



# Treetops

Children and Young People's Service

## Statement of Purpose



Reviewed October 2023

**enabling  
ability**

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## **Contact Information**

### **White Lodge**

Holloway Hill  
Chertsey  
Surrey  
KT16 OFA  
www.whitelodgecentre.co.uk  
Telephone: 01932 567131

### **Registered Manager**

Marsha Wallis

CACHE Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare  
Children, Young People & Families Manager Apprenticeship Standard- Distinction  
EDEXCEL Level 4 NVQ in Health and Social Care (Children and Young People)  
EDEXCEL Level 4 NVQ in Leadership and Management for Care Services  
City & Guilds Level 3 in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment

Telephone: 01932 568365

E-mail: [mwallis@whitelodgecentre.co.uk](mailto:mwallis@whitelodgecentre.co.uk)

### **Responsible Individual:**

#### **CEO Lesleigh Bounds**

Post Graduate Certificate in Leadership  
Certificate in Public Health Commissioning  
Higher National Dip Social Work 1998

Telephone: 01932 567131

E-mail: [lbounds@whitelodgecentre.co.uk](mailto:lbounds@whitelodgecentre.co.uk)

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

**CEO - Lesleigh Bounds**  
Telephone: 01932 567131

Director of Services - Rob Morello  
01932 567131

### **Ofsted**

#### **Ofsted Registration number SC013828**

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD  
Telephone: 0300 123 1231  
Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Children's Rights Commission for England**

The Office of the Children's Commissioner

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street

London

SW1P 3BT

Telephone: 020 7783 8330

### **Useful Telephone Numbers**

White Lodge Switchboard

01932 567131

Ofsted

0300 123 1231

Treetops

01932 568365

## **Quality and Purpose of Care and Care Planning**

Treetops is a purpose-built short break Children's Home located at White Lodge, Chertsey, Surrey, a few minutes from junction 11 of the M25. Treetops provide short breaks (respite) to disabled children and young people, up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Children and young people can stay overnight, stay for a tea visit (15:30-17:30 term time only) and/or day care (10:00-16:00) at weekends or during school holidays (Surrey County Council academic year calendar). Tea visits are available as an introduction to overnights. Day care sessions are only available as part of a care package that includes overnights.

Treetops accommodates a maximum of 6 children and young people staying overnight under short break arrangements. We can have an additional three children or young people for either a tea visit or day care. In emergency situations Treetops can accommodate up to 10 young people during the daytime hours.

At times we may receive an emergency child-protection referral. If this happens, and we are at full capacity, it may be necessary to cancel a child or young person to accommodate them; we will however give the allocation back at a later time. The referrals will be agreed on a case-by-case basis.

In exceptional circumstances Treetops may support a young adult past their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday to facilitate a smooth transition into adult services. This will also be agreed on a case-by-case basis and where the service is able to offer the support, without compromising our provision to children.

Where Treetops have someone over 18 spending the night, we will have one less child, and will try to ensure their ages are matched to provide a safe environment where they are supported with peers.

Treetops provides fantastic facilities as well as a 'home from home' experience for the young people who visit. The facilities consist of:

- Six bedrooms specifically adapted to meet the individual needs of the young people who stay with us. All bedrooms have ceiling hoists.
- Teenage room with TV, sofa
- Large communal area with dining table, seating, a large toy cupboard and an interactive sensory panel.
- Sensory room
- Kitchen where young people can be supported to develop their independent, and life, skills.
- Adapted bathroom and wet room.
- Outside seating area with extensive gardens which includes a specialised play area
- CCTV

Treetops is part of the charity White Lodge and has access to a hydrotherapy pool, sensory room, an adapted kitchen, a cinema room, and a Café in other buildings on the main site. Treetops has its own dedicated vehicle which enables the staff to take the young people out to explore and access the community.

To access Treetops, the Registered Manager completes an impact risk assessment, this ensures that the young person is compatible with the other young people who currently access Treetops and that their individual needs can be met. A time will then be arranged for prospective families to visit, an allocated member of staff will be allocated and will be present at that first meeting, this enables us to show families around and compose an All About Me document to support staff meet the needs of the child while visiting.

Treetops have a children's guide using pictures and symbols and will be given out for families to talk through the provision before the child's first visit.

The admissions process aims at familiarising young people with Treetops before their stay, and whilst most young people are referred through their social worker and follow the induction, we are also open to emergency admissions if we are a suitable provision. Some families may also choose to use their direct payments to access the service.

Our process for preparing young people for transition is just as thorough, and we work hard with families and other professionals to aid a smooth transition into adulthood.

Treetops recognise the importance and value of working closely with families and other professionals in order to deliver the best outcomes for our young people. Our keyworker system means that families and practitioners know who to communicate with should the need arise, and that clear information is available to families at the time they need it. All young people have their own communication book in which staff write about the young person's activities and general wellbeing during their stay, and parents/carers are encouraged to share any news or put any specific requests into this book.

Staff form good relationships with schools, social workers and other relevant professionals, and communicate closely to ensure appropriate strategies and support are in place at Treetops for every young person.

Treetops is committed to promoting equal opportunities and treatment in the provision of its services to families. This is based on a recognition that people can be discriminated against because of their disability, race, culture, religious belief, gender, class, age, marital status or sexual orientation. We challenge discrimination through positive action and policy and are opposed to all forms of discrimination. Treetops tries its best to meet the individual needs of the children and families using the service, including those of a cultural, religious, dietary, or linguistic nature. To this end we encourage young people to be involved if they wish to, in celebrating different religious festivals and use these occasions as a chance to promote tolerance and understanding of others beliefs.

Staff aim to provide the young people with experiences and opportunities they may not be able to do at home. From outings and activities in the community, through to encouraging social development with peers. Treetops help young people develop valuable life skills in a safe environment with trained and experienced staff.

We endeavor to offer friendly, courteous and appropriate services to everyone who is involved with Treetops. We welcome feedback and would like to hear about things you have found helpful or unhelpful. We send out quality audits to ensure we capture family's views and act upon them.

Any compliments can be passed to a member of staff, or put in writing and sent to the Registered Manager. If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service please speak with a member of staff or the Registered Manager, as usually the

matter can be sorted out quickly during a discussion. You may choose to make a formal complaint and we have a simple three-stage process which will enable you to do this; you can ask any member of staff for a complaints leaflet which will help you understand the process. We aim to resolve a complaint within 28 days.

Treetops have both a safeguarding and behaviour management policy which are available on request.

## **Views, wishes and feelings**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that all children and young people have the right to express their views in a manner that is appropriate to their age and ability. These views should then be considered in relation to any decisions affecting the young person.

Treetops is committed to ensuring that the wishes, hopes and aspirations of all young people, regardless of their ability or means of communication, are heard and taken on board, particularly in relation to areas and decisions that affect them. We capture the children's views and wishes by asking them to evaluate their experience of the service, to do this we use the preferred communication systems for each child such as PECS or photos.

Each young person has a robust care plan known as an 'All About Me' (AAM) This contains information about how best to communicate with the young person, for example using Makaton or PECS. Staff then ensure they use the relevant tools to best communicate with each individual. We aim to encourage children to have a say in their care, and encourage young people to have as much choice as possible, including choosing activities and meals. Within this we understand that all young people are individuals and will have different preferences and aim to cater to this accordingly.

If young people are not happy at Treetops, staff work hard to identify the reason why and rectify it, and a child-friendly complaints system is in place to ensure children are able and know how to complain which is displayed on our lobby notice board.

## **Education**

Many of the young people arrive and go to school directly from Treetops via transport services, we have close links with schools and professionals to ensure that this transition is smooth e.g. equipment, medication etc., young people coming from school are given support with their homework by staff when required and are able to make use of the Treetops computers and visit the local community library if requested. We attend reviews and are able to embed young people's schools targets into our outcome system. Life skills, self-care skills, and social skills are some examples of the outcomes that young people visiting Treetops work towards.

All of our young people have Physical and or Learning Disabilities and we have copies of their Education, Health and Care Plan's. We work closely with schools on behaviour, sharing and developing behaviour plans together. If a child is unable to express their feelings verbally, they may do this through their behaviour, if the behaviour challenges others,

then trained staff support the child to de-escalate the escalating behaviour. We are affiliated with the Restraint Reduction Network and look to minimise the use of physical interventions.

## **Positive relationships**

While staying at Treetops young people can communicate with their families and friends in a variety of ways including using the telephone, sending emails or having family to visit. All staff ensure that the young people's paperwork is up to date and communicate effectively with families and other professionals. The home/Treetops communication book plays a role in developing relationships between staff and families, especially as many of our young people arrive and leave us on transport, and parents therefore may not see staff face to face for some time.

## **Enjoyment and achievement**

Treetops offers young people a choice of activities, staff consult with young people to coordinate and provide a wide range of appropriate activities. Staff encourage young people to choose from a range of both onsite and offsite experiences. Staff support and encourage young people to broaden their experiences and try new things whilst ensuring that the activities meet the needs of the individual. We tailor activities to develop and reflect young people's social interests and skills.

Some of the activities offered during a child's stay may include:

- arts and craft
- technical interactive games and use of computers
- swimming – if under a therapy referral
- sensory play
- eating out at local restaurants
- bowling
- music sessions
- cooking
- outings to parks and local attractions
- trips to the theatre and cinema
- day trips to fun places including the beach, museums and farms
- cinema room

## **Health**

The AAM document details any medical or health needs a young person may have. Staff receive training from a nurse trainer to ensure we can meet children's health needs, including administering medication and gastrostomy feeding.

The AAM document details the individuals assigned health professionals, and when required staff are able to



communicate with the young person's school or community nurse. We also have contact details for GP's and consultants to ensure we are meeting each young person's health needs.

We evaluate the competency of staff administering medication through regular supervisions and observations.

Treetops staff communicate with a young person's physiotherapist if requested, and staff are able to help children with physiotherapy exercises if the young person requires it, with the support of the physio teams. Behaviour support plans and risk assessments also form part of the AAM if required.

The nurse trainer and White Lodge training Co-Ordinator are able to deliver or organise all our medical related training; this allows us to react quickly to changing needs and new referrals when staff need specific training.

## **Protection of Young People**

Treetops places great importance on young people being and feeling safe during their stay. Should your child be unwell and unable to attend Treetops please notify us as soon as possible. We may need to notify the social worker for nonattendance. Treetops is purpose built and has a location risk assessment in place. There is CCTV recording on the Treetops premises to view the entrance activity only. The building itself has regular input from the on-site facilities team, and yearly building and fire risk assessments are conducted. A health and safety report is completed monthly by the facilities team.

Treetops has many policies that protect the young people who visit us including a:

- Safeguarding
- Missing from care
- Bullying
- Behaviour management
- Medication and healthcare
- Minimising the risk of Physical Intervention

Whistleblowing and confidentiality policies are also in place to protect the young people. A full index of all Treetops policies, as well as a copy of any policy is available on request.

Staff have safeguarding training which is refreshed biennially and includes safeguarding young people from the internet (E-safety). Staff also receive training around the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Radicalisation. Staff also receive Home Office training on the Prevent duty.

On induction, staff are trained in manual handling, infection control, administering medication, first aid, and behaviour management (Safety Intervention Training), and training is refreshed when required. Safety Intervention Training is a physical intervention strategy and selected staff are trained in this technique we use this in line with Surrey Schools. White Lodge has its own qualified Safety Intervention Trainer who assess staff as fully competent to use this intervention. Staff are taught how to use preventative measures to reduce the need to use physical interventions and work very closely with young people's schools to implement strategies to reduce behaviour that may challenge.

The behavioural and care needs of the children are reflected in our high staff ratio which is a minimum of 4 staff to 6 children. When we have more than 6 young people in for the day this will be reflected in the number of staff on shift. Each shift is led by a senior support worker, and the ratio of support workers increases when required. We have 2 night staff on shift each night who aim to check the young people approximately every 30 minutes unless otherwise instructed by the parents/carers. There may be times where it is appropriate for one of these staff to be asleep, however if the needs of the children require higher support they will both be awake.

There are a few occasions when we are unable to meet our preferred staffing levels. On rare occasions we may only have one waking night staff, with another member of staff sleeping onsite, who is on call if needed. We have good links with a local agency and have identified agency staff who have become familiar with our routine and we would initially request these staff should the need arise.

## **Leadership and Management**

The Treetops team brings a wide range of experiences and training to their roles. Young people can have contact with appropriate role models.

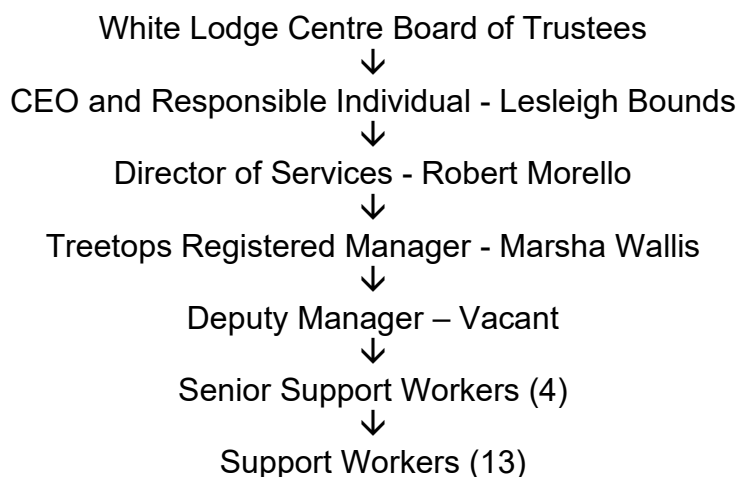
All staff are interviewed, a minimum of two references are obtained and verified and an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check is required before they commence work. The recruitment process will include a formal interview, a written task, and on some occasions the candidate may be observed in the setting interacting with the young people. All White Lodge employees have a six-month induction period, which starts when they commence their post. This involves regular support from their line manager, training related to their role and White Lodge Induction Standards. Permanent employment is subject to the successful completion of a six-month probationary period.

All staff are allocated a supervisor with whom they meet at least ten times per year (full time equivalent). These meetings provide the opportunity to discuss the staff members' role, expand on strengths and areas of interest, reflect on practice, and identify areas for further development.

Staff appraisals are held annually, and development plans are discussed with objectives set to achieve individual aims.

Treetops is part White Lodge, which is a registered charity, the CEO reports to a board of Trustees.

### **The structure of Treetops is as follows:**



Appendix 1 – parents guide

Appendix 2 – staffing (on request)