (annual)	Clothing (per month)	Toiletries (per month)
6	£2.50	£100	£100	£50	£10
7	£3.00	£100	£100	£50	£10
8	£3.50	£100	£100	£50	£10

9	£4.00	£100	£100	£50	£10
10	£4.50	£100	£100	£50	£10
11	£5.00	£100	£100	£50	£10
12	£5.50	£100	£100	£50	£10
13	£6.00	£100	£100	£50	£10
14	£6.50	£100	£100	£50	£10
15	£7.00	£100	£100	£50	£10
16	£7.50	£100	£100	£50	£10
17	£8.00	£100	£100	£50	£10

Hair Cut Money

Money for haircuts will depend on the individual young person. Staff are not permitted to cut young people's hair.

SLEEPING IN DUTY PAYMENTS AND NIGHT DISTURBANCE

Employees required to sleep in on the premises shall receive an allowance as set out in their terms and conditions. This allowance covers the requirement to sleep in and up to 30 minutes call out per night, after which the Time and a Half – the Single Premium Rate/TOIL provisions will apply.

The manager (senior on duty) may arrange/instruct the staff member to leave their rota shift early as part of their duty of care and to ensure health and safety boundaries are maintained. It is acknowledged leaving the shift early may not always be possible. Any disturbance claims must be agreed by the manager (senior on duty) and claimed as required. All claims must be signed by a manager. Disturbance is only the period required to meet the child/young person's and Home needs.

HEALTH CARE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

All young people are registered with a GP and dentist of their choice within the catchment area. Positive approaches to the achievement and maintenance of fitness and good general health are to be encouraged. Regular visits to the dentist and, if needed, to an optician are arranged by the linkworkers.

A varied and balanced diet is offered and young people are encouraged to participate in menu planning and the preparation of some meals. Menus are discussed each week at the Young People's Meeting.

Regular exercise and the development of individual hobbies and interests are encouraged. Opportunities are offered for young people to develop a good understanding of the importance of health and fitness, including access to information and advice about health issues that may be significant for young

people, for example alcohol and substance misuse, smoking, sexuality and health.

All young people who are admitted to Thorndale House Children's Home are referred to the Nurse Practitioner for Looked after Children, Sorted (Substance misuse service) and CYPS (mental and emotional health service for young people) to address issues regarding the health of Looked after Children.

Sorted will provide an initial screening for all young people admitted to Thorndale House Children's Home. If it is felt to be beneficial, then Sorted will create a care plan for the individual young person. The service that Sorted provide is of a confidential nature (unless there is a safeguarding issue). However Sorted work closely with the staff at Thorndale House Children's Home and will provide support or guidance about work that could be undertaken in Individual Program (IP) sessions. Or if a young person chooses not to engage with the workers from Sorted, then Sorted will provide written advice about areas of work that could be undertaken by staff at Thorndale House Children's Home. All staff at Thorndale House Children's Home will have the opportunity to complete a basic drugs awareness course provided by Sorted.

CYPS (Children and Young People's Service) is a dedicated mental health service for vulnerable young people living in Northumberland already accessing support from Sorted or the Youth Offending Service, and / or are in the care of the Local Authority.

PARENTS AND CARERS VIEWS

Thorndale House Children's Home aims to work in partnership with parents and carers, to ensure the needs of their children are met during their stay with us.

As a member of the residential staff team, you are in the trusted position of caring for someone else's child. Whilst it is acknowledged that the parent and child relationship will be experiencing difficulty resulting in admission to residential care, this relationship cannot be replaced. The Residential worker must work in partnership with the parents. Wherever possible, as with the child/adult relationship, the professional will seek to have a relationship with the child's family which encourages and supports social work intervention. It cannot be a friendship or social relationship. We recognise that the views of parents and carers are of paramount importance when planning for their child; therefore we would always attempt to incorporate their views and suggestions into the way we manage and look after their child.

ADULT / CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

The role of all Residential Care Staff offers an adult an opportunity to influence, encourage, and enable a child/young person's development. The scope of this influence is considerable and not often found in professional roles. Therefore, this relationship carries considerable responsibility for the adult. It is the adult's responsibility to place boundaries around the relationship. To develop the relationship for the sole benefit of the child/young person.

As with the adult/adult relationship it offers the child/young person an important vehicle through which the child/young person can learn to trust, share, negotiate and demonstrate consideration for others. Through this relationship the child/young person is offered unconditional regard, which in turn, allows the child/young person to develop as an individual with a positive self-esteem.

The adult must not overly criticise the child/young person; rather they should offer direction and reflect on the consequence of the child/young person's behaviours. The adult must never show hostility towards the child/young person, however, they should reject any hostility shown by the child/young person toward them. The adult should show tolerance and patience, and recognise the unique circumstance of each child/young person. The relationship should encourage and enable the child/young person.

It is appropriate for the adult to show affection, providing it is in response to the child/young person's need, and this is acknowledged and confirmed by other team members. The adult/child relationship is a professional relationship and as such is not mutually reciprocal.

Within the child/adult relationship it is appropriate for the adult to share general information about themselves. It would not, however, be appropriate to discuss difficulties in these relationships or individual personal events. For example, when working with a young woman who has miscarried, it would be appropriate to show empathy and interest but it would not be appropriate to relate a situation in which a family member has had the same experience and has got over it.

The relationship should allow the child a safe place in which to discuss their emotions, experience and sexuality, but the adult should not share such information with the child/young person.

It is the adult's responsibility to manage his or her own emotions and subsequent behaviours. Where this presents difficulties for the adult, they should look for support from their managers and colleagues.

Practice Guidelines:

- In some instances a young person may know you from the community and will have information about you or be friends with your children. Always discuss this with your supervisor and team and devise strategies for managing it.
- An adult should not give children/young people their address or telephone number or Personal Social Media Contacts. If a client becomes aware of this; the adult should advise their manager. They should not enter into private correspondence with a young person e.g. letters or e-mails. A record of correspondence with ex-residents should be kept in the contact with ex-residents log.
- They should not seek to have contact with clients when off duty unless as part of an agreed care plan.
- Adults should not give or receive personal gifts from young people as it could be seen as collusive behaviour.
- Adults will not buy any personal individual presents for young people for birthdays or other celebration days.
- They should not give the child/young person photos of themselves outside of the work setting.
- They should not give, or receive from a child/young person, money.
- Adult should not gamble with a child/young person
- They should not personalise discussion about politics or religion etc.
- Adults should not change a child/young person's given name or give the child a private nickname.
- They should not share exclusive communication. For example, have passwords or secret handshakes. These examples are not exclusive and, when there is any question about behaviour, the adult should discuss with their manager.

VISITORS TO THORNDALE HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOME

Visitors to Thorndale House Children's Home will be made welcome and requested to sign a Visitor's Book on arrival and departure. It is the responsibility of the staff on duty to monitor all visitors, thus ensuring the safety of young people and adults. Young people are given guidance on the arrangements for inviting friends and family to the Home and such arrangements will be guided by risk assessment.

Students will be subject to checks in response to the Children's Homes Regulations 2015. Volunteers will also need to comply with such checks and an interview/vetting process by the management of the Home and Service Manager for Looked After Children.

All other visitors to the home such as contractors are allowed, through prior arrangements with the Home or the Site Manager for Children's Residential Homes. All visitors will follow the required protocol and are subject to identification checks.

Ideally, visits from family, friends and other significant people should be made when school has finished or at weekends.

Generally, all visits should end by 9.00pm because we have to help all the young people prepare for bed.

All contact must be approved by the Social Worker.

OFSTED

Office for Standards in Education, Children and Skills (Ofsted)

Ofsted regulates and inspects all children's homes in England. The residential care sector supports some of the most vulnerable children and young people and Inspection acts in a number of ways to drive and support improvement. Ofsted aim to raise expectations by setting the standards of performance and effectiveness expected of children's homes. Each home receives two unannounced visits a year a full and an interim inspection.

The framework for inspections are underpinned by the Children's Homes Regulations 2015 and the Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the Quality Standards 2015. The inspections are intended not only to test compliance but also to raise standards and drive improvement in the sector, with a strong focus on improving outcomes for children and young people. Inspectors will evaluate how the service contributes to children and young people's experiences and supports them to make progress.

INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY

The Quality Standards 2015 stipulate that the registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from the independent and internal monitoring. Independent monitoring takes place via Regulation 43 visits and Rota visits. Internal monitoring is carried out by the registered manager in line with Regulation 45 requirements.

Regulation 43 Officer Visits, The Legal Position

Regulation 43 of The Children's Homes Regulations 2015 make the requirement that 'The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once per month'.

Further guidance is contained in Children's Homes Regulations 2015 and the Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the Quality Standards 2015. This states that the purpose of Regulation 44 visits is to ensure that the conduct of the home is overseen by someone not involved in its operation, who can provide an independent report to Ofsted and the registered provider.

During a Reg 44 visit, the inspector will require access recording systems in order to monitor their effectiveness. They must also have the opportunity for private conversation with any child living in the home, other family members or any staff members who request it and should always report on their observation of the children/young people in the home.

Generally speaking, Regulation 44 visits should be seen as useful to the home in as much as they are a way in which the overall performance can be regularly monitored.

An effective system of the Regulation 44 visit should help the home to develop good practice and identify areas for improvement.

Contact Details

Reg 43 Inspectors Tonia Chirnside and Alyson Purvis



Reg 43 Inspectors visit the home once a month to check that you are looked after properly.

Northumberland County Council has identified Tonia Chirnside and Alyson Purvis as Regulation 43 Inspectors. Tonia and Alyson have both worked for Northumberland County Council for over 15 years and have been Contracts Officers for Children and Adult Services.

Tonia can be contacted by:

Telephone: 01670 623293

Email: Tonia.chirnside@northumberland.gov.uk

Alyson can be contacted by:

Telephone: 01670 622791

Email: Alyson.purvis@northumberland.gov.uk

Visits can be planned or unannounced. If the visit is planned staff can be asked to prepare certain information for the visiting officer.

Visits usually last about 3 hours. Staff can request time with the visiting officer to discuss any issues they have about the running of the home in private. Young people also have this right.

The visiting officer will write a report on the visit and this will be available to all staff in the home.

Regulation 44 visits are an important means of ensuring high standards of

care are being provided for children in residential care. As such they can be very useful in helping staff to monitor the home's performance and build on good practice. Staff's co-operation and support for this process is a vital part of ensuring it is effective and worthwhile.

Elected Members Rota Visits

Rota visits are undertaken by named County Councillors. The purpose of the visit is to monitor and ensure good practice is demonstrated in the home. A report with recommendations is submitted to senior managers and the registered manager after each visit. Reports are collated quarterly and presented to the Corporate parenting committee.

PERSONAL INTERNET USAGE

Staff who choose to use social networking sites outside of work are advised to exercise caution regarding the security of personal information. Staff members should where possible, set all personal information to private and maintain awareness of the content of profile information.

Should a young person contact you via social networking site then this must be reported to your line manager (and the young person blocked if possible).

Internet usage within the building during work hours is limited to work related use only.

When supervising young people on computers staff must not be logged on to a computer and must be vigilant that appropriate use by the young person takes place throughout the session.

If staff do not have the required knowledge or skills to support a young person they must bring this to the attention of the Team Leader and gain the appropriate skills or ensure a colleague can support the young person.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Thorndale House Children's Home provides a high quality service that does not discriminate on the basis of gender, culture, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability. Any form of discrimination will be challenged.

Staff, will at all times, work towards children having support and information about their rights and how to exercise them.

The children/young person's parents or carer will be informed of the child/young person's rights and indeed their own.

Should an advocate or independent visitor be required to voice the views of a

child/young person, then Thorndale House Children's Home will assist in accessing that service.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

The Children Act 1989 requires that we take into account the religious application and beliefs of children. All children/young people resident in Thorndale House Children's Home will be supported to follow their chosen religion and beliefs.

Where necessary, staff will actively seek any information/advice which will help the child/young person follow their chosen faith. Children and young people will be guided by staff and their parent's wishes when making decisions on their choices

SAFEGUARDING

All Thorndale House Children's Home staff are expected to read Northumberland County Council's guidelines on Safeguarding and familiarise themselves with the procedures. All staff within Thorndale House Children's Home must be aware of the possibility that a child could have been or is being abused and also that a child might be abused during the period that they are resident. The Children Act 1989 states that all children have the right to be protected from abuse and therefore all staff have a key role in identifying abuse when it occurs and in bringing it to the immediate attention of the responsible authority.

Whenever you receive evidence that a child or young person is suffering or has suffered abuse, you have no choice other than to pass the information firstly to the Manager or a senior member of staff, the child's Social Worker or, if they are unavailable, one of the other members of the Children and Families Area Team.

Northumberland County Council Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and young person's local safeguarding team must also be informed.

The registered manager attends quarterly safeguarding meetings chaired by the LADO.

ALLEGATIONS

If a young person at Thorndale House Children's Home makes an allegation of any kind about a member of staff, then this should be reported immediately to the Home Manager. The Homes Manager is responsible for reporting all allegations to the LADO. The role of the LADO is set out in the HM government guidance – Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010). The LADO co-ordinates information sharing with the right people and will also

monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ABUSE

Abuse may occur in different ways and if a child/young person displays any of the following, then the possibility that they may have been abused should be considered. However, none of these indicators prove that abuse has taken place; it would be a combination of these signs that may suggest abuse has occurred. Staff at all times should seek appropriate advice.

Sexual Abuse

Children and young people may

- Become insecure or cling to an adult in a fearful way.
- Have some physical signs i.e. soreness, bruising or bleeding.
- Regress to a much younger behaviour pattern.
- Behave in a way sexually inappropriate to their age or being obsessed with sexual matters, as opposed to normal exploration.
- Becoming withdrawn, stop eating, having chronic nightmares, begin wetting when previously dry.
- Play out sexual acts in too knowledgeable a way.
- Produce drawings of sexual organs.
- Seem to be bothered or worried but won't tell why, as if keeping a secret.
- Repeat obscene words or phrases said by an abuser.
- Act in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults.
- Be chronically depressed.
- Be suicidal.
- Mutilate.
- Exhibit a sudden change in habits.
- Become withdrawn, isolated or excessively worried.
- Sexually abusing another child.
- Become fearful of undressing.

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries.
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries.
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive.
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather.
- Fear of returning home.
- Fear of medical help.
- Self destructive tendencies.
- Aggression towards others.

Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development delays.
- Over reaction to mistakes.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Fear of new situations.
- Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations.

- Neurotic behaviour e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking.
- Self mutilation.
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.
- Compulsive stealing.

Neglect

- Constant hunger.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Constant tiredness.
- Emaciation.
- Destructive tendencies.
- Low self esteem.
- No social skills/relationships.
- Neurotic behaviour e.g. rocking etc.

Disclosure

Some children/young people may seek to tell staff in confidence that they have been abused. Staff must understand that it is not possible to give children absolute guarantees of confidentiality because that could put staff in the untenable position of being in possession of information that a crime has been committed, without the necessary freedom to report it. This would also make it impossible for the child/young person to be protected from further abuse. It is good general care practice to resist being drawn into secretive and collusive relationships with children.

It is essential that a relationship is built up between children and staff, such that children feel they can trust staff to do the best thing with a disclosure of abuse.

What follows are some suggestions/guidelines for you to consider should you feel a child/young person is about to tell you something significant.

- If possible, arrange a time and place where you can talk privately as soon as possible.
- Stay calm and reassuring.
- Try not to be shocked or horrified.
- Explain that you cannot promise to keep what the child/young person has told you a secret.
- Tell them that whatever the circumstances, they are not to blame for the incident.

- Tell them they are right to tell you.
- Do not press for details - some cases of abuse may need further and possibly extensive investigation and it is better for the child/young person if they do not have to repeat the details unnecessarily.
- Ask whether they have told anyone else.
- Explain that there are other people you may have to contact.
- Do not make any promises to the child - the situation may cause you to react emotionally. Whilst this is an understandable and natural reaction at such times, it is possible that you may make promises which cannot in the event be fulfilled.
- Tell the young person/child that you are pleased that they decided to tell someone and that it is absolutely right to do so.
- Let the child/young person know that you understand how difficult it is to talk about such experiences.

A wide range of possible situations can fall into the category of 'a disclosure because it is impossible to know in advance what a child will say; it is advisable to always inform your manager of any concerns or presenting behaviour which concerns you.

Children will probably tell you about incidents involving bullying or bribes, perhaps from peers and whilst the child might have felt it important to discuss it, no further action may be necessary. However, in cases where the child is at risk or the disclosure is of a serious nature you will need to inform all the relevant people.

Staff must record in factual details any discussion they have with a child or young person

You are not offering therapy but, because the child chose to talk to you and because you have listened and believed, you have already helped the child.

Many victims of child abuse say that having the first person they told be supportive was the first step in recovering from their experience.

Treatment of Abused Children

In dealing with a child/young person who is known to have been abused, it is important to realise that the child can be reminded of their bad experience through simple daily events. Dependent upon the type of abuse experienced, this could include such things as undressing, bathing, going to bed, being

chastised, mealtimes, being asked to carry out a task, being left in a room alone etc.

As any of these events may continue to have a very profound effect on the child for a long time after the abuse, it is important for staff to be sensitive to the issues in the child's life and not to misjudge any negative reactions by the child.

Self Protection

Ultimately the responsibility of the staff team is to work with the child/young person in our care, sometimes dealing with very personal and sensitive issues, which may require working directly with individuals or with groups. It is highly important to minimise the risk of young people or other professionals misinterpreting your actions.

Some basic guidelines are:

In the event of an injury to a young person accident or otherwise, ensure it is recorded and witnessed by another adult. Ensure you record who the other adult was what their actions were, when the accident occurred and what the outcome was including the young person perception.

Record any allegations a young person makes about you and discuss this with the Manager.

Ensure other adults are aware of the allegation. If necessary offer the young person access to the senior member of staff on duty, to discuss their perception of what happened. The meeting must be recorded.

If a young person touches you in an inappropriate manner, record what happened and ensure that another adult also knows what happened, as it could be a totally innocent contact. Do not make the young person feel they have done something wrong but point out that you do not like it. It is unwise to ignore the event as the young person may continue doing this to others who may take advantage or react in a risky or negative way.

Do not place yourself in a situation where you are spending excessive amounts of time alone with one young person away from other people.

Be mindful of how and where you touch young people.

Never keep suspicions of abuse to yourself.

Always communicate with your colleagues when possible. Let them know where you are, what you are doing and who you are with.

RADICALISATION

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. The process of radicalisation is different for every individual and can take place over an extended period or within a very short time frame.

Children and young people can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These can include through the influence of family members or friends and/or direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or, increasingly, through the internet. This can put a young person at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to cause significant harm.

The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that staff exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified.

Potential indicators include:

- Use of inappropriate language;
- Possession of violent extremist literature;
- Behavioural changes;
- The expression of extremist views;
- Advocating violent actions and means;
- Association with known extremists;
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology.

Any member of staff who identifies concerns should discuss them with the registered manager or senior member of staff on duty so that an appropriate and proportionate response can be planned. Concerns in relation to potential radicalisation will be responded to in the same way as any safeguarding concern i.e. social workers and IRO's will be informed, and advice taken from the police contact for the home. If a concern is raised in relation to a member of staff, then this will be referred onto the LADO.

For further information see refer to Northumberland's Safeguarding Procedures:-

http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_safeg_viol.

[html](#)

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a collective term for procedures which include the removal of part or all of the external female genitalia for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. The procedure is typically performed on girls aged between 4 and 13, but in some cases it is performed on newborn infants or on young women before marriage or pregnancy.

FGM is much more common than is generally realised both worldwide and in the U.K. It is deeply embedded into the culture of communities and intervention by statutory agencies may be resented.

FGM cannot be left to personal preference or cultural custom as it is an extremely harmful practice which violates basic human rights.

FGM has been a criminal offence in the U.K. since the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985 was passed. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 replaced the 1985 Act and makes it an offence for the first time for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to carry out FGM abroad, or to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad, even in countries where the practice is legal.

It is reportedly practiced in 28 African countries and in parts of the Middle and Far East, but it is increasingly found in Western Europe and other developed countries primarily among immigrant and refugee communities.

Suspensions may arise in a number of ways that a child is being prepared for FGM to take place abroad.

If anyone becomes aware of a child who may have been subjected to or is at risk of FGM they must raise this with the registered manager or senior member of staff on duty. A referral will then be made to Children's Social Care Services.

All professionals need to consider whether any other indicators exist that FGM may have or has already taken place, for example:

- Preparations are being made to take a long holiday - arranging vaccinations or planning an absence from school;
- The child has changed in behaviour ; or
- The child has health problems, particularly bladder or menstrual problems.

It should be remembered that this is a one-off act of abuse to a child, although it will have lifelong consequences, and can be highly dangerous at the time of the procedure and directly afterwards.

Children's Social Care Services in consultation with the Police will undertake a [Section 47 Enquiry](#) if there is reason to believe that a child is likely to suffer or has suffered FGM.

For further information refer to Northumberland County Councils' safeguarding procedures:-

http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_fem_gen_mut.html

ANTI-BULLYING

Definition of Bullying:

Bullying is the deliberate abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group, which is on-going over time and involves an imbalance of power.

In Thorndale House Children's Home we are committed to children and young people's right to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve and make a positive contribution without fear of intimidation. It is our belief that bullying is unacceptable and we will always take incidents of bullying seriously.

Positive preventive action will be taken to reduce the risk of bullying taking place, including the structured use of risk assessments outlining where bullying may be more likely to occur.

A range of supportive strategies for all those involved in incidents is in place, and include access to an internal complaints procedure, a direct telephone line to Childline and Action for Children. In addition there is also a direct telephone line to the Clients Relations Officer or young people can complete a referral form to the Clients Relations Department.

Types of Bullying:

Staff must be alert to the signs that bullying is taking place. These may include:

- Persistent name calling or humiliation of an individual.
- Marginalisation or exclusion of an individual within a group.
- Individuals changing their routines, patterns or activities in order to escape from or pursue other young people.
- Furtive, secretive behaviour.

- Patterns of unexplained thefts or damage to a young person's property.
- Unexplained injuries or outbursts of fear.
- Requests to move placement or disruption of agreed care plans.
- Continual absconding from the unit.

The young person being bullied may:

- Become withdrawn, clingy, moody, aggressive, uncooperative or non-communicative.
- Behave in immature ways e.g. revert to thumb sucking or tantrums.
- Have sleep or appetite problems.
- Have more difficulty concentrating.
- Show variation in performance.
- Have cuts, bruises or aches and pains without adequate explanation.
- Start stealing.
- Have clothes or possessions which are damaged or lost.
- Complain of illness more frequently.
- Show marked change in a well-established pattern of behaviour, for example:
 - A sudden loss of interest in a previously favoured activity.
 - Changing times of coming to and going from the house.
 - A reluctance to (or no longer wishing to) leave the home.
 - A request to change school, youth club, etc.
 - A refusal to return to a place or activity.

Guidelines for Care Staff

If you suspect a young person is being bullied:

- Talk to the young person about what is happening
 - Be calm
 - Show sensitivity
 - Show concern
 - Reassure the young person that he or she is not to blame
- If at all possible, act with the young person's agreement.

Some Do's and Don'ts

- Do listen to the young person
- Do take the young person's concerns seriously
- Do encourage the young person to tell you what has been happening and in particular, to report any trouble that has been encountered

- Do help the young person to try and find a safe solution
- Do talk to care staff and school staff
- Do look for signs of distress shown by the young person
- Don't ignore the young person if they say they are worried about being with certain people or in certain places
- Don't immediately rush off and deal with the situation yourself

SYNOPSIS OF REVIEWS AND MEETINGS HELD IN THORNDALE HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOME

Pre-Admission Meeting

This meeting is to determine whether it is in the best interest of the child to be placed in Thorndale House Children's Home.

Post-Admission Meeting/Placement Meeting

This meeting is held on the day of the young person being admitted to Thorndale House Children's Home. The meeting will discuss what needs to be done in the best interests of the young person. The meeting will identify an agreed action care plan.

Care Team Meetings (CTM)

These meetings are every four – six weeks and are chaired by the young person's Social Worker. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure everyone is doing what they should be, to review the previous month and to set new targets.

Looked After Children Review (LAC)

These meetings are held after four weeks, at the three months point, and then every six months during the young person's stay. The review is chaired by an independent reviewing officer (IRO) and look at the young person's care plan, their progress, any areas of concern and an agreed action plan.

INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS (IRO)

When a young person becomes looked after, either in foster care, a residential setting or with a member of their family, then a named IRO will be allocated to them. The named IRO will hopefully continue in this role throughout the young person's time as a looked after child in order to ensure consistency.

The IRO will be the person to chair all of the LAC reviews and will try to meet with a young person on an individual basis before any meeting. This will provide an opportunity for the young person to talk freely about any aspect of their care and will always ask if the young person is happy where they are living. The IRO will also seek the views of the young person's parents / carers.

As a link worker it is important to encourage a young person to attend all of their reviews, as the review is all about them. Staff should seek ways to overcome any resistance a young person has in relation to attending reviews. Some young people find the arena of a review quite stressful, and might have ideas about how to make the process more comfortable for them.

A LAC review will take place within 28 days of any change of placement. After this, there will be a review held within 3 months, and then within 6 months. The purpose of each review is to cover all aspects of the young person's care plan i.e. progress, education, health, contact with family, any social activities the young person is engaged in. In addition the review ensures that all actions have been carried out from any previous review, and is a forum to make plans for the next reviewing period.

EDUCATION

It is well known that the educational attainment of looked after children falls well below that of all children. Raising their level of achievement is acknowledged as a key aspect in improving the life chances of these children. It is therefore vital that residential staff place a high value on education and training, promoting attendance and celebrating success. The Local Authority has a specialist team, Education Support for Looked After Children (ESLAC), who work with schools and associated professionals to maximise the opportunities of Northumberland's looked after children.

The role of the linkworker includes working with the young person, all professionals i.e. ESLAC, social workers, teachers and family to produce an individualised education programme. This takes into account the young person's ability, aptitude, self esteem/confidence and any special educational needs they might have.

It is the linkworker's responsibility to be aware of when school holidays or inset days are and to plan accordingly. Linkworkers should also support the young person in purchasing school uniforms and ensuring that they have any equipment needed to attend school. Linkworkers should also regularly check the conditions of school uniforms/equipment and arrange for replacements with the young person. The staff team are all responsible for supporting the young person to complete homework, although the linkworker will liaise with the school in relation to timetables.

It is always hoped that a member of the young person's family will attend Parents' Evenings and celebration events; however this is not always possible. It is vital that the linkworker is aware of these events and brings them to the Manager's attention in advance, so that the rota can be planned to support the linkworker's attendance at these events.

ROUTINES AND EXPECTATIONS

Weekday – Term-time

It is an expectation that every YP is woken no later than 07:45 to allow them to prepare for the School day. Education times will be detailed in the YP care plan.

If a YP is of school leaving age or older please see their individual plan. There should be an expectation that they are woken before 10am.

Daily Routines

07:30 – 07:45	Handover to morning shift. 1 member of staff to be available on floor during this time if possible
07:30 – 08:30	Breakfast to be available and YP supported to eat a healthy breakfast.
07:45 – 09:00	Transports to school/education to be facilitated.
09:00 – 12:00 & 13:15 – 15:00	Individual education plans during these times if not in school/training. Please see individual plan. During this time the YP should be encouraged not to access their personal phone or to watch TV. During the education day there should be 2 x 15min breaks in the morning, 75 minutes for lunch and 1 x 15min break in the afternoon. YP to be encouraged to have a healthy snack (Fruit) to help maintain concentration levels during education times.
12:00 – 13:15	Lunch - YP to be encouraged to help prepare lunch which is as per menu.
14:30 – 14:45	Handover to the PM shift. Appointments and transporting of young people should be avoided during this time.
16:30 – 18:00	Tea Time. YP to be encouraged to assist in this

meal, and to tidy up afterwards. If there are no planned activities tea should be around 18.00. YP are to be encouraged to eat at the table with the group.

17:30 – 22:00	Evening activities as agreed. Please check all relevant paperwork to help inform decisions i.e. Reparation plans
20:30 – 21:30	Supper time if needed. YP to be encouraged to have a healthy supper, which does not involve excess sugar or any caffeine. This should be a snack, preferably, and not a large meal.
20:00 – 22:30	Routines as per individual. YP to be encouraged to be in their respective room no later than 22:00 on a school night
22:00 – 22:15	Handover to nightshift.

Weekends & Holidays

All young people are to be given their first call be no later than 11:30 in order for them to have time to complete their morning routines as identified in care plan and/or 24hr management plan.

Breakfast is to be encouraged before 10:30.

Lunch around 12:00.

Tea around 18:00 dependant on the evening's activities.

Telephones

Phone calls can be made to social workers, other professional's, friends and family before, and after, school time. The last call should be encouraged before 21:30.

Calls to mobiles should be no longer than 10 minutes.

Thorndale House Children's Home pays for all phone calls from the home, therefore calls to mobiles will be requested to be no longer than **10** minutes and calls to land lines no more than **20** minutes

Bedrooms

It is an expectation that all bedrooms should be clean and tidy. YP are to be encouraged to do this and staff to support if and when necessary. Daily room checks should be carried out. During these checks the staff will attempt to

ensure the following:

1. No cutlery, crockery or food waste is remaining.
2. Clean laundry put away/dirty laundry in washing basket
3. No unmade beds.
4. No over-loaded electrical sockets.
5. No electrical equipment left on including chargers.
6. No graffiti.

7. Any posters in the room do not contain nudity, drug or crime glorification.
8. Any repairs or maintenance to be reported.

Staff will inform young people wherever possible that they intend to enter their bedroom, however this does not mean that young people are able to prevent staff from entering.

Transport

The driver is in charge of the vehicle.

1. The law states that anyone in a car must wear a seatbelt when the vehicle is in motion. This is the law and, for anyone over the age of 14, they will be held liable for not wearing one and could face a fine of up to £50. Anyone refusing to wear a seatbelt will not be transported
2. No food or drink is to be consumed in the vehicles.
3. Any rubbish is to be removed immediately and binned.
4. If a young person is unsafe to be transported, staff may make alternative arrangements for them. E.g. bus or walk.

Respect

Staff and young people should always treat others with respect.

Respect also involves giving recognition for something done well and celebrating individual accomplishments. We all should be willing and able to acknowledge errors and apologise for them.

SKILLS FOR MANAGING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

What are the major skills we require?

- The ability to form good working relationships with young people.

- The ability to be adaptable and realistic.
- The ability to learn a very complex and demanding job requiring confidence, patience, hard work, sympathy, empathy, resilience and a sense of humour.
- The ability to work as a team member.
- To be able to work in a safe and caring manner

Resilience

Staff can find it difficult to maintain enthusiasm, despite their considerable efforts and can become disheartened.

Patience and resilience are required to develop the necessary skills to work effectively with young people in crisis.

Initial problems can be expected when work begins with a new group or individual regardless of their experience. Discussion with colleagues and sharing problems can be helpful.

New staff can be unsure what to do when they start work in a new environment. This can lead them to being subjected to “testing out behaviour”. Listen, watch, and seek advice where you believe it would be helpful.

Staff should learn to discriminate between behaviour which

- Can be permitted
- Can be prevented
- Can be ignored
- Should be discouraged

Dos and Don'ts

Do act normally whenever you can otherwise you may confuse or unsettle the young people.

Do manage problems behaviours in a straight forward firm unexcited manner.

Do be consistent. Do be honest

Do be prepared - poor organisation leads to difficulties.

Do avoid being over rigid, try to steer clear of situations where a young person has to publicly “back down”. There are times when it is better to disengage rather than pursue a deteriorating situation. This may require you to remove

yourself from the situation, remain silent and/or delay action.

After a relatively short time a neutral or positive comment is often accepted by a young person.

Do treat all young people with respect, and try to respect the individuality of each young person.

Be a good parent for the young people you look after. Caring in a proactive sense is what matters. This includes what can sometimes be described as the more mundane tasks; nonetheless these tasks are important to the overall well-being of the young person.

It is essential that high standards of emotional and physical care are maintained at all times.

Do remain sensitive to the needs and moods of both the group and individual young people.

Do listen to what children and young people say.

Do communicate with your colleagues. Try to admit your mistakes and seek advice on problems you may be experiencing.

Inform them of incidents which occurred and how they were dealt with.

DO LOOK FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR PERFORMANCE

Be true to yourself. Acting or playing a role has a part to play in managing difficult young people, but not at the expense of your basic personality. Children and young people will easily see through if you pretend to be other than you are.

Try to maintain your composure if your efforts with an individual or group are spurned. KEEP TRYING.

Be proactive, if you are experiencing problems you need to do something about them. Problems are to be expected with the young people we accommodate but your job is to work through them with the support of your colleagues. Ask for help when required.

Try to view negative behaviour as an opportunity for young people to learn, resist the urge to employ punitive measures. These can often be attributed to stress and are rarely effective.

Maintaining structure requires confidence and a determination to be consistent. Some children are very persistent and will test you out.

Young people may not always like you; this is no reflection on you.

Bribing young people rarely gets the right behaviour. This is not the same as rewarding or promising reward for good behaviour.

Be open about everything you do. A collusive act lets yourself and your team down.

Try not to become over-involved with individual young people. Try to treat them all with the same high level of regard and show an interest in them, all relative to the need of each young person and their desire for involvement.

Be calm and creative when responding to young people in crisis. Minor incidents improperly handled can sometimes escalate into major problems.

Use child friendly yet respectful language when discussing issues with children and young people.

Only make promises you can keep.

If you want positive results remember that it is your motivation and continual encouragements will help young people achieve positive outcomes...

GOOD ORDER AND DISCIPLINE

Children Act 1989

Different homes will have different philosophies of care. It is vital that staff have a sound understanding of the principles and procedures employed in the Home for the care and discipline of the children and the treatment methods used, so that they can respond to a child with confidence. Difficulties in control will arise where the objectives of the Home are not well defined and, consequently, not well understood by staff or where the children do not understand the reason for their placement. Systems of control and discipline cannot be divorced from systems of management and systems of care practice and planning within the Home. It is important that staff should set standards by their behaviour.

Physical intervention should be used rarely and only to prevent a child harming himself or others or from damaging property. Force should not be used for any other purpose, or simply to secure compliance with staff instructions. Thorndale House Children's Home has a clear policy on how and when physical intervention may be used. CALM training is provided; it is regularly and formally monitored. Staff have a yearly reaccreditation governing this aspect of their role.

The successful conduct of any Home is dependent on a combination of sound management, high standards of professional practice and care planning and

caring relationships.

A major determinant of good behaviour and positive ethos of the Home is the quality of the relationships between the staff and the children. Relationships between the staff and the children need to be based on honesty, mutual respect and recognised good professional practice.

Many children in Homes need to experience care which compensates for the loss of the attention and security they would otherwise receive through the direct care of their parents.

Good order is unlikely to be achieved unless there is an established framework of general routines and individual boundaries of behaviour are well defined. Thorndale House Children's Home ensures young people are aware of what is expected of them and how the arrangements for their care actually work.

Young people are offered opportunities to participate in a range of leisure time activities, arranged and planned by the team, all activities should be risk assessed and consideration should be given to the learning outcomes.

All staff should be sensitive and reflective that problems may occur where expectations of behaviour are unrealistic or inconsistent or insensitive methods of control are used. Good professional practice should recognise that often misbehaviour by young people stems from a failure by adults to be sufficiently receptive to the needs and problems of the young people rather than from a wilful defiance of authority.

Staff need to avoid labelling children as disruptive or seeking to resolve misbehaviour by moves to new placements without the original behaviour being properly addressed or understood.

One of the principal purposes of control and discipline is to enable individual children to develop inner controls so that in time they learn self-control, establish feelings of worth and self-respect and are motivated towards improved behaviour and enabled to live in harmony within a group. They should be encouraged to develop a proper awareness of their rights and responsibilities and those of others.

It is essential that children should be consulted and their wishes and feelings ascertained in matters concerning them. Good order is much more likely to be achieved when children are routinely involved in decision making about their care. They should be encouraged to accept responsibility for their own care, appropriate to their age and understanding.

THE ETHOS OF THORNDALE

Thorndale House provides a positive care environment which is based on a “good parenting” social learning theory and Pillars of Parenting to meet the needs of the young children.

Thorndale House’s practice is underpinned by the philosophy of The Children’s Act 1989, the Care Standards Act 2000, and the Children’s Home Regulations 2015.

Staff work within the Pillars of parenting model which can be divided into three categories to help the young people in our care achieve the following:

1: Developing a sense of well-being: helping children and young people to feel good about themselves by

- Providing quality care and protection
- Building warm relationships
- Promoting an appropriate level of self-perception/ self worth
- Ensuring a sense of belonging.

2: Managing life events: enabling children and young people to respond to both difficulties and opportunities by:

- Enhancing resilience
- Teaching self-management skills

3: Acquiring social confidence and capital: helping children and young people to make and keep friends by:

- Improving emotional competence
- Developing personal and social responsibility.

MANAGING BEHAVIOUR AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Thorndale House Children’s Home seeks to promote positive behaviour in the context of normal child/adolescent development.

All young people need to know what the boundaries of acceptable behaviour are both for their own protection and the safety of others. Although the behaviour displayed can require staff to take control of situations, the aim remains that of empowering young people with the skills and coping techniques to help them control their lives. Where a young person’s behaviour may place themselves or others at risk of being physically hurt, staff may have to physically intervene. If physical intervention is needed, staff will use the Crisis Aggression Limitation Management (CALM) system. This is a safe method of crisis intervention with the emphasis on safety, de-escalation and integrity for both the young people and staff. All permanent staff are trained in CALM.

Staff are re-verified on a yearly basis to ensure they remain competent in practising CALM. In order to achieve this, staff are expected to attend a

minimum of two CALM practice sessions per year before the verification date. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure they attend these sessions or identify, at the earliest opportunity, where they cannot attend a session and the need to identify another session.

VIOLENT INCIDENT / PHYSICAL INTERVENTION/ ACCIDENT FORMS

Violent Incident Forms

If there has been a violent incident, the staff involved must complete a Violent Incident Form. Guidelines on how to complete the form are in the Violent Incident File. Once a form is completed, it will be overseen by the Home Manager and then sent to the Service Manager for Looked After Children. Once this process is completed, the original copy of the form will be kept on the young person's file and another copy forwarded to the Health and Safety Department. This process is carried out by the Admin team.

Physical Intervention Forms

Following an incident of physical intervention, the incident **must** be recorded in the Physical Intervention Log before the end of the shift. A physical intervention form **must** then be fully completed within seven days by the staff involved in the incident. This form is then overseen by the Manager before being sent to the Service Manager for Looked after Children.

Accidents

Any accidents involving young people, staff or visitors are logged in the Accident File. A form is then completed on line and forwarded to the Home Manager for processing.

SANCTIONS

A General Statement

Controls and sanctions should not be applied in such a manner as to undermine the self-respect and self-esteem of children and young people or lessen their sense of responsibility. Where possible intervention should be based on reward, rather than punishment, with the emphasis placed on good relationships, honesty, trust and respect. However where sanctions have to be introduced, these should have a clear objective to support the growth of self-discipline otherwise they may become merely repetitive and have no or little impact on the young person or child.

To add to the above statement it is important to quote a sentence from the Children Act 1989 "Where sanctions are felt to be necessary, good professional practice indicates that these should be contemporaneous (in the

same time period), relevant and above all “**JUST**”.

It is clear from the Children Act 1989 and from other guidance on residential care for children and young people that sanctions can be used and where appropriate they need to be imposed to give a message that the young person/child’s behaviour was unacceptable and there are consequences for such behaviours.

Where possible, sanctions should be linked to the negative behaviour of the child or young person e.g.

- a) If a young person plays his music too loud, keeping other young people awake staff may believe an appropriate sanction may be to not allow the young person access to music in his room the following evening.
- b) Where a young person damages an item or the building, it may seem that the appropriate sanction should be that the young person contributes to the repair of that item by having money deducted from their pocket money with their written agreement, or complete a reparation plan.

The most contentious issues around sanctions is when a young person assaults a member of staff.

Emotions run high, particularly if it is a member of staff who is liked and respected by their peers. Where there is a violent pre-meditated attack on staff, this matter should be discussed with the Manager and maybe reported to the Police.

When a young person has ‘special needs’ the timing of a sanction has a direct influence on its effectiveness. The use of a sanction (and rewards) to reinforce discipline has an optimum impact on the young person/child’s behaviour if the sanction is given immediately after the negative behaviour has occurred because that young person with special needs may have a limited memory timescale.

If the sanction (or reward) is delayed too long, it may mean that they do not see the connection between it and their misdemeanour.

All sanctions should be entered in the Sanction Book and the Log Book and staff should then sign their name. All staff are required to read the Sanction Book Statement of Practice then agree, sign and date.

INCENTIVE PLANS

Children and young people who come to reside in Thorndale House Children’s Home may have an individual incentive plan. This is based on the social learning theory and is designed to help young people manage their

behaviour more positively, by helping them identify how they should behave in many situations.

Simply, the more positive behaviour the young person displays, the more rewards and privileges they receive. This does not have to be done formally via an incentive plan. The young person will receive a lot of self satisfaction from being rewarded, which should also result in an improvement in their self esteem.

INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMME WORK (IP)

Every week a young person will spend some individual time with one of their linkworkers to help them look at the problems and difficulties that have been instrumental in them being placed at Thorndale House Children's Home.

These sessions need to be focused and well planned with the emphasis on listening, practical suggestions and solutions, to help the young person look at what has been happening in their lives.

If used correctly, Individual Programmes are an invaluable method in the development of working with young people. There are several important points to remember before starting any Individual Programme sessions.

Planning

It is important to take time before a session to plan what your aim and objectives are in the session. Use written notes as a memory jog. Think of location and setting, time of day, how long should the session last, will you talk to the child or could you use equipment i.e. pens, paper, story books or art equipment?

Aim

What is the aim of the session?

Why are you having the session?

What information are you planning to give or hoping to receive?

Objectives

It is important to remember during an Individual Programme session that you have the session with the young person, having gained a skill or understanding, however small that may be.

Target

Do not set your aim of the session too high. Always remember that nothing will be resolved in one session and it may take several follow on sessions.

Always think of the level of understanding of the young person and set your aims and objectives accordingly.

Seek Help

Staff are not expected to know or be experts on everything. If a session needs to be completed and you do not feel you have the skills necessary, seek help from your colleagues.

Recording

It is important to remember after every Individual Programme session to record what happened on the appropriate form. Ideally, this would be completed immediately after the session, but if this cannot be achieved, staff must try to record the session at the first opportunity. Once a session has been recorded, it should be placed in the young person's care plan file in the appropriate section.

Unplanned Session

The ideal session would take place after good forward planning, however many sessions occur after an incident or comment involving the young person. Staff should recognise when this situation occurs and act accordingly. This type of session should also be recorded and placed in the young person's care plan file.

Evaluation

After an IP session, staff should take time to go over the information received during the session. If necessary, talk this through with colleagues and evaluate this information into the IP forms. Things to remember during evaluation are as follows:

- a) How was the child at the start of the session?
- b) Did the session go well? – If so, how would you do this?
- c) Do you need help from someone with more expertise in the subject?

Always remember, there should be no such thing as a bad session. If evaluated properly, staff should be able to use information from any session to aid the next. If a child has refused to talk at all, this does not necessarily mean you have failed – evaluate this. What was the mood of the young person? What was your mood? Was the location right? Was the time of day alright? Was there anything else going on that could have caused a distraction? Did you understand what your aims and objectives were before you started? Were you confident or unsure before the session? Do you need

advice on the subject matter? Any one of these could affect the outcome of an IP session. By correct evaluation, this information should help in planning the next session.

Any issues which are causing the worker or the young person difficulties should be resolved within the worker's supervision session or in discussion at Team Meetings.

NB. The young person has the right at any stage to refuse or cut short an IP session. If so, this must be recorded and reviewed.

Learning Through Play and Moving Forward

Dependent upon the age and development of the Young Person Thorndale has two useful tools to focus IP sessions.

It is important for children and young people to access free play/recreation opportunities where they live. Children who have moved between homes and families, suffered abuse or neglect, or are going through stressful experiences are at risk of losing friendships and not developing the experience of playing alone or with peers. Adults should encourage recreation time as it can help build trust, self-confidence, establish relationships and develop positive adult role models as well as providing the opportunity to 'let off steam.'

- A child/young person's own culture is created and lived through their play/recreation
- Risk taking can be stimulating and challenging for them to explore and develop their abilities
- A child/young person can make and learn from their own mistakes
- Opportunity to explore their fears and anxieties
- Opportunity to learn about their interests and to find out what interests them
- Can ask questions and be inquisitive
- Make choices, decisions and negotiate
- Set their own goals
- Make sense of puzzling events/situations
- HAVE FUN

This person-centred approach focuses on the individual's personal needs, wants, desires and goals so that they become central to the care process. This can mean putting the person's needs, as they define them, above those identified as priorities by their case management team.

This assessment will be conducted during an I.P session regarding the child's developmental strengths and how they can be enhanced. Therefore consultation with a link worker is important and that the assessment is conducted to establish a starting point.

The evidence of these discussions is recorded below and will acknowledge a score between 1 > 10, 10 meaning that there is no development required. These markings will then be transferred onto a graph to offer a visual view of required development.

PETTY CASH PROCEDURE

Petty Cash Recording

All money taken from and paid into the petty cash system **MUST** be recorded in the Homes Petty Cash Book.

All entries must be dated and numbered in sequence and recorded on an NCC receipt. At the start of the month the number reverts back to number 1
Example

Date	YP Int.	Rcpt No.	Reason	In	Out	Balance
01.07.10	JB	1	Sweets		2.50	17.50
02.07.10	AB	2	Personal Needs		3.00	14.50

When money is taken out from the petty cash and the whole amount is not spent, the change should be returned and recorded on the receipt and in the book.

Example NCC Receipt

Northumberland County Council			Rcpt No. 3
Amount	10 pounds	00 pence	
In Respect of	_____		
Name of Young Person	_____		Taken £10.00
Signature _____	Date _____		Reimb £ 2.00
			Spent £ 8.00

Example of How to Record

Date	YP Int.	Rcpt No.	Reason	In	Out	Balance
01.07.10	JB	1	Sweets		2.50	17.50
02.07.10	AB	2	Personal Needs		3.00	14.50
03.07.10	UNIT	3	Activity		10.00	4.50
03.07.10	AC	4	Bus Fares		1.00	3.50
03.07.10			Change from Rcpt 3	2.00		5.50

Wherever possible, receipts must be obtained and attached to the back of the NCC receipt. It is the responsibility of the person who took the petty cash to ensure that the till receipt matches the NCC receipt.

Shift Coordinator or Person Responsibility for Petty Cash

All staff who take money from the petty cash are responsible for recording and receipting of the money.

However, at the end of each shift, before going off duty, the money in the tin should be balanced with the petty cash book and signed off as balanced and correct.

It is not enough to simply count the cash and make sure it balances with the amount in the tin. The person signing should check the calculations and receipts to ensure they are correct and balance. Once the petty cash book is signed as balanced and correct, you are responsible for any errors Admin may find when they check the petty cash.

When the petty cash receipts are returned to Admin they will check the balance with the petty cash book. If there are any errors which are not obvious or easily rectified, then admin will notify the home's manager and ask for these to be corrected. Any discrepancies in cash will be noted and the person responsible for the error will have to cover any shortfall, or be reimbursed if the money is over.

Petty Cash Top-Ups or Requests for Money

The petty cash tin is kept in the staff office with a small cash float. All top-ups or any request for clothing money or additional expenditure should be made to a Manager or Team leader who have access to the homes safe and are designated signatures on the home's bank account.

All receipts should be sent to admin on a weekly basis.

Please give as much notice as possible when cash is required, but there can be flexibility for emergency funds.

OVERTIME

Overtime payments are carefully monitored. Any overtime **MUST** be agreed between the budget holder (Service Manager for Looked after Children) and the Home Manager. Overtime can only be claimed in the following circumstances:

- 1) In the event of a staff vacancy.

- 2) In the event of a staff member being absent due to suspension, maternity leave, compassionate leave or dependency leave.
- 3) Prior approval must be sought from a Manager if overtime is to be paid or requested.
- 4) Overtime is limited to 40 hours per person, per month and must be authorised by a Manager.

If a member of staff completes overtime in a different home, they must tell the Home Manager.

TIME OFF IN LIEU (TOIL)

Time off in lieu of hours may be used at times, however reasons for working extra hours must be clear and, wherever possible, should be sanctioned by a Manager or delegated person.

Guidelines for the use of TOIL

- Each member of staff is responsible for keeping their own record of hours up to date and accurate.
- Next to the box marked Shift, staff are to put down the shift they are on the rota for i.e. E (Early) L (Late) N (Night) or H (Holiday).
- Record of hours is to be taken to supervision on a monthly basis for signing by staff and supervisor.
- Actual hours worked are to be recorded on the sheet. i.e. if you are late for a shift you must record the time you came into the building, not your actual start time, as per rota. The same applies if you are able to leave shift early or if you stay back late when needed.
- A new sheet is to be started for each four weekly rota and week one must be the same start date as the new rota.
- Record of hours cannot be completed in advance. Only the dates and your own shift pattern.
- Any breaks must be registered on your TOIL sheet.
- TOIL cannot be taken unless your record of hours is up to date and at the discretion of Senior on duty. Service needs will be taken into account before any TOIL is agreed.

- In the absence of a Manager, team leaders can authorise TOIL and make entries onto the relevant record of hours.
- Any alterations to record of hours should be initialled by the person making the alteration.
- No overtime is to be recorded on the record of hours, as this is recorded on your O/T sheet.
- SICK: If off sick, then S is to be put in the box marked with a * and hours recorded for shift not worked.
- HOLIDAY: If off on Holiday, then H is to be put in the box marked with *. Hours recorded as per shift and holiday entitlement.
- Record of TOIL at the bottom of the sheet is for recording any hours agreed by a Manager when not on Unit i.e. shopping for a young person's birthday or Christmas, that could not be facilitated by flexi or when on shift or report writing.
- For full-time staff the four weeks total is to be deducted from 148 hours, giving either TOIL to be accrued if over 148, or to be taken if under 148 hours. Part-time staff to do the same, but with 74 hours.
- Prior to TOIL being accrued agreement must be given by the senior on duty. TOIL should not be accumulated to assist staff taking additional holidays. TOIL should be taken back within a reasonable timescale i.e. when additional hours are worked at the end of a shift you should be responsible for identifying where this time can be taken back in consideration of rota needs.

LEGAL ORDERS

Section 20 and Section 31 of the Children Act 1989

There are 2 main routes into the 'looked after' system,

- Being accommodated under **section 20 of the Children Act 1989**; or
- Being made the subject of a care order under **section 31 of the Children Act 1989**

Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (Accommodation)

Under section 20 of the Children Act 1989, children and young people can be 'accommodated' with the consent of those with parental responsibility. If the young person is 16 or 17 years old, they do not need the consent of those

with parental responsibility in order to be accommodated by the local authority.

Any person who has parental responsibility for a child may at any time remove the child from accommodation provided by or on behalf of the local authority. If the young person is 16 or 17 years old, they can leave the accommodation without parental consent.

Section 20 is based on co-operative working between the local authority, the young person and his or her parents because the court is not forcing the child or young person to be looked after. If a child or young person is being accommodated by the local authority, the local authority **MUST** have regard to his or her views. Before making any decision with respect to a child whom they are looking after, or proposing to look after, a local authority shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, ascertain the wishes and feelings of the child.

If the young person is 16 or 17 years old, they can leave the accommodation without parental consent.

Duties of a local authority:

The Local Authority **MUST** also ascertain the wishes and feelings of any other important people in the young person's life, including:

- the parents
- any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility any other person whose wishes and feelings the authority consider to be relevant In making such a decision the local authority shall give due consideration to:
- The child or young person's wishes and feeling, having regard to his or her age and understanding.
- The wishes and feelings of any person mentioned above and to the child's religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background.

Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 (Full Care Order)

Under section 31 of the Children Act 1989, the local authority can apply to the court for a child or young person to become the subject of a care order.

Once a care order is made, the local authority obtains parental responsibility in addition to the other parental responsibility holders. A care order can only be discharged by the court on the application of any person who has parental responsibility for the child; the child or the local authority designated by the order.

The court will only make a care order if it believes that it is better for the child or young person than not making an order. A care order can only be made on

young people below the age of 17 and cannot be made on a young person who is 16 years old and married. To make a care order, the court must be satisfied:

1. That the child concerned is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.
2. And that the harm or likelihood of harm is attributable to:
 - the care given to the child, or
 - likely to be given to him if the order were not made, or
 - the care not being reasonable or if
 - the child is beyond parental control

Section 38 of the children Act 1989 (Interim Care Order)

It takes time for a local authority to prepare its case for a full care order. For this reason, this section provides for interim orders to be made under a less stringent test than that which applies in the case of full orders. If a court adjourns an application for a care order it may make an interim care order if it is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for believing that one of the “significant harm” threshold criteria is met. The court only has to be satisfied that there are “reasonable grounds” for believing one of the significant harm criteria is made out, rather than being satisfied one such ground is actually made out. There are strict time limits that apply to interim orders, the aim of which is to ensure regular court oversight of whether the application for a full order continues to be met. The general rule is that the first interim order cannot have effect for longer than eight weeks and subsequent orders cannot have effect for longer than four weeks.

HEPATITIS B

Occupational Risk Groups

There are many occupational groups who may be at risk from contacting Hepatitis B. They include dentists, hospital doctors, nurses, police and the fire service, drug dependency, unit workers and lastly staff and residents in daycare settings and special schools.

Remember if you work in a situation where you come into contact with other people’s body fluids you could be at risk.

Hepatitis B Vaccination

- Staff can access Hep B injections from their own G.P. surgery.
- The vaccine is an injection normally given into the muscle of the arm.
- You will need 3 or 4 doses of vaccine given over 6 or 12 months to become properly protected.
- Your Occupational Health Department may advise 4 doses for quick

protection.

Recommendations

- a) It is strongly recommended (because of the occupational risk) that all staff working at Thorndale House Children's Home are vaccinated against Hepatitis B.
- b) Because other diseases may be transmitted in a similar way to Hepatitis B, it is important to always maintain good infection control procedures. As part of a total preventative programme, the implementation of universal precautions and the wearing of basic personal protective clothing and equipment such as gloves are highly recommended.

COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Complaints from young people (residents), parents and carers should always be taken seriously.

Internal complaints

Young People record internal complaints on the 'Have Your Say' (IC1 form). Should a member of staff receive a complaint they should read it, sign it, date it and record it in the Complaints Log. The form should then be handed to the most senior member of staff on duty.

External complaints

Complaints can be made directly to the Children's Complaints Officer based at County Hall. A complaint can be made in several ways; completing the 'How to make a complaint – Here's how to sort it' form with the freepost address. This form can also be found on the Northumberland County Council website and e-mailed directly to the complaints officer. Alternatively, young people can contact the complaints officer directly through the free pre-programmed telephone available to young people.

Statement from Northumberland County Council:

"Should a young person be dissatisfied with an aspect of his/her care, they may wish to contact the Client Relations Department to discuss the matter with a member of the team. A Client Relations Officer will work with the young person to resolve the matter through discussion with the relevant people. Where it is not possible to resolve the matter in this way, or if the young person prefers, he/she can make a formal complaint to the Client Relations Department and an independent investigation is likely to follow. The Client Relations Officer will also advise the young person of their right to an Advocate should they wish to have one. All young people are provided with information about how they can use the Complaints procedure at an early point after admission."

Thorndale House Children's Home welcomes suggestions from any of our young people, staff or other visiting professionals and staff should encourage any positive suggestions from those who use our service.

ADVOCACY

All young people are entitled to speak to an advocate at any time if they feel they are not being listened to or if they are having difficulty getting their views across. They can also support young people in making a complaint. There are two advocacy services:

In house provision – NCC have a Participation and Advocacy Officer who is based at Cramlington. They will respond to requests for advocacy support within two working days, ensuring that support is put in place swiftly. The advocate can be contacted as follows:

- Mobile 07917266278
- Telephone 01670 623980

Independent provision – Action for Children provide an external, independent service for young people who need an advocate.

Young people may meet with an advocate both on and off site. Please ensure that meetings are prioritised and put in the diary correctly. An advocate will only work with a young person if they request it; however staff can request an advocate on behalf of a young person.

The contact address for Action for Children UK is:

Action for Children UK
Newcastle Family Support Service
Wesley House
Bond Street
Benwell
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE4 8BA

Telephone No: 0191 2724990

Email: necrs@actionforchildren.org.uk

PARTICIPATION

Looked after children have a fundamental right to be involved in decisions about their care, from an individual level where decisions affect their own care, up to a strategic level, influencing the care of all looked after children. There are a number of ways for young people to get involved including:

- Being involved in their care planning.
- Attending their review meetings.
- Taking part in Young People's Meetings.
- Speaking to link workers, the Registered Manager or Senior Managers.
- Having an advocate.
- Completing Reg 45, Children's Rights and other on-line surveys.
- Becoming part of a group, such as Voices Making Choices (VMC), Northumberland's Children in Care Council.
- Speaking to a Reg 43 Inspector when they visit the Home.
- Speaking to an Elected Member when they carry out Rota visits.

It is important that young people are encouraged to take part and give us their views, to ensure that we are delivering a service which meets their needs.

Northumberland County Council has a Participation and Advocacy Officer who is available for looked after young people who need advice, support or information. They can be contacted by:

- Mobile 07917266278
- Telephone 01670 623980

LEARNING TOGETHER

Learning Together is the new online learning environment for NCC employees allowing easy access from any computer or mobile device connected to the internet to access:

- course outlines and booking information
- e-learning and learning resources, links and templates
- your personalised learning plan

Also

- track your progress of your training and learning
- managers can track the learning progress of their team members
- some courses can now be booked online
- your learning information and records all in one convenient location

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following is a list of the policies or procedures in place for Northumberland County Council staff. All staff have access to the 'intranet' where they can access the most up to date policies.

Employee Related

Information for Care Staff Applicants

Code of Conduct for Residential Child Care Officers
Code of Conduct for all employees of Northumberland County Council
Restraint and Control Policy
Admin Procedure – Restraint guidance
Physical Contact with children and young people
Alcohol and Drugs – Policy and guidance for assisting employees
Dress Code
Lone Working
Hostage Policy
Staff Supervision
Supervision of Agency staff
Equality Policy – Residential and Education facilities
Policy relating to employee’s friends and family visiting the Units
Staffing Arrangements

The following documents can be accessed via the Staff Intranet under Staff Resources, HR Documents:

- **Appraisal and Performance** – appraisal form, guidance notes, Code of Conduct.
- **Capability and Discipline Procedures** – Guidance notes, handling allegations of abuse against those who work with children/young people.
- **Change Management** – Redundancy policy, at risk form, alternative employment policy.
- **CRB** - guidance notes, criminal records policy.
- **Diversity and Equality**
- **Employment and Contracts** – Employee handbook, secondary employment.
- **Grievances Procedure** – Whistle Blowing Policy.
- **Occupation Health** – Alcohol and Drugs Policy, Smoking Policy, guidance notes.
- **Pay and Conditions** – Annual leave, age retirement procedures.
- **Recruitment**
- **Sickness** – Reporting procedure.
- **Single Status**
- **Training**
- **Volunteers**
- **Welfare Services** – Staff welfare, out of hours counselling, domestic violence.
- **Working Arrangements** – Flexible work request procedure and guidelines, flexi time guidelines, Homeworking Policy.

The following documents can be accessed via the Staff Intranet under Staff Resources/Services:

- **ICT Policies and Guidelines**

- **Data Protection**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Expenses**

Client Related (these policies are printed on purple paper in the staff office):

Admission and Reception of young people, Notes for placing social workers and other professionals
 Guidance on Admitting a young person to Thorndale House Children's Home
 Looked After Children Policy
 Fire Procedure and Security Protocol, CCTV Policy
 Health - Sexual Health Policy, Immunisation and screening, Personal hygiene, HIV Aids and other blood borne diseases, nutrition and diet, exercise and rest, and alcohol, smoking and other substances
 Administration of Medicine Lead Role – Terms of Reference
 Education Advisory Group – Terms of Reference
 Restraint Minimisation Strategy
 Physical Intervention Policy
 Independent Living Policy
 Drugs Policy
 Death of, or the suffering of serious harm by, or involvement in, or serious illness of a child or young person who is looked after by the Local Authority
 Sanctions Policy
 Recording of Business information in Children's Homes, Log book recording, diary recording
 Reducing offending by Looked After Children Policy
 Visitors to the Home
 Guidance to Unit Managers in Children's Community Homes re: anti-oppressive practice
 Bullying Risk Assessment
 Revised procedure for registered comments, suggestions and complaints, Young person's complaint procedure notes of guidance, Have your say
 Internet Policy
 Policy and guidance on photographs taken of young people
 Suitable viewing of television, video, cinema films and computer games – policy and guidance
 Family, friends, contact and visits
 First Aid procedure
 Privacy/room searches
 Joint protocol between Northumberland Area Command and Northumberland Children's Services regarding children and young people missing from home and care
 Policy and procedures re children at home subject to Care Orders

Self Harm and Suicide Management Guide
Procedure on building becoming uninhabitable
Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board – Inter-Agency
Procedures and Practice Guidance
Policy Referral Procedure
Placements in secure accommodation
FACT Deliberate Self Harm and Suicide: Care Pathway for children and
young people in Northumberland
Self Administration of Medication for young people within Thorndale
House
Resettlement Policy
Finance Policy
Policy Statement on Health and Safety at work
Education Policy
Building Maintenance Statement

The following documents can be accessed via the Staff Intranet:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection**
- **Health and Safety Policy** – accident and VI reporting

BOOK REFERENCE LIST

1. Children Act 1989
2. Volume 5 Residential Care
3. Northumberland County Council Handbook
4. Thorndale House Children's Home Children/Young People's Handbook
5. Thorndale House Children's Home Parents and Carers Booklet
6. Northumberland County Council Staff Handbook
7. Northumberland County Council Safeguarding Protection Policy
8. Dignity at Work Policy
9. Whistle Blowing Policy
10. Children's Homes Regulations 2015

SUGGESTION SHEET