



**Statement of Purpose**  
**Apple Tree House SC489820,**  
**Weymouth, Dorset**

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## 1.0) Caring for children

### 1.1) The range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide

Apple Tree House is a service, which provides specialist residential care for children and young people with moderate to severe learning disabilities, with the option to transition into independent living or return home with support. The home is part of a growing range of flexible services to be provided by Potens aimed at children and young people with a varying degree of disability.

Apple Tree House has been carefully adapted to provide specialist accommodation for

children and young people with moderate to severe learning difficulties, Autism, ADHD and associated behavioral challenges, children accommodated at the home may also present with mental health problems, self-harming and children who are socially and emotionally delayed through neglect and harm.

We will work with children and young people to support them in all aspects of their care, working towards agreed targets which are set to focus the personal development of children in areas which present barriers to enable successful transitions into adulthood and or a move into the community.

A lot of emphasis is put on the children having fun and enjoying life to the maximum, with activities planned around their individual needs. We pride ourselves in maintaining relationships and working closely with parents/carers, and welcome ideas and involvement.

The staff team support parents/carers to develop a sound understanding of each aspect of the child's individual needs.

As part of our commitment to providing high quality services, we will constantly strive to meet targets that improve outcomes for children and young people.

## **1.2) Our ethos, and the outcomes we seek to achieve for children in our care**

Potens objectives for all children and young people are to:

- Have a safe and caring home environment in which to live
- Receive carefully planned, individual services to maximise placement stability
- Have access to health and education provision in their area
- Be given the support and opportunities to achieve positive childhood experiences
- Progress into adulthood with an appropriate foundation of life skills to equip them towards independence

Apple Tree House provides:

- A safe and friendly environment that is non-institutional; promoting group living as a positive experience.
- We strive to achieve positive outcomes for children placed at the home, giving young people a voice and enabling them to make choices, access local community resources, develop links with peers locally and participate in social and leisure activities of interest to them.
- Each young person placed at the home is encouraged and fully supported in maximising their education and has access to relevant

educational materials and computers.

- Key workers play an active role in supporting children with their homework, working in partnership with professionals in education in ensuring that children reach their maximum potential.
- The home works closely with parents/carers in order to maintain contact and links with family, friends and relatives as deemed appropriate.
- Each child has the opportunity to collate information and materials that they see as significant, treasure memorable events and develop a personal portfolio during their stay at the home, and have their own memory box.
- Each child's health care needs will be fully met. They have access to local health care professionals and Clinical Commissioning Groups that participate by attending statutory reviews and contribute to the care plan as necessary.
- Opportunity for all children and young people to have a voice and are able to share their opinions.
- Delivery of social, cultural, emotional, religious, physical and dietary needs.
- A foundation for each child/young person to cope with their future as an adult and maximise their potential towards achieving independence.
- Holistic care working in partnership with health and education colleagues, other professionals and external organisations known to the child and attend relevant meetings as required on behalf of the child.
- Assessments that incorporate the social, cultural, emotional, religious, physical and dietary needs of all children so that they are fully met on an individual basis.
- Child protection policies and practices which are adhered to and staff have access to training and information on any updates, to ensure that children and young people are properly safeguarded.

### **1.3) Location of the home**

The home is situated on the on the outskirts of Weymouth, Dorset. It is very close to one of the main roads in Weymouth, with easy access to the main routes in and out of Weymouth.

The Manager has completed a location risk assessment to identify any risks in relation to the physical environmental, levels of criminality and anti-social behaviour and

potential hazards. Additionally the location risk assessment contains information on local schools, hospitals and community access.

#### **1.4) Age range, number and sex of children**

The accommodation has been designed for four children aged 11 -18 regardless of gender.

#### **1.5) The type of accommodation, including sleeping accommodation**

It is a refurbished detached 1930's house set within a gated front garden and pleasant back garden area which has a summer house, laundry and trampoline area. There are five bedrooms for children and sleeping facilities for staff.

#### **Fire and emergency**

Apple Tree House has written statements in relation to fire precautions and evacuation procedures which will be known to staff and young people who will be supported to evacuate in case of emergencies; these are re-enforced by regular, and recorded, fire drills.

Staff are aware of our health and safety policy and regular risk assessments are made which cover all aspects of the home and specified excursions outside the home.

Our fire safety policy details responsibilities, recordings, drills, procedures, training and assembly points

#### **1.7) Our arrangements for supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children living at Apple Tree House**

We believe a young person's cultural and religious background is fundamental to their identity and so it is important that this is encouraged and maintained.

At Apple Tree House we respect all religious denominations. Young people are encouraged to practice their religious beliefs. Staff ensure appropriate arrangements are made, so that the young person has the opportunity to attend place of worship or religious events if requested.

The home will follow the cultural and religious rituals in preparation of food for young people as needed. At Apple Tree House the young people are encouraged to participate in cultural nights, birthday celebrations, and any other significant events that occur during the year.

#### **1.8) The arrangements for dealing with complaints.**

The home has a detailed complaints procedure provided by Potens. The following is a summary of key points:-

##### ***a) Making a complaint***

Children are encouraged to express their concerns or complaints, and also areas of satisfaction; the person concerned can address most of these on the spot. However not all complaints can be resolved in this way and therefore the

following formal system is operated.

***b) Supporting children in making a complaint where required***

- Children are offered the support of their key worker or their preferred person to help them clarify and make their complaint. A complaint form using symbols is available for those requiring it.
- Children are supported in being clear about areas of dissatisfaction and in identifying what action they require e.g. apology, change of decision etc.
- In addition to the Children's Guide there is a Children's Guide to making a complaint.

It remains our policy that we endeavour to resolve complaints internally where possible, but where complaints need to be taken up at a formal level, Apple Tree House's Complaint procedure or local authority Complaints Procedure may be invoked. Complaints from young people are recorded in the complaints book and we feed back to young people on the outcome of their complaint.

**Complaints by employees**

It is the policy of Potens that, wherever possible, complaints and grievances shall be resolved in an informal manner, firstly by the establishment of a climate in which staff are encouraged and expected to address issues of concern and conflict at source. This informal framework is supported by a formal procedural framework, which guarantees that any complaints shall be addressed appropriately where informal means have failed; this is undertaken in consultation with HR.

**Complaints by a third party**

Where an external agency or other third party has a concern or complaint about any aspect of the work of any part of Apple Tree House, of its Directors, staff or clients, then it would be our wish that any such complaint shall be raised at the earliest opportunity.

It is the Director's aim that that concerns or complaint should be resolved, where possible, in an informal way, unless of course where the complaint is of a nature or seriousness where more formal action is appropriate or necessary, and in that case it is the Director's responsibility to support such action.

Our complaints procedures are available in the home or can be accessed via Potens Head office.

**Time scales for complaint resolutions**

Stage	Type	Timescales
1	Local resolution	14 days from receipt of complaint

<b>2</b>	<b>Formal consideration</b>	<b>28 days from receipt of stage 2 complaint</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Review panel</b>	<b>28 days from receipt of stage 3 complaint</b>

**Child line** also offer support and advice to young people choosing to use this service Telephone number **0800 1111**.

In addition, each young person, parent or member of the public can make a complaint known to, **Ofsted**, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. Telephone number **0300 123 1231**. All complaints are taken seriously and we will resolve problems internally, within recognised time scales when and where appropriate.

### **1.9) Our policies for safeguarding, preventing bullying and children who go missing.**

Potens has detailed policies around safeguarding, bullying and missing children.

Safeguarding underpins all the work that we do with children young people and young adults and all staff receive appropriate local authority safeguarding training within their probationary period. All children have an activity risk assessments prior to undertaking external trips etc. The Registered Manager of the home monitors this.

Safeguarding procedures form an integral part of the daily responsibilities of staff in respect of protecting children. All children and young people must feel safe and secure. Staff are required to report any disclosure or any form of abuse to the Manager immediately. Any form of allegation against a member of staff must be reported to the Registered Manager who is responsible for informing the appropriate authority for investigation.

Staff are required to report any allegation of abuse relating to the Manager to the child's placing authority and the Responsible Individual, the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Lead and the Chief Operating Officer.

A member of the senior management team is on call at all times, and their contact details are available in the home.

The Manager/Senior Manager will ensure information and support is made available to the staff concerned, should this be necessary.

All incidents of safeguarding allegations will be reported to OFSTED.

Any staff member, whom an allegation is made against, may be suspended from duty



pending further investigation. The Manager/Senior Manager will ensure information and support is available to the staff concerned in this event, communication will come via the HR department.

All incidents of child protection and allegations against staff will be reported to OFSTED under Regulation 40 of The Children's Home Regulations,

Staff will undertake Safeguarding training every three years, it will be refreshed sooner if there are significant events resulting in updated legislation, changes to policy or where there are concerns about staff practice.

**The Designated Safeguarding Children Lead will ensure that appropriate contact is made with the Local Authority (social care/police) to promote partnership working and good practice.**

All relevant staff and volunteers will be informed who the Designated Safeguarding Children Lead

is and how to contact him/her as part of their induction.

**The Safeguarding Children Lead designated for Potens and Apple Tree House is:**

**Sue Hoxey**

**Tel: 07469817900**

**Email: Sue.Hoxey@potens-uk.com**

## **Preventing Bullying**

No form of bullying is acceptable within the home. Incidents of bullying from the child or staff must be reported to the Manager. An anti-bullying log is in place to monitor incidents and staff are required to attend anti bullying training. Where required young people may receive 1:1 meetings on bullying, and may signed an anti-bullying agreement.

All staff must refer to the homes policy and procedures on bullying for their guidance.

The Home will follow the **Dorset children and young people's plan** (<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/anti-bullying>), which Dorset County Council are currently developing an anti-bullying strategy and as this develops we will align our policy upon it:

We follow the **Dorset children and young people's plan** (<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/anti-bullying>), which Dorset County Council are currently developing an anti-bullying strategy and as this develops we will align our

policy to it:

- the home has a detailed safeguarding policy and follows the local safeguarding board protocols on child protection referrals
- all staff receive training in child protection/safeguarding procedures and related areas.
- the Designated Safeguarding Children's Lead for Apple Tree House is on-call to staff, though staff may take initial contact information related to safeguarding/child protection issues as required and inform the DSCL immediately.
- information regarding Child Line and what to do if you have a worry or cause for concern is displayed in the home, including the use of a private telephone
- the child's key worker also acts as an advocate for that child
- children are given support with understanding and using self-protection strategies
- children have access to the advocacy service and independent visitor and can contact Ofsted.

**In the case of a child going missing from the home** without authorisation the following procedures would be followed (see full policy for details, available upon request in the home):

- a) Staff should take agreed actions to locate each child i.e. a search of home and grounds.
- b) Due to the fact that the children and young people who live at the home are extremely vulnerable If they cannot be located, staff shall **immediately** notify the senior manager on duty, who must in turn immediately report the incident to the police and the senior leadership team on-call staff member.

When notifying the police (using Local Safeguarding Children's board flow chart protocol), the senior manager will provide as much detail as is known about the circumstances leading up to the child being identified as missing. In addition a brief description of the child will be given, including details of what he/she was wearing etc., and the senior manager should stress the vulnerability of the child and inform of any medical requirements.

- c) Staff will ensure that all other children are safe and properly supervised, in accordance with individual risk assessment.
- d) The responsible individual will be notified as soon as possible.

- e) A member of the senior leadership team will inform parents and significant others and the placing authority.
- f) Individual children have missing person plans details relating to going missing, and staff should be familiar with these when working with that child.
- g) Where children are placed out of county and go missing, the Registered Manager should follow the local protocol for children's services this is the Runaway and Missing From Home and Care (RMFHC) protocol - and also comply with any other processes required by the placing authority that are specified in the individuals care plan and their RMFHC.
- h) If the child is MISPERED a written notification of the incident should be submitted to Ofsted as required.

**A copy of the missing child policy is located in the home, and can be accessed upon request.**

## **2.0) Views, wishes and feelings**

### **2.1) Our approach to consulting children about the quality of their care.**

Each young person will have their own key worker at the home who agrees with the young person objectives to be achieved during the placement as part of the placement plan agreement.

All placement plans devised in consultation with relevant parties and young people.

Key workers will hold regular 1:1 meetings with the young people so that their wishes and feelings can be heard and acted upon, using communication aids that are individual to them ensuring that they have a good understanding of what is being communicated these 1:1 meetings are documented. The key worker sessions aim to empower all the young people so that they are able to, voice their opinion, make choices and address any issue's that may affect them within the home. Residents are encouraged to discuss relationships and forward planning for future placements. Young people's thoughts are used to influence their life and well-being in the home environment. Appropriate communication aids are used depending on the young person's level of communication skills. The Responsible Individual will spend time in the home with the young people to ensure all the young people are happy and that their wishes and feelings are being taken in to account.

When review meetings take place a key worker session then takes place, so that the young person is informed about decisions made on their behalf. All young people are encouraged to attend their review meetings. The young person's attendance is assessed before the meeting and advice is sought from parents/social workers to be able to ensure

that if the young person attends their review it does not have a detrimental effect on the young person. For young people who choose not to attend their meetings, a 1:1 session will take place with the young person to enable their thoughts and feelings to be written down and forwarded to the IRO. The young person is then given feedback.

To ensure their views are heard and acknowledged, our young people have access to a range of communication processes.

For young people's with severe and profound learning difficulties, the staff will establish the young person's likes and dislikes through observation and discussion with significant people and advocate on their behalf, enabling them to achieve their full potential in life.

The following approaches are used to enable children to make their wishes and needs known:

- Individual communication tools
- choice boards
- suggestion box
- group meetings
- individual meetings with their Key Worker
- evaluation of activities and provision.
- child's contribution to Annual Review when possible.
- a home meeting.

The use of advocates and independent visitors for the young people are encouraged by our service.

## **2.2 Our policy and approach to (a) anti- discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families and (b) children's rights**

Potens is committed to operating anti-discriminatory practice. It acknowledges that discrimination exists within our society. We accept the importance of challenging discrimination and of transforming social care practice, which promote young people's social care and empowers users.

Anti-discriminatory practice is the responsibility of all of our employees. Potens and its employees must act to establish anti-discriminatory practice.

At Apple Tree we have a staff team that reflects the diversity within society. Whilst it is impossible to legislate for people's attitudes, we have an expectation that they will conform to this policy and all other policies whilst on duty.

We believe that the relationships formed with the young people, colleagues and other professionals should be equal. We always need to be child focused. The welfare of the

young person is of primary importance, and the young person's views will be listened to.

- We aim to challenge discrimination in any manifestation and to positively promote individuality and diversity.
- We positively promote the young person's religion through observance, or places of worship.
- We encourage young people to adorn their personal bedroom space and welcome positive images of their race and culture.
- We deliver a varied menu which includes foods from different cultures.
- We encourage young people to express their individuality and encourage active engagement within the community

We recognise that young people from different ethnic groups may have particular care needs, and that each individual will have differing needs resulting from their disability. Some young people will require advice, assistance and support to look at issues surrounding their particular experiences and backgrounds, this is the responsibility of all staff.

A young person's sense of identity can become very fragile when separated from their parents; young people may struggle to retain a positive sense of their own cultural, racial and religious heritage. Apple Tree House is committed to ensuring that all children in our home develops a clear sense of who they are, equipping them to tackle any discrimination they may encounter.

Promoting a young person's identity is an important part of the referral process when considering a placement for children in Apple Tree House to ensuring that we receive detailed and accurate information regarding the disability, sex, ethnicity, culture and religion of all young people being considered for placement at Apple Tree House.

The principles of anti-oppressive practice and Equal Opportunities are a core component of our induction processes for all staff at Apple Tree House.

At Apple Tree House we encourage helping children prepare and cook meals that reflects their heritage or culture can be a very positive way of demonstrating that their identity is valued within the home.

We always encourage the young people to choose their own clothes and personal items; this approach has the advantage of promoting their financial competence and working towards the Person Centred Planning.

Staff promote and encourage any hobbies, interests and talents a child may have. Young people will be provided with education and information regarding relationships during 1:1 key worker sessions.

Young people are encouraged to express their wishes and future activities and menus and are also encouraged to invite independent visitors or representatives through their placing authority. We aim to empower all children so that they are able to voice their opinions, make choices and address any issues that may affect them within the home; they are encouraged to discuss relationships and forward planning for future placements. Young people's thoughts are used to influence their life and well-being in the home environment.

To ensure their views are heard and acknowledged, our children have access to a range of communication systems.

For those young people with severe and profound learning difficulties, the team will establish the young person's likes and dislikes through observation and discussion with significant people and advocate on their behalf enabling them to achieve their full potential in life.

The use of advocates and independent visitors for the young people will be encouraged by our service and the young people are made aware of how to contact their reviewing officer, children's rights services and OFSTED.

Apple Tree House and the staff team are committed to upholding and implementing the United Nation's Convention on Children's rights and the principles surrounding it.

Each young person will be valued in their own right and treated with respect and dignity.

### **2.3) Children's rights**

The Children's Commissioner for England promotes and protects children's rights in England by listening to what young people say about what matters to them and making sure adults in charge take their views and interests into account.

The law says that, the Children's Commissioner should have particular regard to children living away from home or receiving social care, as set out in Section 8A of the Children Act 2004.

If you are a young person who lives away from home or who receives social care and who needs advice or assistance, you can get in touch with us by calling free phone **0800 528 0731**.

All young people will be treated with respect and accorded the maximum privacy, personal choice and autonomy within the overall requirements for safety. Young people are seen as young people first, and although the young people at Apple Tree House have learning disabilities; the young people are respected as individuals in their own right by all of the staff.

- All staff are familiar with and adhere to Apple Tree House's policy for Equal Opportunities

- All young people are given the opportunity to fulfil any personal religious and cultural observances
- All young people are encouraged to express views on all matters affecting them; freedom of expression; conscience and religion; on health care; education; care etc.
- We believe that all staff have responsibilities to challenge discrimination in all its forms, whether it is direct or indirect.
- Staff will receive anti-discriminatory training as part of their induction and supervision; including looking at their values and culture.
- Young people staying at Apple Tree House, should enjoy the same rights and freedom of any young person of the same age.

### **Children have the fundamental right:**

To be valued as an individual
To be treated with dignity and respect
To be cared for as a child first
To interact using their established method of communication
To be offered the opportunity of independence and choice
To be treated according to spiritual/social/cultural needs
To be able to maintain & develop friendships and interests
To develop responsibility for their own actions
To have their questions answered (unbiased)
To feel comfortable
To know about their body and the changes (puberty)
To know what sex they are and that there are others of that sex
To know that sexual feelings are OKAY
To know what is acceptable and is not (to be given reasons)
To know it's okay to say NO
To have an advocate
To form relationships

To have the opportunity to learn social skills

**To be protected from abuse**

Listened to

Being aware of other forms of communications

Staff keep information confidential; , except for situations where the child may be in danger

### 3.0) Education

#### 3.1) Provision to support children with special educational needs

All of the children who live at Apple Tree House have a statement that outlines how their special educational needs will be met.

The children will all attend local Special Educational Needs Schools for children with learning disabilities and autism. All staff at Apple Tree House support social, life skills, communication, emotional wellbeing and behavioural needs development in line with school plans to maintain consistency in approach.

We keep copies of young people's statement of educational needs or Education, Health and Care plans on file and there is a named school for each young person,

#### 3.2) Details of the management structure where the home is dually registered

Apple Tree House is not dually registered

#### 3.3) The promotion children's education

Each Young Person being looked after is expected to have in place a personal education plan.

Key workers support each young person in all aspects of their educational needs, which will be monitored by the Registered Manager.

Young people have access to a computer and any other essential equipment that is necessary to enhance their educational achievements.

A key worker or named person at Apple Tree House will establish home/school liaison, and a daily diary process to develop effective communication with school and attend any relevant meetings as necessary.

The key worker goes into school at least once every term unless more involvement is



required to discuss the child or young person's achievements and discuss and consult over matters such as communication systems, behaviour management strategies, care routines etc., to ensure a consistent approach is taken between home and school. The key worker will attend all parent evenings where deemed appropriate (if there is no parental involvement).

Apple Tree House works closely with education and a multi-agency team to identify and support all the individual needs.

All young people have a pathway plan and transition plan in place from the age of 15/16

## **4.0    Enjoyment and achievement**

### **4.1) Arrangements for enabling children to enjoy and achieve, and how we promotes their participation in cultural, recreational and sporting activities**

- At Apple Tree House we are committed to ensuring that all children actively participate in social and leisure activities, as part of our service provision. These are accessible and culturally appropriate, meeting individual needs.
- All Young people who live at the home have access to a wide range of local resources within their community; these may include youth clubs, disco's, visiting restaurants, shopping, parks, theme parks, swimming, cinema, pantomimes, football clubs, horse riding, bowling and any individual skill or talent that the young person shows an interest in.
- Trips and activities are planned with each child individually through their key worker allowing for personal preference At Apple Tree House we have strong links with local groups, leisure centres and youth centres that complement our approach to structured multi agency working, and young people are encouraged and supported to get involved with activities and local organisations to give them a sense of the local community and what it means to them.
- Apple Tree House has access to its own transport. The young people are also encouraged to access public transport with the support of staff, and they are also encouraged to take walks in the local area.
- All the young people are supported and encouraged to attend the school settings and we thrive to work very closely with the young person's school to ensure consistency, boundaries and good communication. All young people are encouraged to bring work home and staff support its' completion.
- The staff team take pride in supporting children and young people in events that either takes place with local authorities or the school and staff/key workers support parents evening/plays/sport days.
- We encourage our young people, where appropriate to learn daily living skills by enabling them to access their own pocket money and bank accounts.

## 5.0 ) Health and well-being

### 5.1) Details of any health care or therapy provided, including: Details of the qualifications and clinical supervision of the staff involved

We currently do not have any staff who provide healthcare or therapies

### 5.2) Details of professionals involved in health care

None currently

### 5.3) Provision of health care and therapy

Apple Tree House offer children and young people outstanding care and support at all times. This is achieved by fulfilling the following criteria:

- Promoting choice at mealtimes, thus empowering their food preference and when they would like to eat their meal,
- All young people are encouraged to participate to follow a healthy lifestyle through activities and diet,
- Personal care is maintained to a high standard and promoted to encourage independence,
- Two trained members of staff witness and sign the administration of all children and young people medication,
- Apple Tree House staff look at alternative and healthy ways to identify and promote the wellbeing of each individual child, without resorting to taking prescribed medication.

As a staff team we are very committed to meeting the individual health care needs of children for young people with complex needs; it is the responsibility of the placing authority, to refer the young person to any specialist services they may require whilst in our care. Detailed guidance and necessary consents for invasive care procedures must also be provided.

The manager will put the relevant people in touch with the clinical commissioning groups in order to make the necessary agreements, with regards to the funding of the health care needs for any child who has identified significant health care requirements.

Where children have complex health care needs, the Manager in conjunction with appropriate Health staff will ensure that all staff will be adequately trained to perform any complex care, including, where appropriate, invasive care procedures.

Once in placement an appropriately qualified healthcare professional will undertake necessary training with the staff and undertake assessments based on local competencies during their direct involvement with the young person. The Manager will ensure that this is

completed within the first 6 weeks and that all staff trained will be deemed competent by the said health care professional.

Due to the nature of the children being looked after at Apple Tree House it maybe, on occasion, necessary to use a monitor in the bedroom e.g. for epileptic or asthmatic children etc. This is to safeguard from any potential health risk, and will be identified and recorded in the child's placement plan in agreement with placing authority or parents/carers, where necessary.

### **Therapy**

At Apple Tree House we may work with other professionals to offer therapies such as aromatherapy, advocacy, and external consultants. Additional training for the staff team is available and sought as and when required, for example bereavement training may be accessed. Each Young person has access to an advocate.

Other specialist input such as Occupational Therapy, would be arranged and agreed with the responsible local authority. All staff providing therapeutic support undergo normal vetting procedures, and will be suitably qualified to undertake such treatments and will undergo supervision by a reputable practitioner.

Apple Tree House staff ensure that each young person placed is registered with a local GP within the 1<sup>st</sup> four weeks of placement. If a young person is not receiving the services of a dentist or optician through their school we will refer them to a local practitioner, to ensure regular reviews of the dental and optical health are maintained.

**All Young People's health will be monitored by regulation 44 and 45 reports and clear recording within the placement plan**

## **6.0) Positive relationships**

### **6.1) Our arrangements for promoting contact between children and their family and friends**

At Apple Tree House we work hard to build positive relationships with parents, carers and significant others we encourage and promote contact as agreed with the placing authority and detailed in the care plan.

The staff team promotes and encourages all forms of contact to parents/carers or significant others this will include telephone calls (speaker phones available), Skype, letter writing home, photographs home of the child participating in activities, school photographs, drawings, postcards, religious festival cards and birthday cards.

We recognise that young people, their parents, relatives, friends and carers may have different views on contact, but our aim is that our experience, patience and understanding will be powerful influences on the successful outcome.

## 7.0) Protection of children

### 7.1) Our approach to the surveillance and monitoring of children accommodated

Electronic keypads and magnetic devices, all of which unlock when the fire alarm is activated, are fitted to all external front doors. This is to stop intruders entering the building, and the children exiting onto the road. The children have access to all areas of the building except the admin areas unless accompanied by staff. The garden and grounds are accessible and children are actively encouraged to ask or use communication aids to go outside using the external doors.

The bedroom windows are fitted with window restrictors to ensure safety of the children living at the home and this is risk assessed periodically.

We consult and discuss these arrangements with parents, carers and the children's social workers who have agreed to these security measures in order to keep the children safe.

Due to the nature of the children being looked at Apple Tree it may be on occasion, necessary to use a monitor in the bedroom e.g. for epileptic or asthmatic children etc. to safeguard from any potential health risks. This will be identified and recorded in the young person's placement plan and will be in agreement with placing authority and parents/carers where necessary.

### 7.2) Our approach to behavioural support

Apple Tree House has a clear behavioural support policy and procedure for supporting young people's behavioural needs. There is a strong emphasis on positive attention from the staff demonstrating a caring interest and building strong and positive relationships with the young people.

Positive reinforcement is used to influence individual behaviours; this can be just recognising and praising positive actions through to the use of individually designed reward charts, and the aim will be that sanctions will not be used.

Staff train all staff in safe and positive behaviour support which may include the use of safe holding procedures on the children and young people. We aim to take a proactive stance on the management of behaviours and safe holding procedures are viewed as an extreme measure and only used as a last resort.

Staff always consider the use of alternative behaviour support strategies based upon the child/young person's level of understanding, before resorting to the use of any form of physical contact. Any strategies used are evidenced in appropriate professional documentation.

If a child/young person needs additional therapeutic requirements then the social

worker is responsible for supporting this requirement and will work with us to gain access to this.

Any placement of a child/young person that may require the use of safe holding procedures must be discussed with the placing authority and parent/carer. The proposed procedure will be appropriate for the individual and outlined and agreed in the care plan. Staff are required to undergo training in the use of the specific intervention. The use of all interventions are recorded, monitored and regularly reviewed by the Manager.

Staff are encouraged to discuss the behaviour support strategies and ideas on enabling children to self-regulate as part of the care planning meetings, where ideas and opinions are shared and agreements made to make adjustments to the plans for the children/young people's care.

Parents/carers and professionals are encouraged to actively participate in the care planning process by attendance or feedback via the key worker.

All staff are required to follow our policies and procedures for guidance and the manager is responsible for ensuring all physical intervention and any sanction is clearly recorded and evaluated on the effectiveness

### **7.3) Staff training and competency in behavioural support and positive handling**

Through the implementation of PBS (Positive Behaviour Support) programme the home seeks to keep to a minimum the occasions on which physical controls and restraint are used. Nevertheless, methods of physical control and restraint are required in order to protect the child, other children and staff from harm. The PBS programme gives staff the ability to:

- Establish emotional contact and bonding between staff and the children through the use of verbal and physical interaction.
- Allow the expression of anger, frustration, anxiety, and emotional turmoil in a safe and controlled environment.
- Enable staff to explore issues of threat and confrontation with the children.
- Enable children to recognise their feelings and to learn to express themselves in meaningful and constructive ways.
- Help children identify and adopt alternative coping strategies

Restrictive physical intervention is used as a last resort and approaches used are in line with the BILD (British Institute for Learning Disabilities)/Potens guidelines and policies. All staff receive training in understanding behaviour and the use of restrictive physical intervention. The use of restrictive physical intervention is recorded on incident forms and in the use of restrictive physical intervention books, both of which are monitored by designated staff.

The behavioural policies are located in the home and are accessible upon request. The policies are reviewed annually

Initially staff receive two days training in PBS techniques; this includes assessment at the end of the two days. Staff receive a refresher day every 12 months and this also includes assessment at the end of the day.

The Manager and senior staff will assess staff as part of the supervision process to ensure that their day to day practice is competent.

Behavioural policies and individual strategies for children are reviewed with staff in team meetings and discussed in supervision with staff.

## 8.0 ) Leadership and management

### 8.1) Our contact details

Apple Tree House is fully owned and managed by Potensial Ltd t/a Potens

#### **Potens Registered office**

Potensial t/a Potens Ltd  
68 Grange Rd West  
Birkenhead  
Merseyside  
CH41 4DB

#### **Potens -Chief Operating Officer**

Nicki Stadames – Chief Operating Officer  
Tel: 0151-651-3384  
Email: [nicki.stadames@potens-uk.com](mailto:nicki.stadames@potens-uk.com)

#### **Potens – Responsible Individual**

Lisa Alcorn  
Tel: 07866922967  
Email: [Lisa.Alcorn@potens-uk.com](mailto:Lisa.Alcorn@potens-uk.com)

#### **Apple Tree House-Registered Manager**

Paula Bates  
Tel 01305-839380 or 07809 547975  
Email: [Paula.Bates@potens-uk.com](mailto:Paula.Bates@potens-uk.com)

### 8.2 ) Management, staffing structure and our arrangements for supervision

Apple Tree House as a manager who is supported by a Deputy Manager and 2 senior

support workers and additional full time support workers. As best practice the staff will must rotate and also complete sleep in's and waking nights to ensure the safety of the young people at all times of the day.

<b>Registered Manager</b>				
Deputy Manager				
Senior Support Worker			Senior Support Worker	
Support Worker 40 hrs	Support Worker 40 hrs	Support Worker 40 hrs	Support Worker 40 hrs	Support Worker 40 hrs

The home is managed by Paula Bates Manager who is responsible for the daily running of the Home. The Registered Manager and the Deputy Manager work 40 hours a week on a flexible rota to meet the needs of the home.

There are will be two senior support workers and a deputy responsible for managing and leading the staff and the children's programs. The support workers work an average of 40 hours per week flexibly according to the needs of the service. The staff team work both night and day shifts. They also have access to on-call; this will either be the Deputy Manager, the Registered Manager or the Responsible Individual.

There is a detailed staff development procedure available, to summarise:

**a) Supervision**

Staff receive formal supervision in line with organisational policy every 6-8 weeks. New staff receive supervision more frequently as required.

**b) Appraisal**

This takes place on an annual basis. Detailed guidance and procedures are provided for appraisal from Potens HR policies

**c) Training**

Initial induction training is undertaken within the induction period (12 weeks); this includes training in child protection, health and safety, medication as well as familiarisation with locations and systems. Staff complete the organisational induction work book and are enrolled for their level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce through the local further educational provider if they do not already hold this or an equivalent qualification.

There is also a range of core training which staff have to undertake to comply with Children's Homes Regulations; this includes certificated PBS and, food hygiene and first aid amongst others. This is followed by job specific training as staff progress

into senior posts, and includes staff supervision, appraisals, finance procedures and IT.

### **8.3) Appropriate role modelling**

Apple Tree House has a staff team representing both genders, of different ages and different cultures. Young people are matched with staff for suitable key workers who will act as a positive role model for that young person. We provide a caring, homely and safe environment where young people are able to progress in all aspects of their lives.

**Staff Qualifications: See Appendix A**

## **9.0) Care Planning**

### **9.1) Criteria used for the admission of children to Apple Tree House**

Following a referral, the manager, and key staff members will consider children who are 11 or over who meet the following criteria:

- learning disability
- autistic spectrum conditions
- complex behaviours
- associated health related conditions

We would ask social workers for a selection of the following documents:

- a detailed social history
- a history of previous placements (including an assessment of their successes/areas to work on)
- Social Services care plan
- A history of all behavioural concerns, including levels of incidents/accidents and any physical intervention and current strategies used

Due to the vulnerability of the young people who live at Apple Tree House will not take any emergency referrals

Details of this are given in the Admissions Policy which is available in the home and accessible upon request.

### **9.2) Emergency admissions policy**

We do not take any emergency admissions. The emergency admissions policy for the organisation is located in the home, and can be accessed upon request.