



Underley Garden

Underley Garden Children's Home Statement of Purpose

Responsible Individual:	Christopher Kirkbride
Registered Manager:	Lucas Finch
Reviewed:	October 2025
To be referenced:	In Regulation 44 visits and internal monthly monitoring

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1. A statement of the overall aims of the children's home, and the objectives to be attained with regard to young people accommodated in the home.

We aim to provide outstanding care to all young people irrespective of any difficulties or diagnosis they may have, we aim to make a positive difference to the personal, social and learning lives of the young people entrusted to our care.

- Underley Garden Children's Home will accommodate up to 48 children and young people (Male and Female) aged 5 years to 19 years except in exceptional circumstances such as unavoidable short-term delays in onward placements during transition which would result in the young person being over the age of 20 years old.
- In line with the Children Leaving Care Act 2000 and in consultation with Ofsted we can extend our leaving age to 19, where identified in the Pathway Plan and where this will assist young people in their transition to independence or further placements.
- We will support and care for young people with both Autism, Learning Disabilities, complex and multiple needs alongside each other through a variety of different means including:
 - Careful matching and pre admission criteria which ensures we will only accommodate children and young people whose needs are not too dissimilar to other residents.
 - Only accommodating young people who have Learning Disabilities, Complex needs, Autistic Spectrum Condition and associated mental health conditions.
 - Careful consultation and pre-admission risk assessment alongside multi-agency professionals at the point of referral to ensure Underley Garden Children's Home can meet need.
 - Training staff in working with Learning disabilities, Autistic Spectrum Conditions and complex needs.
 - Employing managers who have experience of Learning disabilities and complex needs.
 - Ensuring placement plans and care plans are agreed with local authorities prior to admission.
 - Working with the large support services of health, therapy and educational professionals throughout Options Autism, to ensure staff have access to advice around support.
 - Ensuring management and staff have access to support from Learning Disability nurses and associated Learning Disability therapists.
 - Careful impact assessments and compatibility matching, for the age range and ability of children in the home.

- Ensuring clear strategies for supporting children and young people are embedded and cascaded throughout planning and policy within Underley Garden Children's Home.
- Underley Garden Children's Home is part of Options Autism within Outcomes First Group and as such will operate the same approach as our other children's Homes. By whereby, children and young people are assessed both in terms of educational needs and social care needs at point of referral to ensure a suitable match to our provision. At Underley Garden we provide an integrated provision of Education, Care, Health and Therapy, there is joint working between all provisions including Joint Targets for each young person which are reviewed termly. We believe that by having an integrated service it benefits young people within their Education as well as their personal, social and emotional development and well-being.
- Underley Garden Children's Home works closely with the on-site school through the joint senior leadership team to ensure positive outcomes for young people. We have a thorough process for if further difficulties arise around individual young people such as behavioural, emotional and development difficulties. A referral will be submitted to the Health and Therapy team who meet on a monthly basis and includes senior managers from Care and Education as well as the therapy team. An effective action plan is then created in an effort to resolve any issues or barriers.
- The Health and Therapy team works across both the care home and the school to ensure good health and well-being outcomes for young people and ensures joint learning intentions are being worked towards.
- Every child or young person placed within Underley Garden Children's Home undertakes a therapeutic assessment in the first 16 weeks. Speech and Language and Occupational Therapists will spend time to observe and directly assess the child or young person's therapy needs. Following this assessment, a detailed report is provided and discussed with the child or young person's carers and other professionals, and an individual therapy package is agreed. This will then be incorporated into Underley Garden Children's Home care plans and risk assessments for the child or young person. Furthermore, each young person has an individual My Plan with sensory strategies, therapy techniques and support strategies documented to ensure the Young Person is supported to a high individual standard.
- Underley Garden Children's Home has access to a wide network of mental health clinicians and professionals who can be drawn on to support individual cases. This may include work around self-harm, attachment issues, and diagnosed conditions. This would typically involve clinical supervision to the staff team, assessment, and direct work with children and young people, staff training, and development of individual therapy plans.

- Referrals and admissions into Underley Garden Children's Home must be directed through the referrals team:
 - Nicola Pillay (Admissions Manager)– Nicola.pillay@ofgl.uk
- This will then instigate an assessment and review process which will be handled by the Registered Manager and Head Teacher, and health professionals in liaison with the referrals and admissions team.
- The staff team at Underley Garden Children's Home will be trained to levels which comply with current legislation and guidance. This is tailored to the function of the home and the needs of the children and young people. Specialist training on attachment, Autistic Spectrum Condition, mental health disorders, behaviour management and communication are standard aspects of an on-going training package for all staff. Furthermore, the care management team regularly complete In-House training alongside the specialist training.
- The financial functions and Human Resource support for Underley Garden Children's Home are supported by Options Autism centrally through various HR functions including; recruitment, vetting and barring, and payroll.
- The Management of the home is supported by a team of social care professionals. Regular supervision and monitoring of the home will be conducted by the Registered Manager for Underley Garden Children's Home. In addition, Regulation 44 visits are completed once a month by an independent visitor who provides feedback and actions to the Registered Manager.

What we will deliver:

- Tailored person centred care, within an organisation with a track record for providing safe effective care, with a strong focus on maintaining placement stability.
- We will prepare the young people in our care to be able to live the fullest lives possible during and after their time in our care.
- We will help young people to achieve progress across a wide variety of areas, including academic study, vocational training, social, emotional and behavioural skills, basic life skills and personal development to keep themselves safe.
- We will offer the chance and encourage young people to achieve recognised academic and vocational qualifications.
- We unconditionally value every person and respect their dignity as a unique individual irrespective of their difficulties or diagnosis.
- We will work with young people to ensure when they are leaving our care they have an enhanced positive self-view.
- We will work tirelessly to ensure young people living in our homes have a sense of belonging.

- We will ensure young people have access to opportunities and activities that stretch and enhance their childhood.
- We will ensure children and young people stay on a path to success, through sound inter-agency working and participation.
- We will encourage young people to build positive relationships with staff members.

2. A statement of the facilities and services to be provided for the young people accommodated in the children's home.

Underley Garden Children's Home is situated in Cumbria within a quiet, rural setting. Registered for up to forty-eight young people, the site is composed of four bungalows and one small house.

Within each house there is a well-fitted large family kitchen with fitted appliances, fridge/freezer and microwave. The bungalows also have a separate utility room.



We have a range of different bedroom layouts in order to suit individual young people's needs. Many of the bedrooms on site are fitted with en-suite shower rooms in order to maximise both privacy and independence.



Standard domestic equipment and furnishings have been used in line with 'ordinary' living principles. However, if required, specialist equipment can be made available for individual children.

Young people have access to a phone and the internet on individualised basis in line with care plans to ensure attachments are maintained with significant people, phone and video calls are promoted on a regular basis for young people to keep in touch with those at home, each bungalow has an iPad so that this can be facilitated.

The communal living areas contain a selection of resources including televisions, music, Smart TVs, computers with internet facilities, video games, board games, books and craft activities. There is also a safe enclosed outdoor patio area for the young people which we aim to encourage the use of in the summer months. There is an outdoor area where the young people can play and socialise and they have a variety of climbing frames and swings.



Each young person has their own bedroom with a lock on, the young person can exit their room even when it is locked. They are decorated and furnished to a high and individualised standard, preferences and likes are discussed within the transition process and the young person and family members are included in this so their personal space reflects their individual

personality and taste. Privacy and independence is encouraged through the home layout. Some young people may require additional supervision and the home will put a sound monitor in their bedroom to ensure their safety due to their vulnerability, medical needs and behaviours displayed, this will be agreed with parents and local authorities prior to being in place. All communal spaces are decorated in either neutral tones or a choice from the young people in recognition of the need to minimise sensory overload whilst maintaining a homely feel.

There is also an office and sleep-in room for the staff members in each bungalow, some bungalows have two sleep-ins due to the complexity of the young people.

The area is rich in local amenities including shops, a library, local parks, leisure centres, cinema and bowling alley. There is a variety of good transport links with all the major towns in the area so providing greater opportunities for a wide variety of activities and

multicultural experiences. Due to the wonderful location of Underley Garden School there are many attractive countryside walks immediately outside the accommodation. Underley Garden also have a fleet of vehicles which are exclusively for the young people to be able to access activities and to facilitate family visits, these range from cars to minibuses and are wheelchair accessible.

The physical environment also includes the local community. How the community perceives the home affects the way they view the young people who live there. We will continue to ensure that the local community has an understanding of the work that we do and our aims and objectives. We feel it is in part, crucial to the success of the home to take a pro-active approach in giving local people adequate information for their needs, without violating the young people's right to privacy and confidentiality.

3. The name and address of the Registered Provider and the Registered Manager:

Responsible individual: Chris Kirkbride
Underley Garden School
Kirkby Lonsdale
Carnforth, LA6 2DZ
Tel: 015242 71569

Registered Manager: Lucas Finch
Underley Garden School
Kirkby Lonsdale
Carnforth, LA6 2DZ
Tel: 015242 71569

Registered Provider: Options Autism / Underley Schools Ltd. Atria, Spa Road, Bolton, BL1 4AG

- 4. The number, relevant qualifications and experience of persons working at the children's home, and if the workers are all of one sex, a description of the means whereby the home will promote appropriate role models of both sexes.**

Staff mixes compatibility and skills matching

Comprehensive regular review of the skills attributes and relevance for groups of staff to work with a particular group of young people occur through monthly monitoring and review by the Care Management team. We aim to provide a balance of relevant experience, skill and empathy within each small grouping of staff in each respective home. We have a balance of male and female workers and both male and female workers work in all homes where appropriate. Duties of either sex of worker may be risk assessed at times to ensure a structured respectful approach is adhered to:

- Registered Manager – To have a Level 5 in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare.
- Care Manager- To have, or be working towards Level 5 in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare.
- 3 Deputy Managers – To have a Level 4 in Residential Childcare.
- At least one Senior Care Worker to manage a bungalow/house – all to have, or be working towards a Level 3 or 4 in Residential Childcare.

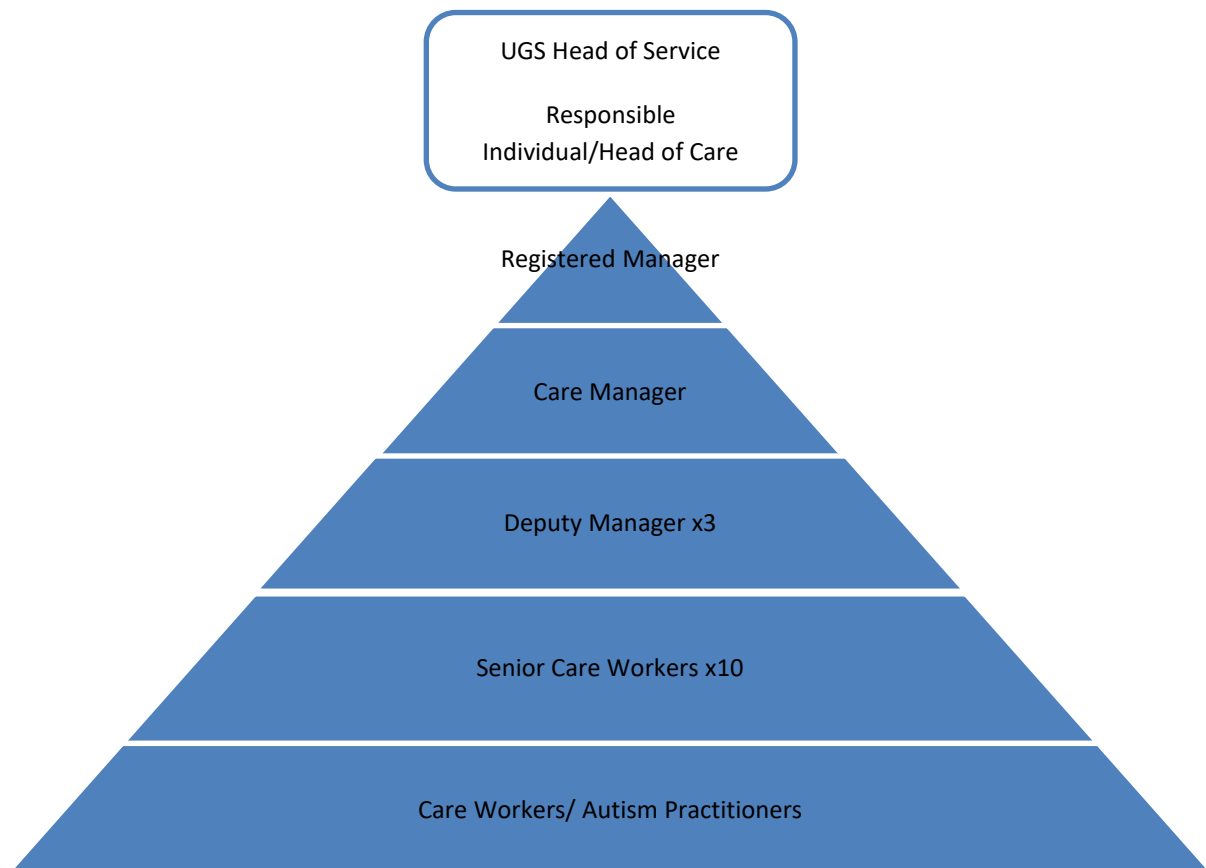
- 5. The arrangements for the supervision, training and development of employees.**

Following a successful 6-month probation care staff are enrolled onto the Level 3 Diploma or Level 4 apprenticeship. All staff are encouraged to continue their own professional development by studying further CYP qualifications at level 4, 5 and graduate level as and when appropriate to their role. All our staff attend training and development sessions as part of their working contract on the first two Wednesdays of the month. A focus of ensuring statutory training is kept up to date and specific training and development relevant to the children and young people we accommodate is captured in these sessions. This is delivered by a host of professionals from a wide health, education, public services and social care background. This training ties into a strategic development plan identified by the RM and RI through an annual review cycle. In house training is also utilised to focus on key areas such as changes in legislation, safeguarding and procedures. There is a dedicated Care Co-ordinator on site who organises required training and ensures all staff have mandatory training within specified time limits.

Supervision

Supervision, mentoring and induction of staff both happens in a formal and non-formal work based environment through a variety of mediums; one-to-one supervision, group supervision, training and development, manager meetings, mentoring sessions, peer supervision, observations and regular performance management review. The formal supervision process requires the staff member to demonstrate work they have carried out with a child or young person, project or produce a work based product. This is evaluated, supported and critiqued by the supervisor to attempt to keep a constant focus, dialogue and QA system of progression. Recorded communication documents will also be used as a more informal means of supervision.

6. The organisational structure of the children's home.



The Deputy Managers are responsible for allocated houses and young people; these are clearly defined roles. The Care Manager works alongside the Registered manager who has responsibility for the overall operational delivery and quality of the children home.

7. Criteria used for admission to the home

Underley Garden Children's Home will provide accommodation for Children and young people with learning disabilities, ASC and complex needs. The age-range, sex and numbers of young people for whom it is intended that accommodation should be provided.

The Home will ensure compatibility with other young people already resident in the home through direct work and group discussions prior to admission.

This will include discussing thoughts feelings and worries of all young people involved. The management team will work with health and therapy professionals and Psychologists, to ensure that a young person's learning disability is within the scope of learning needs of the other residents. The management team will offer placements to young people with learning disabilities that are associated to their Autism, Emotional and Behavioural difficulties.

The welfare of the child/young person is paramount, and Underley Garden with the placing authority has a duty to act in a way that safeguards and promotes this.

The criteria for any admission will take into account the young person's legal status, age, proposed care plan, potential risks to the group and the local community. The needs of the young people already accommodated will be taken into account when deciding on the appropriateness of a placement.

Staff are aware of the sensitivity required in undertaking admissions and discharges to and from the home. The home has a clear policy and established procedure in place, to ensure admissions are carried out with thought and careful planning. The Registered Managers, a deputy manager and senior care worker will all be involved in a thorough transition process to ensure clear communication and a successful move for the young person.

During the first twelve weeks following admissions there is a comprehensive multi-disciplinary assessment period, at the end of the twelve-week period an initial placement meeting will take place to review how effectively the young person has settled in, the progress made and compatibility within the home and school. In extreme circumstances, it may be necessary to terminate the placement without notice (this further explained in our placement contract).

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Young people are considered from referrals made by Local Authorities and/or Children's Services Departments. Parental enquiries are also welcome but will need to be followed by an official Local Authority consultation request. They will have made this referral during or following assessment procedures under the 1993 Education Act. If a Statement has been produced it could be the basis of a contractual agreement between the home and the referring authority whereby the organisation agrees to provide facilities / specialist services for a short or on a long-term basis to satisfy particular needs listed in the EHCP. The school and children's home make provision on both 38 and 52-week basis.

GUIDELINES

Referral information should include:

- Comprehensive needs assessment / Statement of Special Educational Needs or EHC Plan
- A current Care Plan
- A current Risk Assessment if appropriate
- Additional specialist professional reports as appropriate

Offers of a place will be based on:

- The findings of the initial assessment process
- The organisation being confident that it can meet all of the objectives identified in the EHCP, Core assessment and Placement Plan and Risk assessment.
- The young person agreeing to the placement or for a parent/guardian to advocate on their behalf if the young person does not have the capacity.

POLICY

Referrals will be considered by the Management Team. Due consideration will also be given to the views of other professionals and the young people already in residence.

The criteria used is that we will accept all young people (Aged 5 – 18 years) with Autism and LD needs who, according to our judgement, can be successfully accommodated within the available facilities and resources, maintain the overall stability of the children's home and keep the community safe.

On offer of a placement and the first day of the Child or Young Person starting the following will occur:

- The young person's key worker will welcome them.
- Other young people are around to welcome them.
- The young person's bedroom will have been prepared and any personal choices in relation to décor have been acted on as far as is practicable.
- The young person's Care Plan and Health Plan will be drawn up before relevant parties leave Social Worker/ Parent/ Guardian etc.
- Time is taken to explain to the young person what will happen next.
- The young person will receive an appropriate copy of the Welcome Pack (children's guide) if one has not been made available to them previously.
- The young person will receive a copy of the complaints form and we will explain how to raise concerns, worries or complaints.
- An inventory of the Young Persons belongings will be taken when they move in

Underley Garden will consider planned Emergency Placements, the admissions criteria will still be the same.

8. A description of the children's home's underlying ethos and philosophy, and where this is based on any theoretical or therapeutic model, a description of that model.

Underley Garden Children's Home believes that each person has a right to be treated as an individual and that all their physical, emotional and health needs are met in an appropriate and attentive way.

Underley Garden aims to develop sound relationships between Staff and Young People and to create a happy, consistent and stable environment where feelings, thoughts and emotions can be explored and expressed safely "A major determinant of good behaviour and positive ethos of the home is the quality of the relationships between the staff and children" (The Children's Act, vol.4 1.85; p.16).

Underley Garden empowers young people to achieve their full academic potential and to acquire the relevant skills and knowledge to move on positively into adult life. Affirms that all individuals have rights and responsibilities and must therefore be aware of the impact of their actions on the people with whom they live and also on the wider community.

Encourages community participation in order that the young people grow up as

responsible citizens.

The over-riding philosophy of Underley Garden Children's Home is that it should be person and child-centred in its approach to the way it works, and that for young people to grow physically, emotionally and spiritually they need positive role models who are able to protect them, guide them and plan for their futures. We seek to provide the young people with positive and engaging relationships with adults & Peers. This must be in a way that provides appropriate boundaries for their behaviour and does not impose expectations or responsibilities on them.

In all that we do, we are guided by the following values:

- Respect
- Dignity
- Trust
- Well Being
- High expectation
- Recognising the individual
- Realising everyone's potential

What we will deliver?

- We will prepare the young people in our care to be able to live the fullest lives possible during and after their time at our schools.
- We will help young people to achieve progress across a wide variety of areas, including academic study, vocational training, social, emotional and behavioural skills, basic life skills and personal development.
- We will offer the chance and encourage young people to achieve recognised qualifications and awards.
- We will provide a warm, stable home for young people who require additional support.
- We will keep young people safe through proactive safeguarding strategies involving all agencies and significant people.
- We will help young people to enjoy and achieve throughout their stay at Underley Garden children's home, through well prepared person centred planning which focuses on the young person as an individual.
- We will support all aspects of a young person's emotional and physical health through sound multi-disciplinary working.

- We will support relevant, appropriate contact with significant people in a young person's life.
- We will support young people to make lasting appropriate friendships.
- We will support young people to be able to self-regulate their feelings and emotions.
- We will support young people to have trust we will remain committed for them to stay on a path to success.
- We will work with young people to ensure they can look after themselves in terms of independence skills, self-help skills, basic life skills and personal care.
- We will support young people leaving care to find suitable and appropriate accommodation and support services.

9. Protecting and promoting the health of the children and young people we look after

It is well evidenced from research that physical and emotional well-being is an essential pre-requisite for success, positive behaviour and positive mental health. We recognise this and work proactively to ensure the health of all to build esteem, self-image, aspiration and a sense of belonging. We also recognise that the work we do here doesn't just impact upon the young person whilst they are with us, but lays the future foundations for a happy, meaningful and healthy lifestyle.

Our aim is to work not only with the young person but also their families and significant adults in their life, thereby raising standards and providing a holistic service.

We do this by reviewing every child and young person regularly with consultants, educational professionals, health professionals and families.

We access local GP's, dentists and opticians, with which all children and young people are registered as standard.

10. The arrangements for the promotion of the education of the young people accommodated in the home, including the facilities for private study.

All young people are encouraged to contribute to every aspect of their lives through an ongoing live care plan administered by the home in consultations with all relevant parties (parents, carers, local authorities, advocates, friends, peers, teachers, support workers, health professionals).

This focuses the work carried out in the home and is the basis for all planning and

delivery of care in the homes. This is administered by a simple planning and review cycle by staff which focuses key areas including, CYP engagement, leisure recreation opportunities, CYP aspirations, health and therapy, financial knowledge, independence development, and education.

The home is situated on the same site as its school and, as such, close links with school /college staff are maintained to ensure educational participation and development. School staff facilitate home schooling as and when required, which is coordinated in conjunction with the home staff. The school operates a user-friendly and flexible curriculum structure so that we have the capacity to build personalised programmes around the needs of each young person.

11. The arrangements to promote children's participation in recreational, sporting and cultural activities.

Recreation and Leisure

Much support is given to explore and realise potential in whatever interests and aspirations a young person has. This is facilitated by staff supporting transport, attendance, and participation in independent and group activities within the home and in the local community. We have close local links with local groups, clubs, Youth centres and leisure centres, which complement the home's approach to structured multi-agency working. We believe differentiated activities to be key to successful engagement of young people due to the scope of needs of the young people we accommodate. As such, this is managed by the whole staff team & Registered Managers to ensure equal opportunity, choice & age appropriate activities.

12. The arrangements made for consultation with the young people accommodated about the operation of the children's home.

Young People's Voice

We support the right of young people to be consulted and listened to about key decisions which affect their daily life or their future. This happens formally through Key Worker sessions and informally through everyday living opportunities. We encourage staff to involve young people in a way that enables them to contribute effectively e.g. explain the purpose of a review meeting, who will be there and go through the consultation documents in advance of the review. Staff are asked to make a clear distinction between when you are helping the young people to express their views and

when you are expressing your own view or that of the staff team. Staff are expected to consider seeking advice and expertise on how to resolve linguistic, ethnic, and cultural difficulties to enable a young person's full involvement in consultation.

Young people are invited to participate in decisions concerning the home and daily life for example in menu planning, house decoration and decisions concerning recreational activities. The young people will hold young people's meetings on a monthly basis to discuss the running of the home, encourage suggestions and contributions to wider community life and activities. Young people will have the opportunity to raise any matters concerning the operation of the home with the Registered Managers through regular monthly monitoring visits. We encourage and support Young people to be involved in their statutory visits with their social worker and their Child Looked After (CLA) review processes and where appropriate will seek representation from Children's Rights and Advocacy services. Underley Garden employs an independent advocate who has a strong background in disability and visits the young people on site.

13. The arrangements made for the control, restraint and discipline of children.

Positive Behaviour Support

The young people we accommodate may display a variety of challenging behaviours which result in a range of strategies, including Restrictive Physical intervention, being used in order to reduce risk.

Staff are encouraged to take a proactive approach based around knowledge of individual young people and their behaviours and where this may be exhausted, different methods of de-escalation are encouraged via appropriate staff training and the promotion of positive relationships.

By doing this we wish to create an environment whereby all parties are kept safe but that also encourages young people to be involved in the process of being reflective about their behaviours.

The use of RPI is always used as a last resort where other means of de-escalation fail and where the degree of risk has been appropriately assessed.

The use of RPI as a strategy in event of a situation that involves elevated risk will always be determined in reference to: the seriousness of the incident; the relative risks arising from using a physical intervention compared to an alternative strategy; the age,

cultural background, gender, stature and medical history of the young person/adult.

In order to support young people in self-managing their own behaviour they have plenty of space within the home & their personal Bedroom space, where they can take time out where young people can 'self-refer' in a time of heightened anxiety or distress.

The emphasis of using time out is to provide a place of security and low distraction in order to aid the recovery process away from the group. Time out should always be used via a process of 'self-referral' and the use of this must be planned and outlined in young person Risk Assessment or Care Plan.

Behaviour Support and de-escalation Training

All staff are trained in RPI and the adopted method chosen by the organisation is that of Safety Intervention (SI). SI is a framework that encompasses a range of approaches and methods to manage challenging behaviour. By using SI we ensure that the positive handling strategies used with the young people have sufficient range and flexibility to be appropriate across the age and development range. Training provided by on-site tutors enables the staff group as a whole to feel more confident and competent in their management of "challenging" behaviour. The homes aim to promote the least intrusive positive handling strategies with an emphasis and preference for the use of verbal strategies and non-verbal de-escalation strategies, which are exhausted before positive handling strategies are used. The bulk of staff training is theoretical, with 10 units focussing on preventative strategies which can be used to ensure that the use of physical intervention is an absolute last resort. Through regular training on an annual basis staff are provided with open forums to discuss and develop their practice. The SI framework identifies the need for reflection following physical intervention, both for staff members and young people, and appreciates the value of this. As such, staff and young people are debriefed and encouraged to discuss what might have been done differently, in order to avoid similar incidents in the future. Actions are then taken from these conversations, and care plans and risk assessments are adjusted where necessary. The organisation has a number of SI Instructors trained, this team can ensure that there is continued on-site guidance and support, which in turn provides the best possible practice on a daily basis.

Restorative Practice

Underley Garden Children's home operates around a reward and incentive basis which is aimed at giving individual young people the structural consistency that they need within an environment that strives to be caring and attentive to individual needs.

The use of different incentives for positive behaviour gives each young person the opportunity to work towards a chosen goal. Individual schemes created by key workers alongside both our Occupational therapist and clinical psychologist allow that even if a young person experiences some difficulties there is still the opportunities to achieve some degree of success and therefore reach their goal.

We at Underley Garden Children's home believe that rewarding acceptable behaviour works better than punishing undesirable behaviour.

However, sometimes it may be necessary to use other methods of control that will be appropriate to the action or behaviour. For example, if a young person has deliberately damaged another person's property or the fabric of the home, they may be expected to contribute from pocket money, or allowed to do jobs around the home as reparation. This would be individual to each young person as some young people with a diagnosis of Autism and a learning difficulty would not understand the concept of this and therefore it would not be appropriate.

All measures of control and disciplinary measures are based on establishing positive relationships with young people and are built on genuine interest for their wellbeing.

14. The arrangements made for child protection and to counter bullying.

Our Child Protection Policy is designed to provide information and guidance on the procedures which are place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Concerns about child protection should be directed through the 'Designated Safeguarding Leads'. Chris Kirkbride, Lucas Finch and Mel Pearce.

All members of staff who carry out on-call duties are trained to 'designated person standard' in order to ensure appropriate cover is in place across 24 hours, 365 days per year. Within the Outcomes First Group we have a group Head of Safeguarding (Anne-

Marie Delaney) who oversees any safeguarding concerns and holds DSL networking meetings in order so we can learn and share good practice across the group.

Members of staff are also individually responsible under the Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership Child Protection Procedures.

All staff are trained to safeguarding level 1 and beyond. Copies of current procedures are available in all bungalows/offices on site. In addition, regular safeguarding training takes place in-house, within supervision and scenarios used to promote staffs understanding of different safeguarding concerns.

All allegations, whatever their source, are reported by the Registered Manager and DSL's to: (LADO), Cumbria/Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children Partnership, Referring Authority Officers, Parents / Carers (as appropriate) Ofsted (ISA) where appropriate. The procedures as specified by the Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership are followed. Furthermore, all allegations are sent to our internal Safeguarding Lead for oversight and guidance.

All necessary arrangements are taken to care for, support and safeguard any young person resident in the school involved with the allegation.

Where a member of staff is involved with an allegation, appropriate support is provided through senior supervising staff and is managed in line with organisational policy.

Confidential comprehensive records are kept on all Child Protection matters. These are filed in a secure location and are only accessible by the DSL's

Arrangements to counter bullying

Bullying is recognised as an inherent risk. A clear anti-bullying policy is in place and all staff are aware of this. We believe that everybody has the right to be treated with respect, to be safe and to feel safe. Bullying behaviour will not go away if it is ignored and often leads to more bullying. We encourage anyone who feels bullied to tell us or someone else. We encourage young people to talk about their experience and choose an adult they feel comfortable with such as, telling someone by phone or note, a member of staff, the manager or an advocacy worker or social worker.

Staff will directly intervene and challenge any incidents of bullying. This will be managed through staff awareness, risk assessments, effective supervision of young people and the follow up of any complaints. We will support any young person who is attempting to bully another young person as they may need help to stop or change their behaviour or to put things right, this is supported with key worker sessions and social stories. Some young people will not have the understanding of what it is to bully or be bullied so staff will be highly vigilant in noticing any signs and will support young people with this alongside the therapy team.

Any bullying by a member of staff in the homes towards a young person will be investigated according to disciplinary procedures and the matter will be reported to Children's Services. A young person or their family or carer may also choose to make a complaint via the home's complaints policy, alternatively they could approach Ofsted directly on 0300 123 1231.

15. The procedure for dealing with any unauthorised absence of a child from the children's home.

Children and Young People missing from the home.

We aim to provide care to ensure that children and young people feel secure and safe living within our home.

If there is a risk that a child or young person may run away or go missing staff are trained to support them to understand the risks and dangers, involved and make the child or young person aware of how to seek help. Due to the high level of staff supervision at Underley Garden, the risk of a child going missing is reduced.

If a child does go missing from the homes the management work with the police and the child's responsible authority, Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children Partnership and other relevant parties, to do all they can to locate them and return them to the home. When they return they are offered a positive warm response, support and access to an independent person to speak to.

Care management & staff are made aware of Joint protocol Children and young people who run away or go missing from home or care.

'Runaway and Missing from Home and Care' (RMFHC) protocol in relation to Cumbria Local Authority and adhere to its content.

Where there is a possibility that a child or young person will run away and go missing or does go missing from placement, then the child's care plan, along with the placement plan, should include a strategy to minimise this risk. This would be done through a multi-agency approach to ensure the safety of the child or young person. There is a thorough site risk assessment which is attached to the missing from home policy and as agreed by Cumbria Police.

16. The fire precautions and associated emergency procedures in the children's home.

Fire Safety

Every step is taken to ensure that comprehensive precautions are in place to safeguard and protect the residents, staff and visitors against the risk of fire within the service. We comply with the relevant legislation: Fire Precautions Act 1974, Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997, Fire Precaution (work place) amendment Regulation 1999 and Building Regulations 2000.

We maintain regular checks and maintenance of all fire systems and associated equipment as per legislation. We hold training for all our staff in fire safety and awareness and encourage a reporting culture by an easily understood concerns reporting system.

Evacuations and risk management of specific house and its associated group of young people are conducted as per guidance and legislation and easy read protocol is available to all young people and is displayed in prominent positions.

We have an annual audit conducted by our local fire safety department and also contract HealthyBuildings.com to do a comprehensive risk assessment bi-annually to support our risk management procedures. At Underley Garden we have a dedicated site supervisor who oversees all the Health and Safety procedures, policies and ensures we adhere to all regulations.

All our young people have an individual fire Evacuation Plan detailing the layout of their bungalow and exits and they also have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) detailing how they would respond to an alarm and what additional support or aids may be required.

17. The use of CCTV

The system comprises a number of fixed cameras located around the Care Home site but all external to the houses that are placed in strategic sites to ensure site security.

All cameras are monitored from a Central Site Office and are only available to designated staff – members of the Site Team and members of the Senior Leadership and Management Team.

The system runs over the computer network and access is restricted to inside the Care Home only (the functionality to access remotely is disabled for reasons of safeguarding)

Summary of Key Points

- This Code of Practice will be reviewed every two years.
- The CCTV system is owned and operated by Underley Garden.
- The Control room will not be staffed out of office hours.
- The Control Room is not open to visitors except by prior arrangement and good reason.
- Liaison meetings may be held with the Police and other bodies.
- The Hard Drive may only be viewed by Authorised School Officers, Control Room staff and the Police.
- Images required as evidence will be properly recorded on a disk from the Hard Drive, witnessed and packaged before copies are released to the police.
- Disks will not be made available to the media for commercial or entertainment.
- Disks will be disposed of securely by incineration.
- Any breaches of this code will be investigated by the Head of service. An independent investigation will be carried out for serious breaches by Options Autism.
- Breaches of the code and remedies will be reported to the Head of service.
-

For further details, please refer to Underley Garden **CCTV Policy**

All bedroom doors have a door alarm fitted to alert a member of night staff in the event of young people leaving their room, this is an extra safeguarding measure and is used in conjunction with waking night support, this is reviewed for each individual young person on a 6 monthly basis or more frequent if requested.

The front doors to all bungalows also have a door alarm fitted to alert if anyone enters or leaves the bungalow.

18. The arrangements for the children's religious instruction and observance.

It is important that young people retain their cultural identity, thus full support and encouragement of religious observance in consultation with parents will be given to achieve this.

The homes policy is not to force or persuade any child to participate in religious observance if it is against their wishes.

Efforts are taken to ascertain the family experience of each child including cultural factors in terms of moral values, behavioural norms, lifestyle and artistic pursuits. It is recognised that shared religious belief, ethnic background, language, history or economic background sometimes lead to similar cultural norms and expectations.

However staff are careful not to make assumptions about these. Individual Care Plans reflect cultural, religious and ethnic requirements in terms of care.

Cultural, racial, ethnic and religious expectations regarding the choice of clothes, food and personal requisites are supported and actively promoted. This includes ensuring that there is choice within daily menus reflecting different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and that children have ready access to appropriate skin and hair care including make-up. Special dietary requirements will be catered for, such as Halal & Kosher foods.

It is recognised that belonging to a minority in a society brings with it particular stresses. All the children are helped to reflect on this as they are helped to process instances where they have felt different from a bigger group. As a way of supporting the young people understand and learn different cultures/religions the bungalows host 'culture/theme evenings' once a month and make different meals and do some activities related to that culture/religion.

Most children who live in our home have very acute feelings of being outside a group, for various reasons, but particularly because they are living away from their families and outside the mainstream of society. In addition to this many children come originally from families who have found it difficult to fit in and have lived on the margins of society; these experiences of being 'outside' have often been compounded by multiple placement moves and experiences of rejection.

Some of these experiences will have ethnic, religious and cultural components and part

of the treatment methodology is to recognise the various components of these experiences of being in the minority.

Children are encouraged and given the opportunity to practice cultural, religious or ethnic customs and characteristics without interference or prejudice to others. Where religious practices require special clothing or special diet children are properly equipped and advice is sought from either the young person's family or local religious leaders, where necessary.

They are enabled to celebrate their own religious festivals and assisted in understanding and acknowledging the religious festivals of others. It is recognised that it is natural that some young people may express doubt about continuing their religious beliefs or practices; whilst having regard for their wishes, it is important that they are helped to recognise and discuss their choices and the implications for their relationships with their family and community.

Where special privacy is needed in order to pray during the course of the day consideration will be given to how best to provide this, whilst also considering the impact on other children and the group as a whole.

19. The arrangements for contact between a child and his parents, relatives and friends.

Contact

The welfare of the young person is paramount. It is our belief that when looking after children away from home, that whenever possible, contact must be promoted and maintained with the young person's parents, relatives, friends and natural community.

The amount of contact will be set at the Planning Meeting, where the views of all parties and the needs of the young person will be considered, this will be regularly reviewed as and when required.

The contact may be through visits, telephone, e-mails and letters, provided there are no restrictions. Staff will monitor contact and help young people to improve the standard of their contact if appropriate. Video calls are prompted as a regular form of contact for the young people which are more interactive than a phone call.

20. The arrangements for dealing with complaints.

Complaints

Any person who has a concern or complaint is encouraged to share and discuss the matter with a member of staff at the earliest opportunity or speak to the Registered Manager or Head of Care.

Where the person continues to be unhappy, the home has a formal complaints procedure and a copy of this is available on request. Feedback on all complaints is given as per policy.

Individuals also have a right to take their concern or complaint to Ofsted.

The home's complaints procedures are designed to be clear, user friendly and readily accessible. They aim to address informal as well as formal complaints. Systems that do not promote open communication about 'minor' complaints will not be responsive to major ones, and a pattern of 'minor' complaints may indicate more deeply seated problems in management and culture that need to be addressed.

Our complaints procedures are for young people, visiting and contact arrangements with social workers and independent visitors (for children looked after), as well as parents, carers and advocacy and other services.

There is a complaints book that records all representations or complaints, the action taken to address them and the outcomes. Our young people should genuinely be able to raise concerns and make suggestions for changes and improvements, which are taken seriously.

All new children and young people, their parents and new staff are informed of the procedures as part of the induction process. A copy of the procedures will be supplied on request to any of these persons / organisations. Young people, upon admission to the school/home, will receive a young person friendly copy of the Complaints Procedure. Their Key Worker will ensure that the young person knows how, and feels able, to complain about any aspect of living in the home. No action or reprisal will be taken against a child making a complaint or representation.

- Complaints policy is on the Underley Garden website. Chris Kirkbride and Lucas Finch are the complaints officers for the children's home.

21. The arrangements for dealing with reviews and review of placement plans.

Arrangements for statutory care reviews

Legislation requires that 'Children Looked After' have their Care Plans regularly reviewed.

Underley Garden Children's home aims to ensure that the placing authorities follow the statutory review system:

- first review in placement will be within 20 working days of admission.
- the second no later than 3 months; and regularly every 6 months
- Some reviews may be done more frequently than this.
- Local authority care plans to be reviewed following the CLA review.

Due to the complex needs of some of the young people we look after it might be necessary, on certain occasions to hold Emergency meeting such as:

- Reviews are formal meetings, required by law, and take place at least twice a year. They look at the overall plan for the young person. It is here that any big changes in a care plan may be decided upon.
- A Planning Meeting is less formal than a Review and tends to look at the more day-to-day arrangements and can be arranged as and when required. The main difference is that Planning Meetings include just those people needed to look at a specific issue (e.g. parent, young person, key worker or Social worker).

Whatever the meeting, there is a system of forms, filled in by the chair, which help us ask the right questions and to record clearly what has been agreed. The important thing about care planning and reviewing is that everyone's opinion is listened to in order to make sure that a young person is receiving the best possible care and advice. The young people are encouraged to take a very active part in this process and can chair the reviews themselves. If they wish to do this, staff will help them prepare in an appropriate way.

Young people's Care Plans are reviewed and updated on a minimum of a monthly basis or as and when needed. This is updated with input from the Young person, Key worker, staff team & Registered Manager.

22. A description of the children's home's policy in relation to anti-discriminatory practice as respects children and children's rights.

Anti-discriminatory practice / support and rights

Support

- We work closely with families and Childrens Services departments to ensure appropriate ties and relationships with relevant and responsible people are maintained.
- We operate a system of transport to and from the family home specified at key times on admission and throughout the placement to assist this process.
- We will work closely with Children's services to assist contact / support contact visits for all of our young people.

Rights

The Home strictly adhere to anti-discriminatory legislation, policy and practice and actively supports the view that young people will not be discriminated on the grounds of their culture, race, religious persuasion, gender and sexuality or immigration status. Staff are actively expected to demonstrate tolerance, understanding and empathy with all young people they work with. Every attempt is made to combat any occurrence of prejudice.

- The home and its staff team are committed to upholding and implementing the United Nations Convention on Children's Rights and the principles surrounding it. Each young person is treated with respect and dignity and valued in their own right. Our values and ethos are based on anti-oppressive practices.
- We actively promote children's rights organisations and advocates to contribute to supporting the children and young people we accommodate by actively involving advocates where appropriate in care planning and review processes.
- We actively collate data from children and young people which contributes to the running of the management and running of the home.
- Young people aged 18 and above will be subject to a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) where appropriate.

23. Conclusion

Our focused and committed approach, delivered within a caring, family environment provides a platform from which young people can really enjoy their lives and achieve. Each young person's care plan typically involves integrated, outcome-focused input from education, therapy and care. This approach aims to ensure that we provide a person-centred wrap-around service that promotes individuality and choice whilst encouraging all young people to be the best that they can be. Making the provision fit the young person and not the other way around is our first principle in line with legislation.

24. Appendix 1 Important contacts

Responsible Individual

Chris Kirkbride
Tel: 07402333897

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel: 03001231231

Childline

Tel: 0800 1111

Whistle Blowing (see Whistle Blowing Policy)

Chris Kirkbride
Tel: 07402333897

LADO

- Email: Lado@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk
- Please note if you are worried that a child is at **risk of immediate harm** please contact the Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Hub on **0300 373 2724**. or see [How to refer a child](#).

To speak to a LADO for advice please contact Multi-Agency Business Support Team who will take your details and ensure a LADO returns your call:

Phone **01768 812267**

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Chris Kirkbride
Tel: 07402333897
Tel: 015242 71569

Deputy Safeguarding Leads

Lucas Finch
Mel Pearce
Denby Bracken
Tel: 07790827841
Tel: 015242 71569

25. Appendix 2 Staff Team, experience & qualifications.

1	Responsible Individual/Head of Care Chris Kirkbride NVQ Level 3 working with children and young people, NVQ level 5 Diploma in leadership and management, Designated Safeguarding Lead, safeguarding level 3. I have over 14 years working with looked after children with special needs and have been dedicated to achieving the highest standards of person-centred care for children and young people. I was the Registered Manager at Underley Garden for four years and now as Head of Care my aim is to ensure the provision continues to provide outstanding outcomes for the young people in our care. Fundamentally, I believe that children should be kept safe, their welfare protected and all children and young people have an entitlement to the highest qualities of care and education which replicates family life as far as is possible.
2	Registered Manager Lucas Finch NVQ level 5 in leadership and management for Residential Childcare, NVQ Level 3 working with children and young people, First Aid, Administration of medication, COSHH Certificate, Fire Safety, safeguarding level 2 and 3, safeguarding children's manager level 5, DSL training. I have over 12 years' experience working with children and young people with additional needs at Underley Garden, seven of which have been within a management role – as Deputy Manager before becoming the Registered Manager in 2020. I am extremely dedicated and I will use my experience to ensure that the young people here at UGS receive outstanding levels of care so they have the best possible life chances. We have an established and motivated team who go above and beyond to build relationships with the young people, families and social workers of all who reside at UGS

3	Care Manager Mel Pearce NVQ level 5 in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare, NVQ Level 3 working with children and young people, Safeguarding level 2, level 3 and level 5, Safety Intervention Instructor, Safer Recruitment, First Aid, COSHH & Infection Control, Fire Safety, Health & Safety at Work, Medication Administration, Prevent and Food Safety. I have worked with the children and young people at Underley Garden for over 12 years, striving to achieve the highest standards of care and positive outcomes. After 6 years of working within a Deputy Manager role, I have recently progressed to my current role as Care Manager. I am motivated to continue to develop the skills and life experiences of the young people in our care, whilst using my experience to ensure an established team around them to be a positive role model in their lives, going above and beyond to meet their needs.
4	Deputy Managers Alice Preston NVQ level 4 in residential childcare, level 2 in understanding children and young people's mental health, level 2 understanding the safe handling of medication, first aid, safeguarding. Administration of medication, COSHH Certificate, Fire Safety, food safety. My career at Underley Garden School began in 2019 first as a care worker then progressing to Senior Care Worker for two years before recently becoming a Deputy Manager. Underley has enabled me to work alongside amazing young people as well as working closely with parents and social workers to ensure that they are supported in achieving the best possible outcomes. Faith Hiron I have a 1st Class Honours Degree in BSc Criminology and Sociology with Quantitative Methods. NVQ Level 4 in Residential Childcare, I am a qualified mental health first aider, Safety Intervention, Emergency First Aid, Administration of medication, COSHH Certificate, Fire Safety, food safety certificate, safeguarding, Level 2 team principles of team leading. After graduating in 2019, I began working at Underley Garden as a care worker, then as a senior Care Worker for three and a half years before becoming a Deputy Manager in 2024. I am dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of our young people and providing them with opportunities and the essential tools to forge better futures for themselves.

	Annabel Santar NVQ Level 4 in Residential Childcare, Safety Intervention, Emergency First Aid, Administration of medication, COSHH Certificate, Fire Safety, food safety certificate. I started working at Underley Garden in 2022, and after just 10 months, moved into a senior role. That step really helped me build my skills and gave me a chance to lead a small team. I found a real passion for supporting young people and making a difference in their lives. Watching them laugh, learn, and grow is something I find incredibly rewarding, and every day brings something new. I'm a driven and hardworking person who's all about providing the best care and helping young people reach their full potential.
5	Senior Care Workers Achieved or working towards Level 3 or 4 in Residential Childcare. Safeguarding level 1, SI, First Aid, COSHH & Infection Control, Fire Safety, Health & Safety at Work, Medication Administration, Prevent and Food Safety, Level 2 team leading principles.
6	Care Workers/Autism Practitioners Achieved or working towards Level 3 or 4 in Residential Childcare. Safeguarding level 1, Safety Intervention, First Aid, COSHH & Infection Control, Fire Safety, Health & Safety at Work, Medication Administration, Prevent and Food Safety.