



Statement of Purpose

Alston Lodge

Lower Lane

Longridge

Preston

Lancashire

PR3 2YH

Telephone: - to be added here





ASSOCIATED

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Introduction

The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 requires that we have a written statement of purpose for our home which outlines the support we provide to children placed with us and the ways in which we intend to help them to achieve positive outcomes. Our statement of purpose also provides information about the services and facilities we offer within our home.

A copy of our statement of purpose is accessible to all staff members working at Alston Lodge. During induction programmes and regularly throughout the course of their employment, all staff members are required to read our statement of purpose, this ensures they have a full understanding of the aims and outcomes we seek to achieve and the high standards we expect at all times within our home, it also enables us to make sure that all our staff members remain updated with any changes made within our statement of purpose, as and when they happen.

We have the same high expectations for any staff members who come to work at Alston Lodge who are not familiar with our home's surroundings and the children who live there. Before providing any support to children living within our home, they will be asked to read our statement of purpose so that they have the same understanding of our aims and expectations that our permanent staff members have.

We have high aspirations and ambition for all children who live at Alston Lodge, and it is extremely important to us that they feel safe and valued at all times. Our statement of purpose enables us to demonstrate how we will deliver high quality, personalised support to each of our children which not only meets their specific needs and reflects their uniqueness, individuality, strengths, and preferences, but also how it enables them to reach their fullest potential.

Our statement of purpose is updated and reviewed by the Registered Manager annually or whenever changes happen, this ensures that the information it contains always remains relevant, accurate and up to date.

A copy of our statement of purpose is also available upon request to: -

- Any child or young person placed within the home.
- Parents and carers of children and young people placed within the home.
- The placing authority of any child or young person placed within the home.
- Commissioners and prospective placing authorities.
- Ofsted and Regulation 44 inspectors.



Our Vision

“At Alston Lodge we believe that every child who walks through our door can achieve great outcomes, realise their true potential, and live a prosocial life when they receive the right support and opportunities from the right people at the right time.

We’re strongly committed to providing a nurturing, and supportive environment within our home so that each child can grow, flourish, and feel safe. Coupled with the memories we hope to create, the life skills we’ll teach and the specialist therapeutic interventions we offer, we believe there are no limits to what our children can be or do.

We cannot go back and change the beginning that some of our children have had, but we are confident that with solid foundations in place, we can give every child the best possible chance to create a future they deserve and can be proud of.”

Our children and young people

At Alston Lodge, we provide a nurturing and safe environment to both boys and girls from the ages of 8-17. We are able to support children with social, emotional and behavioural needs and children who may be involved in the Youth Justice System. This can be current involvement, past involvement or where a child has been identified as highly vulnerable to becoming involved due to their behaviour or circumstances if early help and intervention is not provided.

Within our home, we believe that every child can achieve great things and can have a positive future regardless of any past experiences and challenges they’ve encountered. We recognise the individual strengths, qualities and potential that each child has and the part we must play in supporting them to reshape their future.

We are confident with our integrated approach of providing nurturing support, developing prosocial skills, and offering highly specialist therapy, that we can give children the best possible chances of diversion away from the youth justice system to enable rehabilitation and progression towards independent living in the future.

At Alston Lodge, we are also able to provide support to children with difficulties and needs additional to their conflict with the law such as: -

- Social, emotional, and behavioural needs.
- Substance misuse, this can be both illicit substances and alcohol.
- Children at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Modern Slavery, Extremism and Radicalisation, knife crime, county lines, gang related involvement.

Due to the internal layout of our home, we are unable to support any child who has severe mobility issues or is unable to climb the stairs independently.



The aims, objectives, and ethos of the home

At Alston Lodge, being able to provide a warm, loving, and friendly place for children to live is extremely important to us.

We understand that we cannot fully replicate the warmth, affection, love, and support which might, in other circumstances, be available to children from their own parents and in their own home. However, our aim is to provide a homely, caring, and supportive environment where each child can have fun, create lots of happy memories and have opportunities to grow, thrive, develop, and achieve so they can look back later on their time with us, and remember it as being positive.

At Alston Lodge we are committed to:

- Working in close partnership with each child, their family, their social worker, and any others associated in their support towards identifying, implementing and a reviewing a plan of support which is unique to each child, and which adequately reflects their specific needs, preferences, choices, strengths, and goals for the future at any one time.
- Looking after each child so they feel safe and secure, respected, accepted, and valued.
- Listening to each child so that we can understand their past experiences and help them to build positive responses to their offending behaviour, so they have the best possible chance of successful rehabilitation and diversion away from the youth justice system.
- Helping each child to grow in confidence, increase their self-esteem and build resilience.
- Working collaboratively with each child's placing authority and any other professionals and agencies involved in their lives, so that they are kept safe and so that they have access to the relevant services and resources they require.
- Providing a nurturing environment which enables children to have stability, to be healthy, and to develop academically through access and participation in education.
- Building positive relationships with children and listening to their views, wishes and feelings.
- Valuing each child as an individual and treating every child with dignity and respect.
- Providing leisure, fun and enjoyable opportunities so that children can achieve their full potential and realise their passions.
- Involving each child in the running of the home so that their views and opinions can be taken into account and so they can develop valuable life skills.



How we intend we achieve our objectives

At Alston Lodge, we provide support to children and young people who are involved in the youth justice system or who are highly vulnerable to becoming involved if the right early help and intervention is not provided. Children living within our home may be at high risk of exploitation and they may also have other difficulties additional to their criminogenic needs such as substance misuse issues, or social, emotional, and behavioural needs which they require our help and support with too. At Alston Lodge, we have a committed and experienced staff team who have undertaken specialist training in subjects such as; Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), County Lines, Recognising and Responding to Radicalisation, DBT Skills, Drug and Alcohol Awareness, Working with Concerning Sexualised Behaviour, Contextual Safeguarding and Extra Familial Harm, and Trauma Informed Practice. This enables us to support children living within our home with any complex needs and difficulties that they may have. The majority of our staff team have also completed Appropriate Adult Duties and Responsibilities training which enables us to provide support to children should they be arrested or detained in a custody setting.

We aim to give every child living within our home the best possible chance of successful rehabilitation and diversion away from the youth justice system so they can look towards the future with strong foundations in place. We will do this by providing nurturing and consistent support with a variety of opportunities and experiences so that each child can grow, develop, thrive, and achieve both educationally and through enjoyment and by also offering intensive psychological treatment and support to every child living within our home. At Alston Lodge we are committed to working closely with local substance misuse agencies and probation and youth offending teams so that the children living within our home have access to the relevant services they require and can gain support to address their conflict with the law and adhere to any relevant plans or special conditions that they need to.

We can offer a wide range of psychological therapy to the children living within our home. The psychological therapy provided is fully formulation driven, and all children have the opportunity to collaborate in formulation work. These formulations are also shared with our staff team, this enables all support and therapy at Alston Lodge to be trauma informed with emphasis placed on 'what has happened to this child to bring them into contact with the youth justice system or to make them vulnerable to this contact?' as opposed to 'what have they done?' All our staff members have weekly reflective practice sessions facilitated by the Consultant Clinical Psychologist to support their thinking and reactions to children and to ensure that the support provided at Alston Lodge always remains trauma informed.

Psychological therapy is available to any child living at Alston Lodge if formulations suggest that this will support them with any social, emotional, and behavioural needs and will benefit their rehabilitation and diversion away from the youth justice system. The fact that we can provide different psychological therapies to children living at Alston Lodge means that we can prevent our children from being placed on lengthy waiting lists or windows of opportunity being missed which we know are essential in preventing first/further contact with the youth justice system.

At Alston Lodge, our main model of therapy is Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT); this approach is a type of talking therapy which aims to support children to understand and manage difficult and intensely felt emotions, to tolerate distress and impulsive urges and to improve their relationships with others. Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is provided by our own psychologist and specially trained DBT therapists. This approach enables us to develop an individualised target hierarchy of treatment goals with each child which directly focuses on the behaviours which result or could result in contact with the youth justice system, and it allows us to teach specific skills to minimise or prevent these behaviours from occurring in the future. DBT skills will be reinforced by the wider team at Alston Lodge, so that we can provide an environment within our home which promotes behaviour and emotional coping that is incompatible with offending behaviour.



We can also offer Radically Open Dialectical Behaviour Therapy to children living within our home. This is a highly specialist evidence-based approach which has been found to be extremely effective in treating complex emotional difficulties and maladaptive and offending behaviours often found in people who engage in criminal activity.

Additional psychological therapies can also be offered to children living with us if these are considered to be an appropriate intervention by our psychologist and if formulations suggest that this would be highly beneficial. These can be offered on completion of DBT or as an alternative.

As we are able to offer such a wide range of psychological therapies to children living with us at Alston Lodge with Radically Open Dialectical Behaviour Therapy being one of the therapy options available, this makes our home incredibly unique.

We have a skilled staff team at Alston Lodge who have a wealth of knowledge and experience from a variety of different settings such as Youth Justice, Substance Misuse, Education, Childcare settings, Mental Health, and Occupational Therapy. This enables us to work holistically with every child at Alston Lodge, to address their whole needs, not just their offending behaviour and to provide extra support in any targeted areas so they can expand their capabilities, develop new skills, and achieve their ambitions and goals.

At Alston Lodge, we aim to adopt a 'good parenting role' so that every child has stability, feels loved and is nurtured and supported in a consistent way with fair boundaries. We celebrate every child's achievements and offer praise for the things they do well. We also encourage every child to explore, and to try new things so they can realise their passions and to persevere even when things seem challenging so they can grow, develop their confidence, and build resilience.

It is important to us that every child feels respected, accepted, and valued and that they can learn how to reciprocate these feelings so they can build and maintain positive relationships and connections with other people.

We also want to help our children understand their responsibilities in life and to recognise what socially acceptable behaviour is. We aim to teach this to the children living at Alston Lodge by modelling kindness, understanding, empathy, trust, and respect for others in our own behaviour and interactions.

At Alston Lodge, we want every child to experience a sense of belonging and to feel like a valuable member of the home. We promote this through active participation in the shared daily running of the household, this includes undertaking domestic tasks such as helping to prepare meals, washing up, cleaning tasks, and completing personal laundry. We believe the participation in these tasks enables children living within our home to experience the routines of family life, to develop essential life skills, to work as part of a team and to recognise the valuable contribution that they and others make to the household.

We also engage in non-domestic activities together within the home too. This includes sitting down at mealtimes and eating together, playing games, and watching TV and films. We believe these are valuable opportunities to build positive and meaningful relationships, to learn new things about one another and to share stories about our day.

It is important to us that children can have their voices heard, can be listened to, and can be involved as much as possible in the decision-making and running of our home and in all aspects of planning and decision-making about their lives. Through meetings in our home, we ensure that each child can express their views and opinions and can have influence over any changes which are made within our home. We make sure that children understand their right to complain if they are unhappy about things and we ensure that they can make choices about things which are important to them such as; the foods they want to eat, activities they would like to participate in and maintaining any cultural traditions that they have.



We understand that people sometimes want time alone and we respect the privacy and dignity of all children living at Alston Lodge. We will always knock on their bedroom door and wait to be invited into their personal space. Every child has their own key to their bedroom so that they can keep their belongings safe and maintain their right to privacy.

We work closely with each child during support planning, to ensure that they have their own individual support plan which clearly identifies their specific needs, strengths, choices, preferences, goals for the future and a transitional pathway towards independence. We ensure that where barriers which prevent them from achieving their full potential are highlighted, that we access the relevant services and resources so that these can be overcome or removed.

We believe that all children have the right to be healthy, to learn, to achieve, to be recognised for the strengths and talents they have, and to access and participate in education. We understand that many children who enter the care system may have had limited opportunity to participate in fun and enjoyable activities and due to fractured family life may have faced disruption in their education. We are committed to ensuring that all children within our home can access a variety of fun and enjoyable leisure opportunities of their choice in the community and within the home which enable them to explore, try new things, stimulate their development, and promote their general wellbeing. We will support each child to access school, college, or an education provision so they can achieve their highest academic potential. In cases where a child does not currently have an educational provision to attend, we will work with their social worker to find one and in the meantime endeavour to provide education and learning within our home.

Building positive relationships and developing secure attachments is something which we strive to do with all the children living at Alston Lodge, although we understand that this may take time and requires lots of patience, dedication, and curiosity from us. Some children may have experienced traumatic and frightening situations during their lives, and this may impact on their ability to trust others and cause difficulties with their self-esteem, confidence, and behaviour. As a team, we are consistent in our attitudes of never giving up and always being present so that when children are ready, they can let us into their lives, and we can get to know them well and support them with any needs they have. Working in partnership with families and carers is important to us too and where appropriate we will invite families to meetings about their child and involve them in support planning and decision-making so they can be involved as much as possible in their child's life and so they can maintain their contribution to their upbringing.

We aim to work closely with each child's placing authority and any other professionals and agencies involved in their lives, so that we can adopt a collaborative approach to keeping them safe. This will also ensure that each child has access to any relevant services which they may require so that the best possible support can be provided, and positive outcomes can always be achieved.

Due to some of the children living within our home having involvement with the Youth Justice System, we recognise the importance of working particularly closely with youth offending teams, probation, the police, other youth justice professionals and each child's placing authority to ensure that there are relevant plans in place which address each child's criminogenic needs and conflict with the law and also identify any specific conditions which they are required to adhere to. We have developed good relationships with the Missing From Home Co-ordinator at Lancashire Constabulary and the Police Constable at Lancashire Child and Youth Justice Service, this has enabled us to agree mutual expectations and responsibilities in keeping the children living at Alston Lodge safe.

Each child will also have a Placement Plan which will lay the foundation for their support plan and provide clear direction for our partnership working with each child, their family, and their social worker. Each child's Placement Plan will be available in a 'child friendly' version so that they can have a copy of their plan which is easy to understand. Each child's Placement Plan will clearly identify their assessed needs and how these will be met within our home along with the expectations and responsibilities of everyone involved. Each child's Placement Plan is a live document which enables the ongoing assessment of their needs and is continuously



reviewed, monitored and evaluated to ensure that any agreed outcomes are being achieved, that each child is making progress in all areas of their lives and to ensure that the level of support and provision requirements remain suitable for each child's specific needs.

Our ethos

At Alston Lodge we believe that every child living within our home has the fundamental right to:

- Be treated and valued as an individual, to receive individualised support and to be given our special attention.
- Be cared for by people who are experienced and who can understand their needs.
- Have fun.
- Be treated equally and no less favourably than others.
- Receive respect and be shown understanding for their cultural and religious beliefs.
- Receive an education which enhances their opportunities and life prospects in every sense.
- Receive prompt attention in relation to all their healthcare needs.
- Feel safe, feel loved and to always know that someone cares.
- Be informed about important decisions which affect their lives and to be able to express their views and opinions.
- Have privacy, dignity and personal space for themselves and their personal belongings.
- Have the opportunity to make their own choices and think independently.
- Complain about anything which they feel is unfair or makes them unhappy and for their complaint to be listened to and responded to.
- Be able to build and develop meaningful friendships and connections inside and outside of the home.



Description of the location of the home

Alston Lodge is a detached and spacious property on Lower Lane in Longridge, Preston Lancashire situated in a residential neighbourhood.

Alston Lodge is located on the outskirts of the beautiful Ribble Valley town of Longridge and is set within extensive gardens and grounds extending to just under two acres.

Alston Lodge is a large detached house located in Longridge, Preston and is has up to 15 bedroom available to use. The home will accommodate up to 5 children and young people and utilize all other rooms for space for education, relaxing, additional lounge areas and provide areas dedicated to delivering specific therapeutic interventions where applicable.

There is also a spacious annex to the home, which will be used as a move on flat/ independence area once children become ready for this next step, in order to prepare them for independence. A child living in this space would be included in the 5 children that Alston Lodge is registering for.

There is an extremely large garden area which provides ample space for children and young people to use for relaxing in, playing sports games and enjoying communal functions such as BBQ's.

Alston Lodge is situated close by to Ribchester and is a short drive away from Preston City Centre which host a wide range of local ammenties for our children to enjoy.

The home is close by to Longridge town centre where there is a range of activities that young people have access to, and youth centres for all young people to access and enjoy social development opportunities. The activities include leisure facilities, swimming pool, bowling , cinemas and local nature parks are enjoyable for young people wanting time out. The home has access to local shops and supermarkets that sell local produce.

Alston Lodge is in close proximity to a range of health services such as doctors, dentists, and optician's. The home also has the additional support of the multi disciplinary team members including mental health nurses, access to clinicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, DBT therapists, substance misuse practitioners, teacher and support workers that will help support and underpin any therapeutic intervention.

In close proximately to our home there is also a variety of local shops and supermarkets meaning that children do not need to go far to purchase any essentials they may need. Longridge is well known for its wide selection of takeaways and restaurants which cater for different tastes and preferences of food, we have a good selection on our doorstep or alternatively we can arrange to get takeaways delivered to our home.

There is a regular and reliable bus service which operates close to our home.

There are also train stations within a 10mile radius of the home, this includes Ramsgreave and Wilpshire, Whalley and Langho. Trains from these stations travel to numerous locations across the northwest.

Longridge and the surrounding areas, also has several local schools, a college, and a university campus within close distance. There are also other colleges in the nearby towns of Ribchester, Preston and Fulwood.

Our nearest GP surgery, dentist and pharmacy are all within a short driving distance of our home. The nearest hospital and optician are also a short car drive or bus ride away.



Description of the accommodation

Alston Lodge is a modern and spacious detached house with a large driveway to the front of the house and gardens to the side and rear. To the outside of the house there is CCTV, this is in place to deter any intruders and to maintain the safety of our children, the staff, and the general public. The use of CCTV to the outside of our home follows our organisation's CCTV policy.

There is no CCTV inside the house.

The home has a large kitchen attached to a dining room where all children and staff members can enjoy meals together. There is a large lounge area that is split into two areas, again providing space for children to relax.

There are several other rooms on the ground floor that will be utilised to suit the needs of the home and children who live here with dedicated areas such as an education room, sensory room and games room. There is also an additional bathroom on the ground floor

All our bedrooms are single occupancy, and we can accommodate up to six children, both boys and girls. All our bedrooms are located on the first floor of the property, and each is furnished to a high standard with a bed, television, a fitted wardrobe, desk with chair and a chest of drawers, this enables each child to have plenty of space to store all their personal belongings and to be able to complete independent study away from others, should they choose to. We encourage each child living with us to decorate and personalise their room to their own taste and they each have their own key for their bedroom so that we can respect their privacy, dignity, and personal space and so they can keep their belongings safe.

Three of the children's bedrooms have en suite bathroom facilities, this coupled with the additional large communal bath/shower room and separate wet room on the first floor.

There is also a spacious annex to the home, which will be used as a move on flat/ independence area once children become ready for this next step, in order to prepare them for independence. A child living in this space would be included in the 5 children that Alston Lodge is registering for.

Our home is designed and furnished to replicate a family like environment so that children and staff members can spend time together.

Within our large back garden, we have garden furniture, football nets, a basketball hoop, and a selection of outdoor games so that children can relax and have fun in the outdoor space.



Supporting religious, cultural, and linguistic needs

At Alston Lodge, we understand how religion and culture can be a central part of a child's identity and can create a sense of belonging. We are committed to equality, diversity and maintaining the rights that children have, and we place a strong emphasis on respecting the religious beliefs of children and ensuring that they can maintain them throughout their stay with us.

Upon arrival to our home, we address each child's religious beliefs and cultural preferences so that they can attend a place of worship of their choice if they wish to do so.

For any children wishing to practice their religion, staff members will locate the nearest place of worship which suits their religious beliefs and will also transport children to and from their place of worship if they are unable to do so independently.

At a child's request, we are also happy to arrange for a minister or a member of the relevant congregation to visit them within the home so they can continue to observe their religion whilst living at Alston Lodge.

At Alston Lodge, we are respectful of the diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds that children may have, and we ask that other children are respectful too.

We will fully support and encourage children to maintain any traditions that they observe e.g., festivals, religious events, dietary needs, clothing, social activities, language, and we will look forward to learning more and understanding about their culture too.

Where English is not a child's first language or where a child has any communication difficulties, we will endeavour to meet their individual needs as much as we can using the skills and experience within our team.

We want the best for the children living within our home and we want each child to reach their fullest potential, we will therefore access any relevant outside services to gain extra support for any child with linguistic needs and to provide information and guidance to the staff team too so that we can ensure that we are always achieving the best possible outcomes for children.

If we need to purchase any resources or undertake any training so that we can support a child's linguistic needs more effectively within the home, then we are committed to doing this.

Complaints and Suggestions

At Alston Lodge we recognise that there may be times when people are unhappy about the support and services provided within our home. We have a written Complaints policy/procedure which is available for any child to access at any time upon request.

The rights of children to make a complaint will always be respected and maintained within our home and we will never prevent or dissuade any child from raising something which they are unhappy about.

Upon arrival to our home each child is provided with information about the process of how they can make a complaint if they become unhappy or dissatisfied with something throughout their time with us.

Our procedure for making a complaint is given verbally to children, it is documented within our home's children's guide, and it is also regularly discussed at meetings within the home which we encourage all children to attend.



Our Complaints policy/procedure is also available to the placing authority, families/carers, staff members and to any visitors within our home and can be made available in different languages and formats upon request.

All complaints are taken seriously at Alston Lodge and children living within our home are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have so that any dissatisfaction is brought to the attention of the Registered Manager of the home and can be resolved as quickly as possible.

The Registered Manager of the home; [REDACTED] is committed to ensuring that all complaints are fully investigated and addressed without delay and that they are handled confidentially and dealt with fairly and where necessary that they result in improvements being made.

When complaints are made, our aim is always to achieve a resolution which is satisfactory to both the complainant and the home and wherever possible, all complaints will be dealt with informally. We recognise that complaints are often difficult to make, and that formal processes can be daunting and overwhelming for children or anyone else. We therefore encourage suggestions in the first instance where a child or anyone else is unhappy or dissatisfied about any matter connected with an individual's support plan, their treatment within the home, or the operation of the home, so that The Registered Manager can try to resolve any matters quickly and effectively.

However, in some cases, due to the nature of the complaint or if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome decision, a formal resolution/investigation may be necessary. Our home's Complaints policy/procedure provides full details of the informal and formal processes we use to handle any concerns and complaints, how these can be followed and who the complainant can further direct their complaint should they not be satisfied with an outcome decision following any investigation. We aim to resolve all written complaints within 21 days of them being made. The full contact details for Local Authority, Ofsted, and The Children's Commissioner are provided within our home's Complaints policy/procedure.

[REDACTED]

Where a complaint being made relates to the Registered Manager of the home, this is to be addressed to the Responsible Individual, [REDACTED] who will formally acknowledge it has been received and will fully investigate the matter following our home's Complaints policy/procedure and aim to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

Any child or person wishing to make a written complaint will be provided with a copy of the home's Complaints policy/procedure so they have full information about our process for dealing with written complaints, the timescales we will seek to find a resolution by, and the appeals procedure if they remain dissatisfied following the investigation and outcome of a complaint.

We understand that every child's ability and level of understanding is different, therefore if a child is not able to understand the home's written Complaints policy/procedure, we will either provide it in a different format to make it easier to understand or if a child prefers, a member of staff will explain it to them and will be happy to transcribe a verbal complaint into writing for them if they are unable to do this for themselves.

If children prefer to do so, they can also seek assistance from someone outside of the home to support them with making a complaint e.g., advocacy services or the Independent Visitor. We will make children aware of their right to do this and we will support children to contact advocacy services or the Independent Visitor at their request or we will provide them with the details so that they can make contact themselves. Children will also be informed of their right to contact their social worker at any time.

Where any complaints are made by a member of the public or outside agency, they must be referred directly to The Registered Manager of the home, who will contact the complainant and confirm the nature/seriousness of the complaint and where necessary undertake an investigation.



At Alston Lodge, we will ensure that any feedback and recommendations made following a resolution are shared with our wider team so that we can learn from the experience and if necessary, make any improvements to the quality of support we provide.

Records of all oral and written complaints and outcome decisions are maintained and stored confidentially and will be provided to Ofsted and the Regulation 44 Inspector upon request.

At Alston Lodge, we have a number of policies relating to the protection of children which can be accessed upon request by any individual or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child living within our home.

These policies include our Child Protection Safeguarding policy, Behaviour Management policy, Complaints policy/procedure, Anti-radicalisation policy, Bullying policy, Safe/Positive Touch policy, Missing from home policy, Cyberbullying and Internet Grooming policy, Money, shopping policy, Self-harm policy, and Whistleblowing policy.

Views, wishes and feelings

At Alston Lodge, we use a child focused approach so that children are always at the centre of everything we do and so we can ensure that our home is a happy place for all children to live.

It is important to us that each child feels valued and always respected, can have their voices heard, be listened to, and can have influence in the decision-making and running of our home. Throughout daily life, we continuously seek the opinions of the children who live here so that we can ensure that the support they receive always meets their individual needs, and so that they can make choices in all aspects of their lives and freely express their views, wishes and feelings. After all they are the experts in their own lives and are therefore the only ones who can truly tell us what they want and need.

At Alston Lodge we hold weekly house meetings which all children are encouraged to attend. We ask children to contribute to the agenda for the meeting. This enables us to ensure that the things that are important to our children can be discussed as a group and everyone can express their individual choices and preferences e.g., dietary needs, places they would like to visit etc. Staff members will add other items to the agenda too if these are not already on such as food choices, weekly meal plans, day trips, good news stories, achievements, and home improvements etc.

We encourage children to choose a communal area within the home where they would like the meeting to be held and we encourage children to take turns in facilitating them. This enables us to ensure that house meetings are how our children want them to be and it also empowers children to take some ownership for the meetings.

Staff members will contribute to the meetings too so they can share important information about any new staff members starting within the home, to discuss the complaints procedure, mutual expectations of all children and staff and to make suggestions about upcoming events in the local area which children may want to attend.

During our meetings we also discuss things that are going well within the home and things that are not so that together we can find solutions to make improvements where we need to.

Minutes are taken at the meeting by a staff member and written feedback minutes are provided after each meeting to all children by the Registered Manager/Deputy Manager on agenda items which have been raised



and require feedback or further action. Providing feedback is important to us as it shows the children within our home that we think their views are important and we will always listen.

At Alston Lodge, we welcome feedback and suggestions from everyone, whether that be children, staff, families/carers or any professionals or visitors to the home.

We have a suggestions box within the home which is checked regularly by the Registered Manager/Deputy Manager where suggestions can be placed. Alternatively, if people have a suggestion which needs speedier attention, then these can be given directly to a member of staff.

All children living at Alston Lodge will have their own keyworker who they will have regular 1:1 sessions with so they can build a positive relationship and get to know each other well.

We hope that by having a consistent person within the home who children can go to and who will act as a positive role model, will provide reassurance that whenever they have any worries or concerns about their support or anything else in their lives, someone will always be available to listen, and to help and support them in any way that they can.

Children are also welcome to discuss any worries, concerns, or suggestions they have at any time with any staff member, and we understand that people may develop close relationships with various members of the team. We all want the best possible outcomes for the children living within our home and would never want a child to wait a long time to discuss anything which is worrying or concerning them, or if they have a suggestion about things that we could do better.

Each child's keyworker will play a vital role in their overall support whilst living at Alston Lodge, and they will support them to be fully involved in all aspects of their support planning so that their plan is individual to them and so it fully reflects their specific needs, choices, preferences, strengths, and any personal goals they want to achieve. All children will be able to complete their own individual activity planner and contribute to the weekly menu plan and shopping list so they can express their choices about the foods they want to eat and so we can ensure that we purchase items that they like and want.

Keyworkers will advocate on behalf of the child they are assigned keyworker to and will contribute in meetings to provide updates on any progress they have made, to make suggestions about how any goals can be achieved and to ensure that no decisions are made on their behalf which do not consider their views, wishes and feelings.

We actively encourage children to attend all meetings which are about them so that they can be fully involved in any decisions and so they have the opportunity to express their own opinions and choices, and these can be listened to. We recognise that this can be very daunting for some children and therefore if children do not feel able to attend any meeting, we encourage them to write things down so that any important things they want discussing on their behalf, can be done so by their keyworker or someone else of their choice.

Within keyworker sessions children are made aware of their right to speak to an advocate who can support them during meetings or about things within the home. Upon a child's request we can contact an advocate for them, or we can provide details so that they can do this themselves. Children are also informed of their right to contact their social worker at any time, and they will be supported to do this.

Developing positive relationships and working in partnership with families and carers is important to us and where appropriate we aim to involve families and carers in support planning and decision-making as much as we can so that they can express their views and opinions and so that they can maintain their contribution to their child's upbringing and can gain insight into the circumstances surrounding their child's conflict with the law.



The Registered Manager will seek regular verbal feedback from families/carers where appropriate, about the support of their child, the operational running of the home, and about our accommodation and the facilities we provide.

Anti-discriminatory practice with children and families

At Alston Lodge, we celebrate diversity and the uniqueness of everyone. Whether it be a child, staff member, family member, professional or a visitor to our home, we are committed to ensuring that no one faces discrimination and that everyone feels respected and always treated equally regardless of their protected characteristics.

All our staff members receive training in equality and diversity as part of their induction programme, and our home's policy on Diversity in Care expands their knowledge and understanding further. This allows us to be confident that everyone working within our home recognises the importance and responsibility that they have to treat everyone equally, to respect people's views and beliefs at all times and to ensure that no child living at Alston Lodge faces discrimination from anyone at any time.

At Alston Lodge we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, by any child or any adult. In any situations or circumstances where it does occur, we will aim to address it immediately and deal with it professionally and fairly.

The Registered Manager of our home is committed to ensuring that all aspects of the home's operations enable each child to be respected for the beliefs they have, to have their individual needs met and to be protected at all times from any form of discrimination.

Our home's approach to placing children at the centre of everything that we do, ensures that children's rights are always observed and that they have ample opportunities to express their opinions, views, and choices.

We ensure that children within our home are aware of their right to complain if they are unhappy or dissatisfied about something or if they feel that their needs are not being met. This is discussed regularly during keyworker sessions and house meetings so that children fully understand their right to do this and the procedure to follow.

We are committed to building positive relationships with parents, and families, free from any judgement and where it is appropriate to do so, we will maintain regular contact to provide updates on their child's progress and to involve them in any decisions about their child's lives.

We understand the importance of maintaining close relationships, and we welcome visits to our home from parents, families, and other important people in the lives of our children. We have a telephone within our home so that phone calls can be exchanged between children and their families. We are also able to facilitate any visits within the community and to other people's homes so that children can keep in touch with any important people in their lives. We ensure that any visitors to Alston Lodge are always treated with dignity and respect and that they are always made to feel welcome.



Consultation with children in the home

At Alston Lodge we believe that all children should have a say in how we operate the home and should be able to express their views freely. We will support all children to understand the home's rules and expectations of behaviour, so that everyone enjoys living here.

We consult with children in our home by:

- Taking the time to get to know children well and always listening to what they say so that we can understand their needs, views, and concerns, especially about the quality of their care.
- Through regular meetings held in the home which provide the opportunity for children to raise concerns, share their views and opinions, make suggestions, choose activities, and devise weekly menus and meal plans. We also use house meetings to address any relationship dynamics between children within the home as they occur and to remind children of the standards of behaviour that we expect.
- Having regular keyworker sessions which give children the opportunity to express their views and opinions on an individual basis.
- Always informing children of things before they happen, unless it is unavoidable or in a child's best interests.
- Progress reports, audits, suggestions in our suggestions box or received by us.

Children's Rights

At Alston Lodge we believe that children have rights in relation to every aspect of their lives which should be maintained and always upheld. It is particularly important to us that each child living within our home always feels safe, respected, and treated fairly.

We work in partnership with other professionals involved in each child's lives so that we can adopt a collaborative approach to keeping them safe. We respect each child's right to privacy and ensure that any information which we hold about them is kept confidential. We ensure that any information is stored securely and is treated respectfully and sensitively by all staff members, and we will only ever share information about any of the children in our home "on a need-to-know basis."

We want every child to feel safe within our home and so we adopt a zero-tolerance approach to any bullying or harassment. We believe that everyone should be always treated with dignity and respect and should be able to move freely around the home without the fear of intimidation from others. If we observe that any staff member or child within our home is demonstrating any behaviour which we deem as unacceptable, we will deal with this swiftly, following the appropriate channels and put a stop to its occurrence.

Within house meetings and during keyworker sessions we communicate our expectations of behaviour within the home. We understand that in group living environments, disagreements can occur from time to time. We are proactive in our approach to managing behaviour and we deal with any situations as soon as they happen so that any issues can be resolved quickly, and relationships can be repaired.

In situations where a child's behaviour persistently falls below the standards, which we consider acceptable within our home, we will always be fair in our approach to handling it. Our staff team are experienced in



dealing with behaviour which can be challenging and are therefore skilled in redirecting situations and providing children with opportunities and solutions so they can rethink and rectify their behaviour.

We always aim to recognise the positive behaviour of children living within our home and reinforce it by giving praise whenever we see it. We believe this is particularly important as not only does it make children feel good when people notice the good things that they do, it also increases self-esteem, confidence and encourages positive behaviour to continue.

At Alston Lodge we aim to be good role models to the children living within our home, we therefore ensure that through our own interactions and behaviour we show kindness, respect, empathy, and patience to others so that we can lead by example and treat the children we support with the dignity and respect they deserve at all times.

Education

At Alston Lodge we have high aspirations for all our children, and we believe that every child has the fundamental right to receive an education which enhances their future life prospects and enables them to achieve their full potential academically. Our home is not registered as a school.

We want the best for our children, and we want every child to have opportunities in life where they can expand their skills and knowledge, learn new things, achieve, and go on to be whatever they want to be in the future.

We understand that some children may have had previous negative experiences in education and that some children may have some gaps in their learning. The team within our home is committed and dedicated to working closely with each child to alleviate any previous worries they may have about education and to ensure that they have the opportunity to attend school or college.

Where children already attend school or college within the local area, we will support and encourage each child to attend every day. The staff team within our home adopt a 'good parent' approach and will therefore encourage a good sleep routine at night so that children are up and ready on time each day to attend school/college and that they have the necessary equipment they require. Staff will also transport children to and from school or college if they are unable to travel there themselves independently.

For children who do not currently have an educational placement within the local area, we'll work in close partnership with each child's social worker and the Virtual School to try and find a local school or college which suits their age, ability, and educational needs as soon as possible so that they can re-engage in education. In the meantime, we will guide and support children within the home environment with their education so that they can still learn new skills and make progress academically. Within our home, we have an extensive range of textbooks and study guides in different subjects for different ages and abilities and we will also use online resources and seek guidance from the Virtual School so that we are giving children who are currently out of education, the best possible support that we can. We are also able to bring private tutors into our home so that children can receive 1:1 teaching. We are committed to doing whatever is necessary to ensure that children who are not currently in education can still achieve positive outcomes academically.

If children already attend school or college in a different area, where we can, we will ensure that they can still attend. We understand that school and college isn't just about learning. For many children it may have been one of the only places where they have felt safe and secure, and children may have built solid friendships and relationships with people there. If a child's school or college is within reasonable distance, then we are committed to doing all we can by way of arranging transport to and from their current school/college so that they can maintain consistency and close links with people who are important to them.

We will ensure that each child living within our home has a Personal Educational Plan which reflects their educational needs, ability, strengths, progress, and achievements. Each child's keyworker will work closely



with them, their social worker, and educational professionals to ensure that their plan is implemented, maintained, and reviewed regularly and that it always remains relevant so that any highlighted areas where a child requires extra support can be addressed.

We will support and encourage children living within our home to attend and participate in any extra-curricular activities and trips at school or college that they choose to. We believe this is an important aspect of educational life as it enables children to have fun and relax away from the pressures of schoolwork. Not only that, we strongly believe that extra-curricular activities enable children to increase in confidence, broaden their hobbies, learn new skills and abilities, and allow them to interact socially with others and to make new friends. We are committed to providing transport so that each child can attend any activities outside of school that they choose to.

There are other aspects of school and college life which we also view as very important. These include school and college open days, parents' evenings, school assemblies and school activities.

We want to be a part of all of these, and we want our children to know that there will always be someone there for these important events too, to guide, support and to offer advice to them when they need it, and to also celebrate all their achievements and successes. We want to see our children grow and thrive in school activities too, so we'll be on the side-lines shouting words of encouragement if they have a football match or a school sports day too.

We place great importance on learning within the home too. We have a designated study area where children can complete homework and revision free from any distractions.

All our staff members are available and willing to provide assistance and guidance to children at any time with their revision and homework. Some of our staff members have worked in school settings previously so they have a sound knowledge of the Curriculum in certain subjects.

In our study area we have a computer with educational and word processing software on and we have high speed Broadband internet throughout the house so that children can access any online resources they need to. Our computer is monitored on a regular basis so that we can ensure that children are staying safe online and that the content they are accessing is appropriate.

We also have a wide range of textbooks and study guides to suit all ages and abilities and stationery too so that children can learn and complete homework within the home with the necessary resources and tools they need.

Each child's keyworker will discuss their education as one of the topics during keyworker sessions. During these they will discuss the child's enjoyment in school/college, whether they have any concerns, problems or worries, exam planning, school reports, homework, and bullying. Each child's keyworker is responsible for maintaining regular contact with their educational placement and for highlighting any concerns should they arise.

As well as education, we are passionate about supporting children within our home to develop life skills so they can become more independent and so they can improve their personal wellbeing.

During early childhood some of our children may not have had the benefit of a consistent adult figure in their lives to teach them about topics such as personal hygiene, puberty, keeping healthy and about the different emotions and feelings that they will experience as they grow. We understand this and so throughout daily life, through keyworker sessions and during house meetings we aim to approach these topics sensitively and empathetically to teach the children living within our home about different personal health topics so that they can understand and learn to develop skills to look after themselves.

We will also teach children how to develop other valuable life skills which will support them throughout life such as basic cooking, baking, housekeeping, and the budgeting of money.

At Alston Lodge we also support children to complete AQA awards within the home in a wide range of subjects so that they can expand their capabilities and learn new skills.



When children show an interest in a specific area, we encourage them to develop and increase their knowledge and understanding further. Not only does this add to each child's learning, but it also supports them to be curious and find out about the things that they like.

We encourage AQA awards with all children living within our home, but we find these particularly beneficial when children are out of education waiting to find a placement as they help to re-engage children back into

learning, and they also help to increase confidence and motivation, which sadly many children lack when they have been out of education for a long period.

We aim to help all children gain various AQA awards so that when the time comes for them to move on, they will have a portfolio full of achievements they have made.

Details of support provided to children with special educational needs

We understand that every child's level of understanding and learning ability is unique and that some children may require more support than others with their education and learning.

As with all children within our home, we are dedicated to providing extra help and support to children with their learning in the home environment through the completion of homework, reading, and extra educational activities, but where necessary, we are also able to provide support within school or college too.

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child or young person's ability to learn, and they can also affect their:

- Behaviour or ability to socialise, for example they may struggle to make friends
- Reading or writing, for example because they have dyslexia
- Ability to understand things
- Concentration levels, for example because they have ADHD
- Physical ability

We want school or college to be a positive learning environment for every child that lives within our home, and we want each child to be able to reach their full potential. Therefore, our staff are committed to working closely with each child's school or college to maintain regular contact with educational staff and to monitor each child's progress.

Where there are any concerns that a child living within our home may have any special educational needs, we will liaise with the SEN co-ordinator within the child's school or college so they are able to undergo any necessary assessments to have their needs assessed and so that any difficulties or barriers that a child may be experiencing can be identified as soon as possible.

Where a child living within our home already has identified special educational needs, we will ensure that we work closely with the SEN co-ordinator within the child's school or college and maintain regular contact, to ensure that they have the correct level of support they require and to ensure that they have an education, health and care (EHC) plan in place which clearly identifies their educational, health and social needs and the additional support required to meet those needs and that these plans are reviewed annually.

Where any children within our home, have an education, health, and care (EHC) plan in place, their keyworker will be responsible for liaising closely with their social worker, educational professionals and the SEN co-ordinator within the child's school or college to ensure that their plan is implemented, maintained, and reviewed annually.

Each child's EHC plan will form part of their Placement Plan, this will be reviewed on an annual basis as well as being reviewed regularly in LAC reviews.



Enjoyment and Achievement

At Alston Lodge, we believe that experiencing fun and enjoyment is a very important part of every child's development. Not only do we believe it improves cognitive, physical, social, and emotional wellbeing, we also believe it enables children to explore, build confidence and learn how to take risks safely.

Within our home we aim to provide a variety of opportunities to children within the community and within the home environment so that they can thrive, achieve, have fun, try new things, be creative and take part in any existing hobbies and interests that they already have.

Every week each child will complete a weekly activity planner with their keyworker to identify what activities they would like to participate in for the week. This enables each child to be able to plan and make choices about the things that they would like to do, and it also enables us to make sure that we always have enough staff working so that they can do those things. The children living within our home may choose to do some activities on a 1:1 basis with staff but they may also choose to go out with other children living within our home or their friends too.

It is important to us that children can be active participants in their community and develop new connections. Within our local area we have various activities which children can access such as: bowling, ice skating, swimming, gym, roller skating, cinema, museums, football stadium, trampolining and lots of local parks and walks. We also have our own transport, so we can go further afield if any child wants to participate in a particular activity that we don't have available within the local area.

The staff within our home are very enthusiastic about activities and are always on the lookout for events taking part within the local area which children living within our home may want to try. If a child living with us has a particular interest or hobby, staff will always try to locate a suitable club or society so that children can pursue their chosen interests. We have already made good connections with local clubs and associations within our local area such as: football, cricket, dance, basketball, youth clubs, swimming, and badminton which we can introduce children living with us to.

Where children already have existing hobbies, they participate in or clubs which they attend, we will always encourage children to continue to pursue them so that they can increase their talents, strengthen their existing skills, maintain relationships with people they know there and achieve in their chosen area. Where children take part in any competitions or matches, one of us will be there watching and we will celebrate their efforts with them. It is important to us that children receive regular praise and recognition when they have taken part in something or overcome something which they have previously found challenging. Not only does this give children a sense of achievement, but it also lets our children know that we care and that we are proud of them.

Within meetings in our home, we discuss group activities and day trips so that the children can make suggestions and express their choices about the things that they would like to do as a group. We like to go out regularly together and activities we might take part in as a group include theme park trips, trips to the zoo, the circus, concerts, meals out or sporting activities.

Within our home we have the following activities for children to enjoy:

- Games consoles, board games, arts and crafts, cooking/baking sessions, cultural celebrations, theme nights, movie nights
- Outdoor sports equipment for garden games (cricket bat, skittles, footballs, basketball hoop, football nets)



Health

The team at Alston Lodge are committed to ensuring that the individual health and development needs of each child are taken care of at all times.

We understand that this is an area which may sometimes have been overlooked in children's lives due to multiple placement moves or chaotic lifestyles. Within our home we seek to promote and protect the health of all children by:

- Reviewing any health information we receive about each child upon arrival to our home. This includes their most recent Health and Emotional Wellbeing Assessment so that we can understand more about each child's individual health needs (physical, emotional, mental health) and so we can ascertain whether they have any involvement with any services, are currently receiving any ongoing medical treatment or are awaiting any investigations. Where children are accessing any services or receiving ongoing treatment, we will make it a priority as part of our admission pathway to check that their care has been transferred to the relevant services and departments within our local area so that they have access to the support they require and so there is a continuation of their identified needs being met.
- Ensuring that each child has an up-to-date LAC health assessment which addresses their identified needs and has an individual Health Plan which forms part of their overall Placement Plan and support plan. Each child's health plan will be developed and monitored by the Registered Manager, Deputy Manager and each child's keyworker and will contain specific information about their individual identified health needs and how these will be addressed and met whilst living within our home e.g.; prescribed medications and how these need to be administered, a record of any appointments made and attended, immunisations, information about referrals to any specialist services etc. Each child's keyworker will be responsible for ensuring that accurate records are maintained and that all relevant health information about each child is kept up to date. This will be overseen by the Registered Manager. Keyworkers will also be responsible for monitoring that any relevant appointments for children have been made and when future appointments are due. Where children do not attend appointments for any reason, a written record will be completed detailing the reasons why and dates for any future appointments. Where children refuse to attend appointments, this will be discussed in keyworker sessions so that the reasons why can be explored further and so that children can be supported to attend in the future.
- Ensuring that any medications which are brought into the home are properly recorded, and that their administration is supervised and controlled in accordance with our home's policy and procedure regarding the administration of medication.
- Staff being alert to each child's needs at all times and obtaining medical (or other) advice and support as needed. All staff members receive First Aid training at Alston Lodge, and we have a stock of first aid equipment.
- Registering each child with a GP, optician, and dental practice in the local area upon admission. All staff at Alston Lodge are responsible for arranging any appointments or check-ups that children need and for encouraging their attendance to appointments.



- Promoting in-house programmes which provide basic education and advice regarding general health and wellbeing e.g., the benefits of eating healthy and staying active.
- Educating children on health-related topics such as the harmful effects of illegal or banned substances, drugs, solvents, cigarettes, etc.
- Working collaboratively with doctors, dentists, other health professionals and outside agencies to ensure that the identified healthcare needs for each child are met.

Therapeutic Techniques

Psychological Therapy

[REDACTED], Consultant Clinical Psychologist will lead and provide psychological therapy with [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Registered Mental Health Nurse and DBT Therapist.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] accesses external supervision from a qualified Clinical Psychologist on a six-weekly basis.

The main therapy model will be Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) and children will be offered full-programme DBT, an intensive and evidence-based therapy. Outcomes will be measured using a range of standardised assessment tools: DBT Ways of Coping Checklist, PHQ-9, and GAD-10. Outcomes will also be measured by collation of scores on weekly diary sheets to evidence progress towards the target hierarchy developed during the pre-treatment phase of therapy. Pre, mid and end point therapy reports will be produced.

Positive Relationships

At Alston Lodge we are committed to ensuring that all children can maintain relationships with family, friends, and other significant people in their lives. Providing that it is safe to do so, and that there is no Court Order or serious concerns which prohibit this, we will actively promote contact between children and people who are important to them.

Within each child's Placement Plan, the arrangements, and agreements for who they can have contact with will be clearly outlined and the home will promote and ensure that any agreed contact takes place. Each child living within our home will have a contact plan which forms part of their overall support plan and the team at Alston Lodge will ensure that written records are maintained when any planned contact is made or isn't made so that this can be monitored and evaluated.

Where any planned contact doesn't take place, the reasons why will be discussed with each child and documented in their contact plan.



In circumstances where contact needs to be supervised, escorting staff members will ensure that this is done in a discreet manner whilst still adhering to all contact arrangements in place. We understand that maintaining relationships and contact with significant people is extremely important for children and we want it to be a positive and meaningful experience for them.

At Alston Lodge, family and friends are welcome to visit children at the home as agreed, providing there is no Court Order or contact arrangement which prohibits this.

We actively promote and encourage children living within our home to develop new friendships and connections with others and will support them to make arrangements to see friends and spend time with them socially within the community.

Protection of children

Monitoring and surveillance of children

At Alston Lodge we take the privacy and dignity of all children living within our home very seriously. Inside our home we do not have any CCTV, although we do have door chimes on our front door and back door which notify us when anyone has entered or exited the home.

We have CCTV to the outside of our property, which is intended to help deter any intruders or crime to our home and to maintain the safety of the children living with us, the staff, and the general public. At Alston Lodge we have a CCTV policy which ensures that any monitoring and recording which takes place is for the intended purposes only.

Fire precautions and associated emergency procedures

Our home has been inspected by the local Fire Service and meets all the necessary requirements which have been outlined for the safety and security of children living within our home and the staff who work there.

Each child will have their own Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) which identifies the level of assistance they will require to evacuate the home in the event of a fire and whether any equipment will be required so that they are able to do this. Each child's PEEP will be reviewed regularly and updated with any changes as and when required, to ensure that they always remain accurate.

Within our home, smoke alarms and fire detection equipment has been fitted and we have firefighting equipment strategically installed throughout our home. Our firefighting equipment is provided by Pendle Nu Tech Ltd, who also check and service our equipment on an annual basis. All staff members working within our home attend mandatory fire training so that they understand how to use any equipment that we have.



We have staff members who have been [REDACTED] identified as fire marshals within our home who are responsible for completing weekly fire checks and maintaining records of this. As part of weekly fire checks, they will inspect all our fire equipment throughout the home to ensure it is in its correct location and has not been tampered with.

We have a written emergency evacuation procedure for our home which outlines our fire exits and our fire assembly point should we need to evacuate the home in an emergency, this is available to everyone. Our emergency evacuation procedure is also documented in our home's children's guide and is given verbally to children upon admission. Our evacuation procedure is also discussed in house meetings which children attend and staff meetings.

At Alston Lodge we complete quarterly fire drills so that we can practice evacuation safely and so we can ensure that everyone understands what to do in the event of a fire and where to assemble.

Behaviour Support

At Alston Lodge, we understand that there are many different factors which can contribute to a child's behaviour falling below the standards we expect. Often this is due to children not being happy or not being able to understand a situation they are in and having difficulties in expressing their wishes and feelings during these times.

As a team we are committed to supporting children throughout any difficult and challenging experiences they encounter and in managing all aspects of behaviour in a fair, firm, and consistent manner. Within our home, we use praise and reward regularly to reinforce positive behaviour. We believe it is extremely important to recognise and acknowledge the positive elements of behaviour that we see children demonstrate as it reaffirms to children that we care, it helps to maintain positive relationships and it also motivates children to establish a pattern of acceptable behaviour and to develop measures of self-control.

We place a strong emphasis on building positive relationships with the children living within our home and getting to know them well. We include children in the development of any behaviour support plans and in all decision-making regarding the use of any consequences to manage behaviour. Not only does this ensure that each child's voice is always heard, it also enables us to understand each child's preferences and wishes for how they want their behaviour to be managed should there be situations where it falls below the expected standards.

In situations and circumstances where we see any deterioration in a child's behaviour, our first priority is always to offer support at an early stage so that we can try to understand the cause of the behaviour. Through the use of redirection and verbal de-escalation techniques to help with self-regulation, we will aim to try to prevent any situations from escalating further. Our staff team have a wealth of skills and experience which enable them to deal with any challenging situations in a kind, calm, and proactive manner.

At Alston Lodge, we will always ensure that children are treated with the dignity, respect, and kindness they deserve. We understand that there are times when situations are so serious that there is no other option but to use physical intervention techniques to keep children or others safe, to prevent injury or imminent risk of



harm or danger. However, we are committed to ensuring that this is only ever used as a last resort, for the least amount of time and when all other less intrusive methods of managing behaviour have been tried and exhausted. Our staff understand the home's underlying philosophy towards managing behaviour and our "Behaviour Management" policy further reinforces this.

All staff members within our home receive annual mandatory training in de-escalation, breakaway and physical intervention techniques from a fully qualified instructor who has been trained by PRICE TRAINING LTD.

Throughout physical intervention training, each staff member's level of competence is continually assessed to ensure that they can carry out all techniques safely, correctly and in a way which maintains dignity and does not inflict any form of pain on children.

We understand that any occasions where a child has needed to be restrained are upsetting for everyone involved and for children it can be a frightening and traumatic experience. Following the use of any physical intervention where a child has needed to be restrained, a post-incident debrief will be carried out with the child by a staff member at the earliest opportunity to maintain positive relationships, to provide emotional support and to gain their perspective on what happened, whether there were any trigger factors, the child's thoughts and feelings and whether they think that things could be managed differently should any similar situations arise in the future. The child will also be offered the opportunity to make a complaint and be informed of the procedure of how they can do this should they wish to. The child's physical wellbeing will also

be checked following the use of any physical intervention and if a child has any pain or discomfort then staff will support them to access medical attention straight away.

Following the use of any physical intervention we will also carry out a post-incident review with all staff members involved in the incident as soon as possible. This will enable any issues to be discussed, feedback to be shared and a review of the incident to take place. All post-incident de-briefs and post-incident reviews will be recorded, maintained, and made available on request to the placing Local Authority, Ofsted, and the Regulation 44 Inspector.

The Registered Manager at Alston Lodge will ensure that all relevant professionals and the child's representatives are notified of any incidents that take place as soon as practically possible after the event and ensure that they are provided with a full written report of the incident.

Safeguarding

At Alston Lodge, the safety and wellbeing of the children is paramount, and we recognise and understand the duty that we have to make arrangements which ensure that all functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All our staff members receive annual Safeguarding training in the prevention of abuse, recognition of abuse, dealing with disclosures or suspicions of abuse and child protection procedures. Our staff members also complete mandatory training in child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, county lines, extremism and radicalisation and contextual safeguarding.

At Alston Lodge, our staff members understand the responsibilities that they have to report to the Registered Manager or any other senior member of staff, any witnessed or suspected incidents of abuse. Such incidents



may include behaviour where someone [REDACTED] has harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or any behaviour which indicates that someone may be unsuitable to work with children. Our home does not tolerate abuse in any form. Where any reports of witnessed or suspected abuse have been made, immediate action will be taken, and the procedure outlined within our Safeguarding Children policy will be followed.

We encourage all children within our home to raise any concerns that they have. Within keyworker sessions and within house meetings we discuss topics such as exploitation and internet safety so we can educate children about how they can stay safe, what they should do and who they can talk to should they ever feel unsafe. We have made useful links with the police within our local area who are happy to come in and talk to the children living within our home at our request.

Within our office we have a Safeguarding notice board which displays contact numbers for the LADO and Safeguarding teams within our local area and flow charts which provide prompts and step by step instructions on what action staff members need to take if they suspect a child is at risk of harm or if a disclosure or allegation is made. Within team meetings and staff supervisions recognition and prevention of abuse and safeguarding reporting procedures are agenda items which are regularly discussed. These measures enable us to ensure that everyone working within our home understands their responsibility to keep children safe and protected from any harm and the procedures which must be followed in any safeguarding situations.

Within Associated Wellbeing Ltd, we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead [REDACTED], who is responsible for overseeing and monitoring all safeguarding matters. The Registered Manager [REDACTED] is the Designated Safeguarding Officer for Alston Lodge. The contact details of both are displayed within the entrance of our home, so that all children, parents/carers, professionals, and visitors are aware of who is responsible for safeguarding.

Weekly Safeguarding meetings take place within our organisation to monitor that all serious concerns which have been raised about a child's welfare have been reported to the relevant people, and any relevant and necessary actions have been completed. These meetings are attended by The Directors, The Designated Safeguarding Lead, The Designated Safeguarding Officer of the home, The Responsible Individual, and any other relevant senior members of staff within the organisation.

Preventing Bullying

Our aim is to ensure that children do not identify bullying as a problem within our home. We are committed at Alston Lodge, to providing a caring, and friendly environment where everyone feels safe, this includes both our children and our staff team. We strongly believe that everyone has the right to be treated with respect and not to be bullied or harassed at any time.

Where there are any incidents or suspicions of bullying within our home, we aim to deal with these promptly and efficiently. Our staff are trained to recognise and respond to situations of bullying, in a positive and proactive way which is supportive to both bullies and victims.

Our home's Bullying policy outlines the steps that we will follow in the event of any bullying taking place and the action that will be taken based on the severity of the bullying.



It is extremely important to us that [REDACTED] children within our home feel as though they can tell someone if they feel threatened or bullied and that they feel confident that it will be dealt with in a way which stops its occurrence and does not make matters worse for them.

Within house meetings we regularly discuss the standards of behaviour that we expect within our home, and we reinforce the importance of treating others with respect and that bullying of any form will not be tolerated.

Within keyworker sessions bullying is discussed as a topic of conversation. Children are asked whether they feel safe within the home and if they do not, actions will be identified about what we can do to make improvements and resolve any issues or worries they might have. All keyworker sessions and any identified actions arising from concerns raised about bullying are documented. Where any action has been taken following a concern being raised, this will be monitored by way of regularly having conversations with the child who has been bullied to check on their welfare and to ensure that it has stopped any bullying from taking place and their concern has been resolved.

Where necessary, a risk assessment will be completed for children who are likely to be at risk of persistent bullying. Any actions which need to be taken to manage the risk will be clearly documented in the risk assessment and communicated to all staff members.

At Alston Lodge, we want to ensure that children are also safe whilst away from the home environment, and we take bullying outside of the home very seriously too. In the event that we suspect or discover that a child is being bullied away from the home, we are committed to working with the child's school if this is where the bullying is taking place or the local Police to identify the cause of the problem and to find a satisfactory solution which maintains the safety of our children.

Children Missing from Home

At Alston Lodge we are committed to protecting all of the children living within our home at all times. We understand that there may be occasions where children feel unable to cope within the home's environment and may leave without permission or an explanation.

Where a child is absent from our home which is both unexplained and unauthorised, we will always take it seriously and deal with it immediately to ascertain their whereabouts and to promote their overall safety.

The staff team at Alston Lodge fully understand the procedure and necessary actions to be taken in the event of a child being absent without permission. This is also clearly outlined within our home's Unauthorised absence/missing policy. Our staff also understand the need to fully comply with the local Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures maintained and managed by the police and local authority within our local area.

Where there is a likelihood that a child may go missing, appropriate risk management strategies will be considered and implemented to manage and mitigate the individual risks of each child.

At Alston Lodge when a child is absent without permission or has not arrived home at an agreed time, we will always try to make contact with the child in the first instance by ringing their personal mobile phone if they have one, or by ringing any other number where they may be contacted. This enables the staff team to gain insight into whether a child is just running late and expected to return to the home or if there are any concerns which suggest that they are missing. If contact cannot be made by telephone, then a member of our team will search the home and its grounds, the local area, and any other known locations where the child may be in an attempt to locate them.

If it becomes evident that the child cannot be located within the home or their usual known locations then the child will be reported as missing to the Police, the placing authority, the home's assigned On-Call duty manager and if appropriate the child's parents.



The staff team will assist the police in the gathering of information which may help to locate the child such as talking to friends, acquaintances, other children in the home and significant others in the child's life. The police will also be provided with a copy of the child's Trigger plan and profile and given details of any significant information they may need to know. Any information received will be immediately passed to the police to support them in their enquiries.

Upon their return to the home, any child who has been missing will be warmly received back by our staff team. They will be checked for any medical injuries and if necessary medical attention will be sought straightaway. The child will be provided with emotional support by staff and the opportunity to talk about the events which led up to them going missing. They will also be provided with food and drink and settled back into the daily routines of our home.

Where children within our home persistently leave without permission or explanation to engage in behaviours which place them at high risk, we will work collaboratively with the police, Missing from Home Co-ordinator, the Local Authority, and the child's placing authority to develop a strategy for managing the individual risks to the child.

On all occasions where a child leaves the home without permission or explanation, a fully comprehensive record will be completed and maintained which details: - the circumstances surrounding the incident, the action, which was taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for going missing and any further action taken in light of the reasons. This information will be shared with the child's placing authority and if appropriate the child's parents.

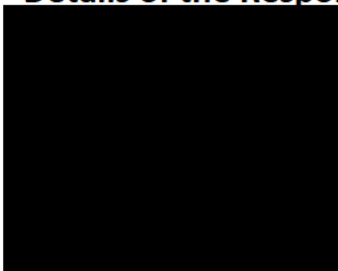
Our home's Unauthorised absence / missing policy provides information of the full procedure we will follow if a child goes missing and the preventative strategies we will adopt if children are persistently absent from our home without permission or authorisation.

Leadership and Management

Details of the Registered Provider

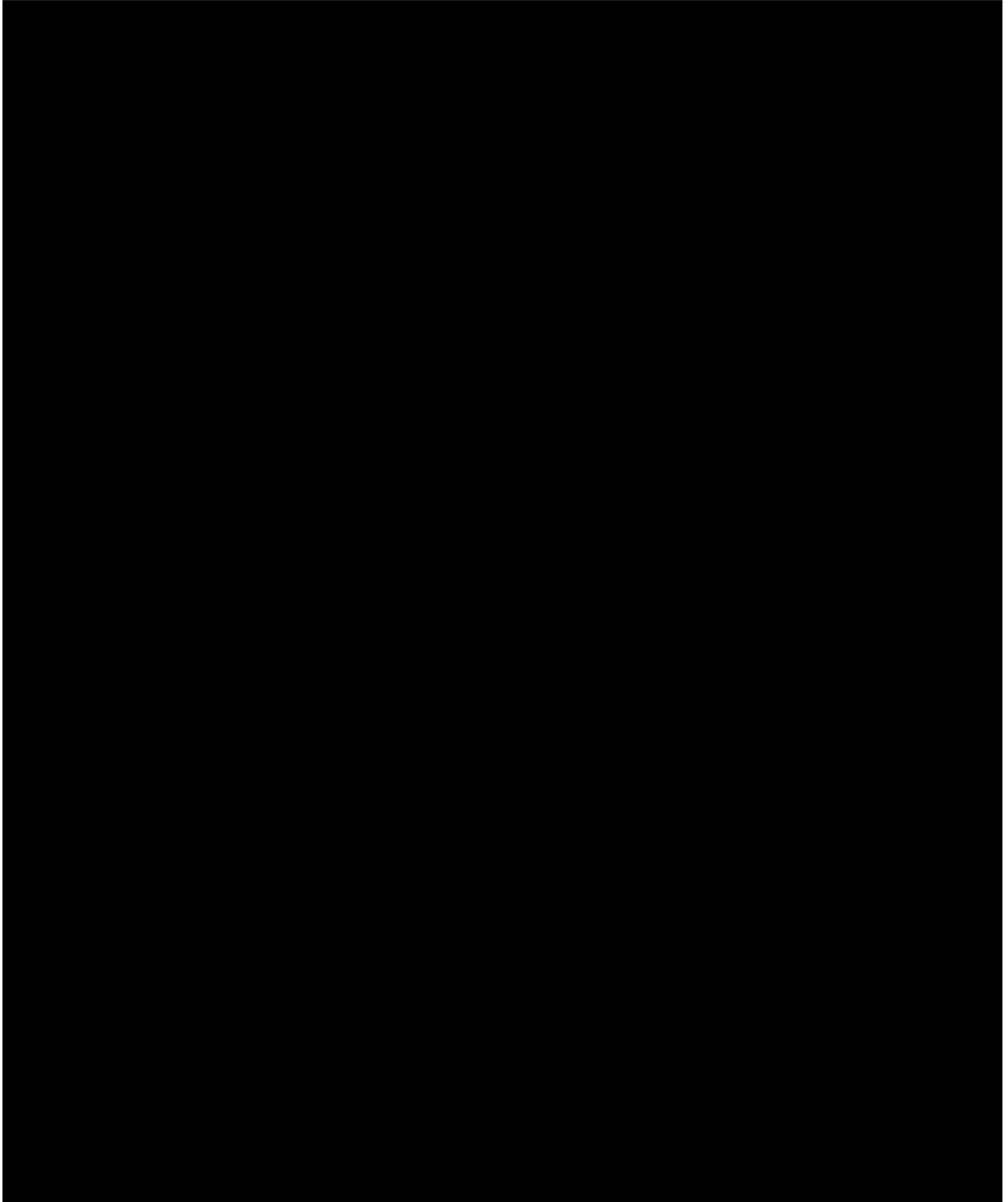


Details of the Responsible Individual





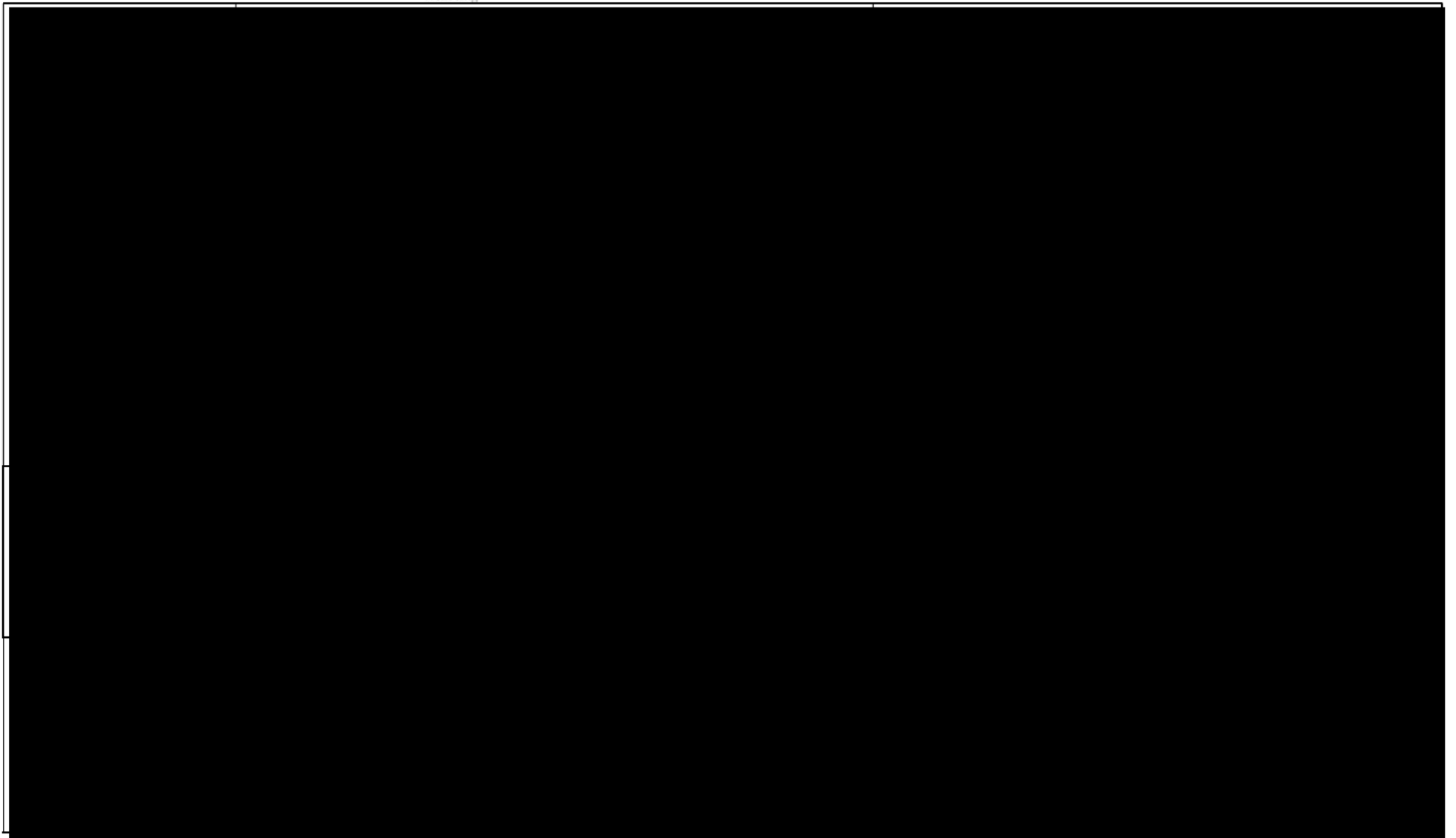
ASSOCIATED





Details of the qualifications and experience of staff

Name & Position	Qualifications	Experience





The recruitment and selection of staff

The Registered Manager at Alston Lodge adopts a thorough and in-depth recruitment and selection process when employing new staff members for our home. This ensures that we do not discriminate unlawfully in the provision of employment opportunities and that any new employees are suitable to work with children and have the necessary skills, qualities, and qualifications to complement our existing team and match the individual needs of the children living within our home. All potential employees are required to apply for an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

At Alston Lodge we have a Recruitment and Selection Policy which demonstrates our safer recruitment procedures and outlines the recruitment process, and the pre-employment checks we carry out when recruiting and selecting staff members to work within our home.

Our recruitment processes enable us to identify the most suitable applicants for our home right from the initial advertising of any posts through to staff members commencing in employment.

Prior to any new staff member commencing within our home, they are required to complete mandatory training in specific subjects. This ensures that they have the necessary underpinning knowledge and skills needed to be able to support children.

All new staff members are subject to a six-month probationary period, this enables their suitability for the role to be assessed within a specific time period.

The training and development of staff

All new staff members complete an in-house induction programme within the first week of starting at Alston Lodge. This gives new staff members the opportunity to learn about the home's ethos and aims, routines, policies, reporting and recording procedures, child protection procedures and to undertake shadow shifts alongside experienced staff members so that they can get to know the children within our home whilst learning the requirements and expectations of their new role.

All new staff members are required to complete online mandatory training in a variety of topics within one month of commencing in employment so that they have an understanding and underpinning knowledge in areas which are relevant in the lives of the children we support to ensure their safety and protection and to meet the legal requirements of the overall organisation.

Online training topics include: - Safeguarding Children, Infection Control, Food Hygiene, Health and Safety, Fire Safety, Radicalisation, Autism, Positive Behaviour Management, Professional Boundaries, Self-harm, and Information Governance. This list is not exhaustive and additional topics will be added to our mandatory training programme by the Registered Manager determined by the individual needs of the children living within our home.

All staff members also receive face to face mandatory training in: Emergency First Aid at Work, Food Safety, Advanced Medication, Fire Safety, Basic Life Support, The Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, and Safeguarding Children.

The organisational structure of the home

Alston Lodge is run by The Registered Manager [REDACTED]. In his absence, the Deputy Manager [REDACTED] will run the home. Our home's staffing structure flow chart illustrates the roles of the staff members who work within our home and the therapists who provide therapeutic interventions to the children living at Alston Lodge.

Upon arrival to Alston Lodge, all children are allocated a keyworker who takes part in regular reviews of the child's Placement Plan and support plan. Keyworkers are responsible for the most important aspects of each child's support and also with liaising with any professionals, and agencies involved in each child's life. The overall care of each child is a shared responsibility of all staff members that work within our home.

Supervision training and development of staff members

At Alston Lodge, all staff members receive support to carry out their roles. Supervision is provided throughout the normal day-to-day supervisory and management processes within the home, although all staff members who have direct responsibility for supporting children also have organised and regular supervision sessions with a nominated supervisor/manager at least once a month. Staff within our home are supervised in accordance with the order illustrated on our home's staffing structure flow chart and staff supervisions are carried out in line with our home's Supervision policy.

Within each staff member's supervision, the topics discussed are: - methods of working with children, keyworker responsibilities, the staff member's role including their accountability in fulfilling the home's Statement of Purpose, prevention of abuse and local safeguarding reporting procedures and the staff members role in fulfilling Placement Plans for individual children.

Within supervision, each staff member's nominated supervisor will provide feedback on their work performance, discuss any training and development needs they may have and will also check on their emotional wellbeing. If any personal wellbeing issues are highlighted, the staff member's nominated supervisor will help them to develop a plan of how these can be addressed and will provide them with the contact details for our organisation's employee support helpline.

Any training and development needs which are identified within supervision are incorporated into each staff member's Personal Training and Development Plan which is an integral component of their annual performance and appraisal. Appraisals of all staff members within our home are carried out annually by the Registered Manager or the Deputy Manager.

The nominated supervisor of [REDACTED], our home's Registered Manager is the Responsible Individual, [REDACTED] who will also complete their annual appraisal.

Staffing within our home

Within our home, the Registered Manager understands the responsibility they have to ensure that the home is always sufficiently staffed to provide high quality support to all children so that their individual needs can always be met, whilst also ensuring that any resources the home requires to deliver support are used efficiently and economically.

The home has capacity for four children and although, there are never any planned occasions where there is not at least two members of regular staff on duty at any one time, due to reasons beyond control there may be occasions where we need to use staff members from other placements within our organisation to ensure that there are sufficient staffing levels within the home at all times.

At Alston Lodge, staffing levels are determined based on the individual needs and level of support required for each child, these may decrease when occupancy falls.

In cases of emergency, staff members have access to an On-Call Manager for advice, support, and guidance. There is an On-Call rota displayed on the noticeboards in the Manager's office downstairs and in the upstairs office which provide the names and contact telephone numbers of the On-Call Manager so that staff working within the home always know who they can contact in an emergency. A copy of this rota is also emailed to all On-Call Managers.

Our staff work a combination of shifts and are expected to rotate between long days and long day sleep-in shifts. All our staff members are required to work weekends and bank holidays, these agreements form part of their contractual obligations.

The long day shifts within our home are: 08:00 – 22:30

The long day sleep-in shifts within our home are: 08:00 – 23:30 + sleep in shift.

If an incident involving a child or any house related matter occurred through the night, our staff members are aware that they are required to get up through the night to commence work and deal with any situation.

Care Planning

Admissions to our home

At Alston Lodge, all admissions to our home are considered on an individual basis and are made via application to [REDACTED], at which point there are added to the internal referrals system for the Responsible Individual to review and signpost to potential suitable homes for the Registered Manager to consider.

To assess whether an admission is suitable for Alston Lodge, the Registered Manager will request as much information as possible from the referring placing authority and through speaking to other professionals involved in the child's life. The Registered Manager will review all information gathered to ascertain whether the child's identified needs meet the home's admission criteria and the Statement of Purpose and whether they effectively match with children already living within the home and the skill set of our staff members.

As part of the home's internal matching process, the Registered Manager or Deputy Manager, in their absence will complete an impact risk assessment to assess the impact that the referral would have on the children currently living within our home, and the possible effect that the children living at Alston Lodge would have on the child who has been referred. The impact risk assessment will also identify what measures could be put in place to manage any identified impact.

Following a further review of all information gathered during the assessment process, the Registered Manager and Deputy Manager will make a decision as to whether the child could be suitably placed at Alston Lodge, and if appropriate will then arrange to go and meet the child face-to-face. A face-to-face meeting will only take place once the Registered Manager or Deputy Manager, in their absence is completely satisfied that the home can meet the child's identified needs to prevent any unnecessary feelings of rejection for the child who has been referred.

Prior to any new child being placed within our home, transition visits will take place so that the child can become familiar with the home and its routines and so they can meet the staff team and other children living within our home. Each child is given a copy of our home's Children's Guide prior to admission so that they have information about our home, staff team and the expectations that we have.

A Placement Planning meeting will take place within 72 hours of a child moving into our home with the child, their social worker, parents/carers, if appropriate and the Registered Manager and Deputy Manager. This will identify the child's individual needs, risks, targets, and the level of support required, and a Placement Plan will then be developed.

We do not accept emergency admissions to our home due to the impact that this may have on the other children already living at Alston Lodge.

Transitions and moving towards independence

Throughout the support planning process, we are always considering the future and the ambitions and aspirations that children hope to achieve during their time with us.

We encourage children to set goals which reflect their ambitions and aspirations, and we support children to develop new skills and access opportunities in all aspects of their lives so that they can grow and thrive to their fullest potential and achieve positive outcomes.

When the time comes for children to move on, we are committed to ensuring that the transition from our home is meaningful and carefully planned so that children feel ready for their next step and so that they feel fully supported right to the end. It is important to us that each child's experience of living within our home has been positive and loving and that they feel equipped with strong foundations in place to progress towards independence or to move to their new home.

At Alston Lodge, the relationships we develop with the children living within our home are very important to us. When children leave our care, we don't just stop caring and we welcome all children to keep in touch and we let them know they can contact us any time if they choose to.

Formally Approved by:



Responsible Individual

Updates to Statement of Purpose

Date	Section of SOP	Changes made/ information added