

Somerton Road Specialist Childrens Home

Statement of Purpose

This Statement of Purpose describes the benefits enjoyed by the children at Somerton Road; it outlines the care we provide and how we are organised to provide that care. It includes an overview of the facilities, services and practices we adopt to make sure that we continuously deliver effective services for the benefit of our children.

June 2023

A copy of this statement is available on request to the following:

Parents of children in the home

Parents of children considering admission to the home

RQIA or other regulatory bodies

Northern Ireland Commission for Children and Young People (NICCY)

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Somerton Road Specialist Children's Unit

Somerton Road's Mission Statement

1. Our Aims and Objectives

Somerton Roads aims: -

- To provide high quality person centred residential care to meet the needs of the individual young person's residing in the home.
- To provide a safe environment in which the physical, cultural, social, intellectual and emotional development of every young person is facilitated and differentiated according to their needs.
- To provide security and stability for all young people who live in Somerton Road.
- That each child will achieve positive differences in their personal, social and learning lives and in this way, achieve their full potential whilst they are with us.
- To enhance the quality of young people's lives, promoting dignity, independence and access to universal provision.

In order to achieve these aims the following objectives have been set: -

- To provide a homely environment, that is safe and secure, comfortable, stimulating, fun, well equipped to support the young people who are living in the home.
- To promote safe, positive and meaningful relationships between the young people and the staff members. Staff members will role model, encourage and support young people in developing grow and develop their communication skills, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- To ensure that all staff work within the Positive Behaviour Support ethos, promote its values and work within the young person's Positive Behaviour Support Plans.
- To have a designated key team, led by a keyworker for each young person who will work alongside the young person, their parents and social worker to design individual person centred care plans. The whole team will agree the care plan and a holistic approach will be taken to support the young person to achieve their goals. The keyworker and key team will be the identified point of contact for all other multi-disciplinary professionals working with the young person. The keyworker will liaise with these colleagues to support the young person to achieve goals set in the care plan.

- To provide opportunities to build appropriate relationships outside of the home, both with other young people and adults with support as necessary.
- To extend young people's experiences by providing opportunities to maximise independence and to promote engagement in leisure activities both in the home and in the wider community.
- To develop and support a highly trained and experienced staff team.
- To develop achievement and independence skills with the young people to enable smooth transitions onto adult services and life.
- Promote positive attitudes to disability and model good practice

2. Underlying ethos and philosophy

Somerton Road's primary ethos is derived from the principles of Person Centred Care, Trauma Informed and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). All of which underpin how staff practice and their daily interactions with young people.

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is a framework for working with individuals who may, at times present with behaviours of concern/challenge. Staff link with the MDT staff and implement best practice in Applied Behaviour Analysis with person-centred values in order to achieve outcomes that are evident and meaningful. Our aim is always to enhance the individual's quality of life and to assist the reduction in behaviours of concern/ challenge.

PBS is a Framework, which assists staff to:

- Understand behaviours that challenge,(also known as Behaviours of concern)
- Assess the broad social and physical context in which the behaviour occurs
- Plan and implement ways of supporting the person, which enhances their quality of life and their relationships with their careers.

PBS is based on the values of recognising each person's individuality and their human rights, the importance of self-determination, alternatives to aversive and restrictive practices, and an acceptance that behaviours, which challenge develop to serve an important function for people.

Central to Positive Behaviour Support is an understanding of behaviour based on assessment of the setting/situation in which it occurs. When you understand the function of the behaviour, you can reduce, replace or eliminate behaviours that challenge.

Our PBS approach is educational, proactive and respectful, whilst encouraging the person to be as independent and as safe as possible.

The service also draws direction from the Social Pedagogy Ethos.

All staff at Somerton Road contribute to the provision of a positive environment and culture where children are able to realise outcomes in all areas of their lives and to act as 'Good Parents' to children during their time at Somerton Road. Staff seek to provide a positive group living experience, allowing young people to develop relationships, build practical and social skills to enable young people to have positive outcomes. All staff will be encouraged to have an active awareness of each child's cultural, spiritual and dietary needs. Staff are expected to ensure that children will experience staff sensitivity in practice, especially in respect of intimate personal care or personal issues.

In our child centred environment, in which a young person's dignity and individuality are celebrated and developed, our commitment to continuous improvement means that we are completely open and transparent; we actively seek the collaboration and perspectives that come from children, parents, carers, advocates and our partner agencies.

We seek to identify and promote positive interactions that will encourage the building of healthy attachments, based on the individual needs of the Young Person, their levels of understanding and their abilities.

All young people at Somerton Road will be actively encouraged to share and influence the day-to-day routines and practices within the home through a variety of means, including one to one interactions with staff. Young people will also be given the opportunity to actively engage in, and influence the planning and delivery of a wide variety of activities and other appropriate opportunities, which involve calculated risk.

3. Facilities and Services Provided (Amended)

Somerton Road is a registered Children's Home. The home is in a residential area with good access to local amenities (shops, transport, leisure and parks with good access to arterial routes). It is a two storey detached house with six registered beds, only accessing five of the beds.

The building and equipment has been adapted and/or purchased to meet the specific identified needs of the residents.

At Somerton Road, we provide care for young people aged 12 – 17 years old. The home is currently registered for up to 6 young people who require long-term placements and have a Learning Disability and display complex behaviours of concern/challenge. At present, the number of beds used in the home is 6 but this is a temporary measure to accommodate an emergency admission who had previously been matched to the home through the admission panel. This placement will be kept under review.

Staff on duty daily:

- Each young person will be supported based on their assessed needs, currently this is one to one for all the young people. This may increase if

assessed as needed and will be discussed and agreed at an MDT meeting and kept under review.

- Every shift has a designated shift coordinator and their role is to support the team to ensure shifts are planned based on young people's care plans and current needs, and that ensure that all duties and tasks have been accordingly undertaken within the shift.
- The home is staff 24 hrs per day with either or both waking night and sleepover cover as assessed as needed.
- There is an on call management system in place to provide support for staff outside of normal 9am-5pm Monday to Friday working hours. This sits alongside the Regional Emergency Social Work Service.
- Short Term gaps in rotas can occur, due to sickness, training requirements or annual leave leave, these will be met by the use of bank staff or if necessary, agency workers provided by a Trust approved agency. Wherever possible we use agency workers who are previously known Home. All agency workers must provide proof of identity, qualifications, skill set and evidence of their NISCC registration and have met with the manager to receive and induction before commencing work with the young people.
- Staff are required to work on a rota basis of 7.30am – 14.00pm / 14.00pm – 21.00 pm and a waking night staff from 20.30 pm to 07.30 am.
- Our children's home provides 24 hours / 7 days per week care service and this enables contact to be available at all times.

A range of other services can be accessed to enhance the opportunities and support for children.

- Psychology support
- Therapeutic Behaviour support
- Community Nursing Services
- Social Work Services
- Speech & Language Therapy Services
- Primary Healthcare Services
- Patient and Client Support Services
- Recreational Opportunities, both within and outside Somerton Road
- Transport via Trust vehicles and Services
- Alternative Therapies

Somerton Road staff are proud of their partnership with parents and carers and demonstrate their commitment to this by welcoming parents and carers' input in developing care plans and decision-making. Wherever possible, we will encourage and facilitate the participation of our Children and Young People in all aspects of their life and care.

The young people resident at Somerton Road are encouraged to maintain links within the community by attending youth clubs, church organisations and are involved in the planning of outings with staff.

Links are maintained with other professional services to meet the individual young person's needs, as and when required.

Somerton Road operates a Key Worker / Key Team system. The keyworker and key team for each child has responsibility for liaising closely with the young person's family, field Social Worker, School, Youth Organisations, GP's, Dentists and other professional bodies which include Psychiatric and Psychological services, ensuring any concerns or issues are addressed as soon as possible. The keyworker and / or key team also carries out individual pieces of work with their key child based needs and goals identified following keyworker completion of monthly assessments. Individual young person's needs are identified through: Daily recordings; Risk Assessments; up-to-date LAC information; observations from colleagues; Educational plans and assessments and robust Transition plans; staff meetings; robust handovers; and social worker and parental input.

4. Name and address of Registered Provider

Dr Cathy Jack
Chief Executive

Somerton Road Registered Manager
Ms Helena McSorley (A)

5. Organisational Structure

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust

Dr Cathy Jack Chief Executive BHSCCT

Ms Kerrylee Weatherall Director of Children's Community Services Interim

Edel McKenna Co-Director, Early Intervention and Safeguarding Interim

Vacant Service Manager, Children with Disabilities Service

Principal Social Worker, Mrs Trish Stitt
Residential and Short Breaks

Monthly Monitoring Officer Ms Geralyn Woods (A)

6. Staffing Structure within the Home

Title	Band	WTE
Manager	7	1
Deputy Manager	7	2
Residential Social Worker (Qualified)	6	3
Residential Child Care Worker	5	13.69
Residential Support Worker	3	6.12
House Keeping Services (PCSS staff)	2	1.0
	3	1.0

Name	Position	Qualification	Experience
	Registered Manager (A)	Social Worker	9 years Children's Residential experience- 3 years within Children's Learning Disability
David Blair	Deputy Manager	Registered Nurse Learning Disability and Registered Children's Nurse	34 Years Children's & Adults Learning Disability
Helena McSorley	Deputy Manager	Social Worker	New post – currently being recruited
Conor Fitzsimons	Residential Social Worker	Social Worker	Over 5 years learning disability experience, qualified social worker for 2 years. Newly appointed, start date 17.7.23
Andrea Rainey	Residential Social Worker – temp	Social Worker	5 Years Children's Learning Disability
Lorraine McKeown	Residential Social Worker	Social Worker	3 Years Children's Learning Disability
Vicky Hayles	Residential Child Care Worker		3 Years Children's Learning Disability
Maureen Morgan	Residential Child Care Worker	QFC Level 3 diploma	26 Years Children's & Adults Learning Disability
Sean McKinney	Residential Child Care Worker	QCF level 3 Diploma	11 Years Children's Learning Disability
Rachel keys	Residential Child Care Worker	Degree in Psychology	2 Years' Experience Children with Disability(LD)
Vacant	Residential Child Care Worker		Recruitment process taking place
Vacant	Residential Child Care Worker		Recruitment process taking place
Maria Loughran	Residential Child Care Worker	QCF level 3 Diploma	11 Years Children's & Adults Learning Disability
Dawn Kerr	Residential Child Care Worker		6 years Children's & Adults Learning Disability – newly appointed
David Johnston	Residential Child Care Worker	QCF level 3 Diploma / Degree International Tourism Management	15 Years Children's & Adults Learning Disability
Vacant	Residential Child Care Worker		Recruitment process taking place
Roisin Vernon	Residential Child Care Worker	QCF level 3 Diploma	11 Years Children's & Adults Learning Disability
Vacant	Residential Support Worker		Recruitment process taking place
Vacant	Residential Support Worker		Recruitment process taking place

Nicola Mc Bride	Residential Support Worker	QCF level 3 Diploma / Degree Social Pedagogy	9 Years Children's Learning Disability
Terri Louise Patton	Residential Support Worker	Child Care Studies level 3	2 years Residential Care
Ciara Anderson	Residential Support Worker	QCF level 3 Diploma	2 years Residential Care
Kim Chapman	Residential Support Worker	QCF level 3 Diploma	16 Years Children's & Adults Learning Disability
Anna McDonald	Residential Support Worker		10 Years Children's & Adults Learning Disability

7. The arrangement for the supervision, training and development of employees.

A dedicated team of male and female workers, who are experienced at helping and supporting young people and their families, staff the Home. The diverse nature of the team in terms of age, gender, experience, skill and qualification provides the opportunity to promote a positive view of difference to young people. Furthermore, the team is committed to continually building on and extending experiences of diversity within the home and experience of children. . All staff are introduced, as part of their induction training, to child protection procedures, health and safety and fire safety training, medication and first aid and the recording of information, while they are shadowing the team and building relationships. There is a further program Statutory, Mandatory and bespoke training based on the current resident group that the staff member would participate in, for example Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA), Positive Behaviour Support and autism awareness training.

Supervision is a vital part of supporting, managing and developing the staff team. The new staff members will receive more frequent supervision as part of their induction. This is reflected in the NISCC Code of Practice for social care employers and in regulations and care standards for regulated services. Supervision sessions are recorded and staff are required to read and sign their notes, as per the Regional Supervision Policy, which are then placed on the staff member's file. Supervisions are a good opportunity to bring up personal worries and concerns and identify personal developmental needs such as trainings or courses.

Supervision is provided for all staff in a variety of formats, including peer supervision, monthly team meetings and where appropriate post crisis reflection. Staff members are provided with formal supervision on a monthly basis (or more frequently for newly qualified staff as per AYE requirements).

The frequency of supervision is monitored and reported on a monthly basis as part of the Monitoring Officer's monthly monitoring duties.

Staff Development Reviews (SDR) are in operation within the home and take place annually.

There is an identified member of the Learning and Development team for residential services within the Trust who works closely with management and staff members and provides dates for forthcoming training relevant to the team, provides support to help design and deliver team development days.

8. Profile of Accommodated Children

Somerton Road Children's Home will usually provide care for five children aged between 12 and 18. They will have a learning disability and display behaviours of concern/challenge and require care placements because of home or placement breakdown or to ensure their safety and wellbeing. The home works in partnership with families and spending time with families will be based on the needs of the child alongside the family. Some of the children may spend one to three nights at home while others may have regular time out of the home with their families. This will be determined on an individual basis as part of their assessment and care plan and reviewed through the Looked After Children Review process in line with LAC regulations. The Courts may also direct the nature and frequency of contact when a Care Order is in place. Placements should, wherever possible be planned and children/young people introduced at a pace which is appropriate to their needs and understanding.

9. Criteria for Admission

Potential residents should have:

- Learning Disability
- Behaviours of Concern/Challenge
- Be 12 year old or over
- An assessment, which indicates that the threshold for residential care has been met.
- No other safe care option is available
- Therapeutic/Behavioural support is available for the placement from the owning Trust.

The Trust has an Admissions Procedure for the Home. This Procedure outlines that an Admissions Panel will be convened to consider applications for vacant beds. Its role will be to consider each referral and make decisions on appropriate placements and compatibility with Statement of Purpose, values of the home and that the needs of any applicant can be safely met within a Children's Home.

The Service Manager for Children with Disabilities BHSCT will chair the Panel. The Panel will be made up of the Registered Manager, PSW for Residential, Psychology/Psychiatry, and a MDT representative. A panel will be convened when a vacancy becomes available.

In exceptional circumstances, and only if agreed by Children with Disabilities Service Manager, or above, will a child be accommodated as an emergency admission. If the child requires the bed for longer than 4 weeks and there is not a clear care plan for their care the Service Manager for Children with Disabilities BHSCT will hold an admissions panel.

By exception and only when all other alternatives have been exhausted, the Trust may seek to accommodate a young person under 12 in response to safeguarding concerns or because of placement breakdown. Such a placement will require Co-Director approval and a variation of the SOP will be shared with Regulatory Authority. If this is for a short time placement a panel will not be convened, but a placement consideration and planning meeting should be convened to plan for the placement and complete required documentation and Risk Assessments. In such a circumstance, the sixth registered bed may be brought back into commission. If this is to access, a long-term bed for a child the request will be taken to panel and the normal panel process will take place. This can also only happen if one of the five operational registered beds is available.

10. The Following Categories of Young People are deemed unsuitable for Admission.

- Children/Young people with severe mental health disorders who require continuous psychiatric supervision, or for whom isolation or the use of seclusion or significant use of PRN medication is a key element of their care plan.
- Any child who requires seclusion
- Complex health care or nursing needs or may be technology dependent.
- History of fire setting.
- History of forensic/ offending behaviour.
- Children with no or assessed as having a mild or moderate learning difficulty.

11. Arrangements to Promote the Health & Well-being of residents within Somerton Road

Staff, in partnership with children and parents, will promote and protect the health and well-being of our residents. We will ensure that the children live in a safe, caring, healthy and stimulating environment, in which their interests are recognised and promoted. In order to ensure the safety of the young people living in Somerton Road. In line with care plans and risk assessments, the front door remains locked and there is controlled access to parts of the building.

This will be documented in young people's care plans along with Risk Assessments and Restrictive Practice approval.

- All children will have 'LAC' planning processes and forms completed.
- All children will have a Care Plan, which will be reviewed six monthly.
- All children will have an identified key worker and key team.
- Datix forms will be completed as and when appropriate and learning reviewed.
- As part of the LAC care planning process each child's health and well-being will be monitored and reviewed.

All medicines are administered and stored as per RQIA regulations and in line with BHSCT **Community Medicines Code 2016**. Staff are aware of this and copies are available within the unit

- Any observable injuries will be recorded, investigated and appropriate action taken. Carers will be informed of all reportable accidents.
- Primary care and health issues will be dealt with wherever possible, by the children's own GP and we will liaise appropriately with other relevant health care professionals.
- All staff will be made aware of health and safety requirements within the home and will be expected to adhere to these.
- Trust and SBNI Regional Safeguarding procedures will be implemented and staff will receive appropriate training annually. Staff have online access to these procedures
- A local resolution approach is the initial response to complaints and there is a complaints procedure available and accessible to all family members and children.
- The home is inspected at least twice annually by RQIA; these inspections are now unannounced.
- All staff will be vetted via Access NI, DHSS and PSNI. Staff are required to provide two references and the chair of the interview panel reviews these.
- A range of policies and procedures are in place as listed in the appendices, which are reviewed, replaced or added to as and when appropriate. Staff will be expected to keep themselves updated on new policies and procedure and changes to existing policies and procedures. Policy and procedures can be discussed at staff team meetings and during supervision

12. Promotion of Children's Participation

Within Somerton Road, the paramountcy of the needs of the children will be respected and promoted. The participation of young people is an integral part of our work to understand and respond to their needs, wishes, and vulnerability. We consult with young people through discussion both informally and formally. Where a child has communication challenges, the home uses a wide variety of communication tools to promote involvement in decision-making and day-to-day life within the home. Where appropriate a

communication or sensory assessment will be sought from Speech and Language Therapy colleagues to assist with developing care and communication plans.

Informally: -

- Through discussions and observations at the dinner table.
- Discussions and observations through play.
- Discussions and observations whilst out on activities.
- Discussions and observations whilst out driving.

Formally: -

- Planned one to one interaction/play with staff.

The young people in the home can be verbal or nonverbal and the staff support the young people to engage through discussion and / or through visuals or observations.

We feel that it is important to enable the young people to contribute in all aspects of their care; this enables staff to make the young people's stay a safe, fun, worthwhile and beneficial experience.

It is important for the young people to see their thoughts views and wishes visibly - on display boards and communications. Seeing their contribution develops confidence, wellbeing and a sense of belonging to Somerton Road, again creating a friendly and family environment.

13. Arrangements for Restrictive Practice and Physical Intervention and the Discipline of Children

Restrictive Practices – within Somerton Road each young person has individually assessed needs and to provide safety some restrictive practices are needed, 1:1 supervision to ensure the young person's has support to maintain their safety, engage in preferred activities and to support in areas of personal care. This has been reviewed and agreed at MDT panel and at LAC reviews in partnership with parents. There are certain doors locked in the home that have been assessed as a safety need, however the young people can indicate they wish to go through the door and their supporting staff. All restrictive practices are reviewed by the keyworker when they are completing the monthly assessment to ensure they are still in the best needs of the young person and remain in line with their assessed needs.

Statement in relation to Mental Capacity Act - only applicable to those 16 years old and over.

The Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 came into partial implementation in Dec 2019.

“Depriving a person of his or her liberty is one of the most serious infringements on a person’s human rights. The Act therefore treats detention amounting to deprivation of liberty (“DoL”) as one of the most serious interventions that can be done to a person who lacks capacity”

What this means is that a person can only ever be deprived of his or her liberty in this care home if he or she is deemed to be of unsound mind.

A deprivation of liberty is when:

- The person is being cared for in this home and
- The person is not free to leave and
- The person is under continuous supervision and control

To enable us to provide care for a person who has been assessed as lacking capacity in this home, where we are depriving them of their liberty as detailed above - the following conditions must be met:

1. There must be an assessment of capacity which determines that the resident does not have the capacity to make decisions about the deprivation of liberty
2. There must be a best interest decision which states that it is in the residents best interest to receive care in this home with the deprivation of liberty care plan in place
3. The nominated person, which is normally a family member has been consulted with in relation to the deprivation of liberty
4. There is a need to prevent serious harm to the resident or other
5. There is authorisation from a Trust Panel stating that it is legal to care for the resident in this care home with the deprivation of liberty care plan in place

Physical Intervention - This is a sensitive and complex area of policy and practice and every effort will be made to ensure a strong value base, and that each child/young person in our care is appropriately safeguarded. We will adhere to the Children’s Home Regulations 2005, Section 16. Behaviours of concern/challenge will be managed effectively within the care environment through the use of behavioural strategies, such as distraction and de-escalation, as contained within Positive Behaviour Support plans, and within Management of Actual or Potential Aggression Crisis model. Physical intervention techniques are an important part of this model, but will always be used when all other options have been employed, but have not resolved the issue or behaviour of concern. The need to physically intervene will always be seen as a measure of last resort, employed to ensure the safety of all. All interventions and practice will be shared and explored with young people, their family and community staff.

As discussed in section 2 the home’s ethos is underpinned by PBS. Each young person within Somerton Road will have a PBS plan developed in partnership with therapeutic service colleagues. Allocated Children’s

Therapeutic Service staff will complete an initial assessment and profession specific assessments in order to understand the presenting behavioural and psychological challenges.

A summary of assessment findings will be completed focusing upon the presentation of behaviours that challenge its impact upon the child and young person and the triggers for and functions of such behaviours.

PBS plans will have multi-components, which are built on the findings of these assessments and devised in partnership with the staff, the young person, family and other professionals who have regular contact with the young person. The assessments help form understanding of the functions of the behaviour, proactively meeting assessed needs and developing strategies that seek to reduce the likelihood of behaviours of challenge/concern occurring should form the majority of any plan. These will include interventions aimed at increasing the young person's quality of life and which seeks to alter the contexts in which challenging behaviours occurs. /

A PBS intervention plan will also describe an appropriate and ethical range of reactive strategies to guide responses to incidents of behaviour that are not preventable and which aim to minimise escalation and reduce the risk of harm to the person and others. PBS intervention plans provide guidance on how strategies will be implemented, by whom and by when.

Any physical interventions used as part of a risk management strategy, will be reported as an incident on the Belfast Trust's Datix system and reviewed as part of the Children's Homes Regulations, Events and notifications (schedule 5) within the Monthly Monitoring Reports provided to RQIA. The use of any other form of restrictive practice within the children's Home can only be agreed within a multi-disciplinary forum in partnership with parents and associated professionals and is subject to regular review. Trends will be monitored and practice enhanced, ensuring that all physical interventions are ethically sound and justifiable in the circumstances.

14. Safeguarding our Children and dealing with Bullying

Regional Child Protection policies and procedures will be adhered to, all social work staff and managers have access to Regional Safeguarding Policies and Procedures online via the SBNI website.

We wish the children/young people to be cared for in a safe, child centred environment that promotes their welfare and safeguards them from significant harm.

The aim of the home is to provide a home like environment in which our children thrive. We will maintain an open culture with respect to the prevention of bullying. It is important for staff to be aware of the issues of bullying either within the home, at school, in the community and cyber bullying. All young people are expected to respect and value each other.

Staff work hard at safeguarding children from bullying and are aware that bullying is a complex pattern of behaviour.

Should staff become aware that an individual is experiencing bullying they will offer immediate support and promptly address the needs of all concerned. Somerton Road will not tolerate any form of bullying. All incidents of bullying are recorded and reported to all relevant parties. A positive restorative approach to resolution will be employed

Anti-bullying measures in place include:

- Careful observation and monitoring
- Staff guidance on bullying
- Keyworkers continue to be vigilant when reviewing recording to pick up any themes or patterns.
- Being aware of the signs and symptoms
- Raising concerns with parents/schools

It is important to maintain open links with other parties involved with the child/young person to ensure a clear and accurate exchange of information at all times.

Access NI checks professional registration (NISCC/NMC), supervision and continuous professional development will be used to ensure a safe and protective environment. Child protection training and regular updates will be mandatory. Individual safeguarding arrangements will be made for each child and incorporated into their care plan.

15. The policy for PSNI involvement in the Children's Home.

Somerton Road seeks to work in partnership with the local PSNI when necessary and actively foster good relationships in order, to best protect the young people resident. A bespoke protocol has been developed for police attendance and is currently available in Draft format.

As Somerton Road is an open residential home, it is dependent upon the individual young people to: -

- a) Work in co-operation and partnership with the staff and recognise their role and responsibility in making the home a safe place, for themselves, other young people and staff.
- b) Understand that with rights come responsibilities.
- c) Accept that actions have consequences.

It is only on this basis that the home may function in a manner, which enables the needs of all the young people to be met.

On those occasions when a young person is assessed as putting themselves, or others at risk of serious injury and are beyond whatever influence staff may bring to bear, the assistance of the PSNI may be sought by staff. There is guidance for staff on police attendance in children's home.

16. Unauthorised Absence

The welfare of young people in our care is paramount. Staff supervise all young people in our care at all times due to the potential impact of their disabilities on safety of themselves and others.

Staff must take appropriate steps to minimise the risk of children going missing, such as ensuring that the premises and surrounding site is secure and frequent headcounts.

Any young person will be considered missing when they have left the Home without permission, and their whereabouts are unknown.

If there is any doubt regarding the safety of any young person, the police will be notified immediately.

Parents and social workers are to be notified as soon as possible – dependent on wishes.

After a careful search of the home and grounds is completed, and consultation with the Manager has taken place a decision will be made as to the most appropriate course of action. Staff will follow the Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) Protocol for contacting the police.

It is important that plans be made for the return of a young person. Staff numbers and planning should reflect the need to engage and support the young person who may return in a distressed or negative frame of mind. Staff should always attempt to discuss the reasons for the absconding and who they were with, with the young person, using appropriate forms of communication and at an appropriate time following their return.

When the situation has been resolved, members of staff should review the reasons for its occurrence and ensure that measures are taken to ensure it does not happen again.

17. Electronic & Mechanical Surveillance

The Trust is very conscious of a child's right to privacy and dignity. Somerton Road staff will carry Pinpoint alarms for safety reasons. Occasionally assessment will indicate the need for a listening device/monitor, generally to assure staff and families that the child/young person is safe within their bedroom. Any such decision will be thoroughly examined and assessed on an individual basis and form part of the child/young person's care plan and be subject to review. This will be approved by the multi-disciplinary team and

recorded as a Restrictive practice. This will ensure that the best interests of the child are met and our duty of care will be fully discharged. This will be reviewed at least six monthly at LAC reviews.

The home recognizes the need to protect young people whilst balancing this against their need for privacy. Somerton Road operates a rota system to enable appropriate staffing levels to provide supervision levels within the home.

Somerton Road has in operation, the use of CCTV Camera's, which does not record as it is solely for observation of the grounds around the home. These are externally mounted with a viewing monitor situated in the downstairs office.

18. Review Arrangements

Somerton Road Children's Home provides residential care for up to six children as part of a voluntary care arrangement or as condition of an existing Care Order. It is the statutory duty of the Responsible Authority (Health & Social Services Trust in which the child resides) to review a child who is looked after or accommodated.

The relevant placing Trust is responsible for the completion of all Looked After Children forms, including pre placement planning forms which are completed and that reviews take place consistently every 6 months. Each child resident in Somerton Road will have an extensive residential care plan, which is additional to and more detailed than the LAC care plan. The key worker in partnership will facilitate this plan with the child, parent/carer, schools and community staff. The plan is regularly updated and reviewed (6 monthly) normally co-terminus with "LAC" reviews.

19. Contributing to Reviews

We believe that all children have a voice, verbally and nonverbally and they should be heard. Children's views are sought in a variety of ways to try to have a meaningful contribution to the review process. In partnership with carers and community staff it is hoped that children can and will attend reviews.

20. Specific Therapeutic Techniques

Somerton Road uses the eclectic mix of therapeutic approaches such as Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), Person Centred Thinking, MAPA, Multi-Sensory Usage, and other therapies that children may be using at home.

These approaches are incorporated into the ethos of the home and the daily practices of the staff's interactions with the young people.

21. Anti -discriminatory Practice

The staff team will not judge or treat young people at Somerton Road or their family unfairly or discriminate against them through their written, verbal or non-verbal communication. Working in an anti-discriminatory, anti-oppressive manner is a founding principle in the Person Centred Thinking approach to caring for people with Learning Disability. This ensures children and their carers, are central to the care we provide, are respected for who they are, are treated with dignity, and are involved in the decisions that affect the care.

22. Arrangements for meeting spiritual needs and facilitating religious observance

Somerton Road staff will ensure that the ethnicity, culture and language of the young people living in the home will be respected and promoted and attendance at religious services or events will be facilitated. No one will be discriminated against because of his or her ethnicity, culture, religion, sexuality or language. Special dietary and personal requirements are taken into consideration including cultural, religious, and ethical or health requirements. Children are encouraged to be open and express their feelings and opinions.

23. Contact Arrangements with Family and significant people in the young person's life.

Somerton Road will actively promote family contact as appropriate and agreed in the young person's Care Plan.

Staff at Somerton Road work very hard at building good relationships with the parents and carers of the young people resident in the home. The management of contact is one area that staff ensure that they appropriately plan for and actively promote.

Contact arrangement are reviewed at every LAC review and changes made if needed, in consultation with the family. Contact can take place in the Home, the family home, or any other agreed venue. A room is available in the home so that visits can take place in privacy (unless contact is to be supervised or a young person and/or parent requires additional support.

24. Fire Precautions and Safety

Somerton Road has a modern and safe fire alarm system which includes both smoke and heat sensors linked to a loud siren system.

Somerton Road has a fire certificate issued by the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and is checked annually by Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority. The Trust Fire Officer visits to assess firefighting procedures and safety equipment. The home has three designated Fire Wardens who are responsible for ensuring all required testing of both the equipment and evacuation procedures are carried out within the required periods.

25. Arrangements for dealing with Representations or Complaints

Somerton Road adheres to the Belfast Trust Complaints Procedure. Where a complaint relates to the care of a child, Children's Home Regulations (NI) 2005 is used. A high degree of co-operation is expected between Somerton Road staff and parents/users in negotiating and agreeing the best course of action.

Complaints are written expressions of dissatisfaction or disquiet in respect of the care of an individual child. All complaints either formal or informal are considered as important and treated as such. Each complaint is recorded and documented on the complaints register and appropriately investigated.

Our aim is to resolve any such issues as close to the ground as possible. The Monitoring Officer, Trust Visitor and Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority monitor complaints records and documentation.

If you are unhappy with how you are treated you can make a complaint, verbally or in writing, to us, your family, your Social Worker, The Northern Ireland Commission for Children and Young People (NICCY) or the Children's Home Inspector. They will help you make a complaint.

The addresses of the Inspector is:
Children's Inspector
Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority
9th Floor Riverdale Tower
Lanyon Place
Belfast
BT1 3BT
Tel 028 90 517500
Fax 028 90 517501
Web www.rqia.uk

The address for NICCY is
Northern Ireland Commission for Children and Young People (NICCY)
7-9 Shaftesbury Square,
Belfast
BT2 7DP
Tel [028 9031 1616](tel:02890311616)
Fax 028 90 314545
Web www.niccy.org

Document Review History		
Reviewed date	Note of amendments / changes (version control)	Reviewed by
15.6.23	Pg. 5 – section 3, 3 rd paragraph to reflect a temporary emergency admission who was previously approved for admission by the Somerton Road Panel.	Trish Stitt
15.6.23	Pg. 6 – point 5 sleep in removed as this is not currently the model used	Trish Stitt
15.6.23	Pg. 8 – staffing list updated to reflect the current team	Trish Stitt