Good Neighbour Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide advice to the neighbours of **Willow Family Care** run children's homes. The document is also a reminder to the staff and residents of children's homes about their responsibilities to the local community as well as their responsibilities to the child care task. We acknowledge that a document such as this can only assist and is not substitute for the establishment of good relationships between a home and its neighbours.

Introduction

It is the duty of Local Authorities to 'look after' certain children who are assessed as being 'in need' for a variety of reasons. Where appropriate, that duty of care is delegated to specialist bodies such as Willow Family Care.

Whilst children are 'looked after' their care should be of the highest standard and they will be returned to their families whenever it is practicable and safe to do so. In following this duty we will ensure that children 'looked after' are given the opportunity to reach their full potential in respect of education, health and social attainment. Every aspect of this service is governed by the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and Children's Home Regulations 2015 that guide the way staff look after children.

In respect of those children who are 'looked after' in children's homes the objective will be to ensure that the homes are seen as part of the community rather than separate from it. Residents and staff should enjoy the same opportunities, choices and access to facilities as any other citizens but should also try to make a positive contribution to the local community.

Willow Family Care Limited is committed to ensuring that whilst children are in our care, as well as protecting their welfare, we will do all in our power to encourage and teach them how to be responsible members of the community. This reflects an important point; that all members of local communities, including the staff and residents of children's homes, have rights themselves, but these rights are equally matched by responsibilities to others. In particular, the adults responsible for the care of the children must act as good parents and present positive role models.
Our aim is to promote the safety and welfare of the children in our care and to achieve this we appreciate support and observations from members of the local community.
Above all else it is essential that staff listen to and respond to the concerns of neighbours in the spirit of being a good neighbour themselves. This should not be done in a way which takes away from the staff responsibility to their child care task but should be done as part of that child care task.

Our Standards

In managing the home Willow Family Care, and its staff are committed to the

following standards.

We will:

1) Establish positive links with the local community. Staff will be expected to help the children accept and respect the rights of others and in particular the immediate neighbours and local community.

Staff should:

- Know the local community
- Obtain information on local facilities
- Present good images in the local community and have good and appropriate communication systems.
- They should work with young people to get them involved in the local community and make a positive contribution.

2) Be aware of the impact of the building within the community. The look of the building needs to reflect a positive, cared for image.

Staff will

- Be mindful of how the building and grounds look
- Keep rubbish under control
- Be mindful where young people, visitors and staff smoke
- Maintain good boundaries and fences
- Keep noise to a minimum (e.g. by installation of double glazing, controlling stereos, T.V. and computer games and advising visitors to the home)
- Keep gardens maintained
- Draw curtains or blinds as appropriate
- Put lights on/off as appropriate
- Ensure visible supervision of children's activities
- Ensure appropriate parking and
- Where possible get involved in community events

3) Manage how staff and members of Willow Family Care present themselves. It is vital that staff and others accept the importance of their role in relation to the children's home and the community within which it is situated.

Staff will:

- Present as good role models for the children and young people
- Be ambassadors for the home and company, this includes both during working times and outside working times
- Be accountable for the children's behaviour outside the home in the grounds, in the locality and in community facilities
- Be careful of combinations of young people going out
- Be mindful of the numbers of young people out together this includes discouraging local youths from hanging around outside the home with or without young people looked after by Willow Family Care
- Use and support local facilities
- Respond to complaints appropriately and in accordance with the complaints policy

- Act as competent parents by being consistent and offering appropriate structures and boundaries
- Help young people accept and respect themselves and others

4) Care for how children present themselves.

To assist with their feeling of self-worth, children and young people should:
- wear good clothing and where appropriate school uniform
- appear well cared for and wear clothes suited to the weather conditions
- present acceptable behaviour
- accept that they are accountable for their behaviour outside the unit

5) React quickly and properly when incidents occur. Each situation is unique,but staff will react promptly and efficiently.

Staff will:
- receive training to deal effectively with incidents as part of a core programme of training - this includes Behaviour Management Training and Complaints training
- receive clear guidance to enable them to respond effectively
- identify a person who will take responsibility and coordinate action
- respond as immediately as possible thereby preventing an issue becoming bigger
- advise the manager who will respond personally or follow up on actions
- ensure more senior managers are made aware
- inform the community and or individual of action taken as appropriate
- advise neighbours of the use of the complaints procedure where appropriate
- check if satisfied with outcome / action taken

6) Address ongoing practices. Maintaining good relations with the community is a never- ending process.

Staff and managers should:
- keep practices in relation to public relations on staff meeting and supervision agendas
- keep in touch with local neighbours
- check on their views and well being
- keep them informed of developments that may affect them
- be a good neighbour
- consider becoming involved in neighbourhood watch schemes etc.
- assist in times of crises
- encourage liaison groups
- be aware of local community issues
- involve staff, children and young people in local community events and resources

7) Address training issues to improve staff confidence and attitudes when tackling the issues presented to them.

Managers will provide training which:
- deals with incidents / complaint

- enables positive working with the local community
- tackles behaviour management in relation to the local community
- promotes the role of the corporate parent
- Maintaining community links following an incident

The following is staff guidance to enable staff to deal effectively with matters which in particular may affect the local community. The most senior person on duty will be responsible for ensuring that the following guidance is implemented.

Incidents

- Immediately assess situation (depending on the seriousness it may be necessary to contact a manager)
- Consider any aspects that may cause adverse reaction from the community
- Take details to assist with the matter being dealt with effectively
- Inform those involved of the complaints procedure
- Identify person to coordinate (within 30 minutes)
- Take positive action
- Liaise with neighbours
- Demonstrate that you are in control
- Take a balanced approach, avoid taking an aggressive or defensive stance
- Manage your own feelings
- Inform of action taken (as soon as appropriate, but by end of shift)

If young person has been abusive or caused damage:

- Be proactive
- Inform neighbour of the consequence to be imposed
- Use restorative justice methods to minimise police involvement i.e. get young person to apologise / make amends
- Inform manager at earliest opportunity. Depending on the seriousness it may be necessary to contact them in their 'off' time
- Manager to follow up (within 7 days)
- The manager or senior member of staff should visit in person to ensure the neighbour is satisfied with the way that the situation was handled
- This should be followed up again at a point in the future
- Remind those involved of the complaints procedure
- Neighbours are entitled to contact senior management directly

Complaints and representations

- Where a neighbour is unhappy with the response / outcome, they should again be advised of the complaints procedure
- In addition they should be informed of how to access senior management

Useful telephone numbers for neighbours and local residents.

- Company Director & Safeguarding Lead: Jamie Harrocks: [redacted]
- Company Director: David Bingham-Mee: [redacted]
- Company Director & Property Management: Annie Padgett : [redacted]

- General Manager: SM: 00000000

Please give details where necessary of the Registered Manager and/or the Assistant Director

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
0300 1234 666
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk
Cross reference:
Complaints policy
Record of review