

# Owlswick Independent School and Children's Home

## Annual Statement of Purpose

**March 2019**



## **Owlswick School and Children's Home**

### **Statement of Purpose**

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Department for Education Establishment Number: 845/6007

Date of statement revision: March 2019  
Date for statement to be revised: March 2020

## Contextual Information

The Children's Home Regulations 2015, Regulation 16 (1) requires that Owlswick School and Home have in place a written Statement of Purpose for our Children's Home.

In addition, Regulation 16 (2) requires that we provide a copy of this document to Ofsted and that we also make a copy available upon request by:

- Any person working in the home
- Any child accommodated in the home
- The parent of any child accommodated in the home
- The Placing Authority of any child accommodated in the home
- The Placing Authority who is considering placing a child in the home

It is the Registered Managers responsibility to take a positive approach to Regulation 16 (2) by providing a copy of this document to those individuals above rather than this having to be requested.

This Statement of Purpose details all elements of service provision, for example this includes:

Quality and Purpose of Care  
Views, Wishes and Feelings  
Education  
Enjoyment and Achievement  
Health  
Positive Relationships  
Protection of Children  
Leadership and Management  
Care Planning

This is a critically important document for Owlswick School and Home, but more importantly for the children and young people who use our services, their families and placing authorities.

It is the primary foundation for the service that we provide at Owlswick School and Home and how we deliver the service. It is the practise and management template that we aim to adhere to and be measured by. It is a stated means of how Owlswick School and Home will aim to ensure we put children's and young people's rights at the forefront of all we do.

Ofsted (The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) is the regulatory body that registers Owlswick as a children's home. The registration complies with the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

Ofsted is a national body set up under the Care Standards Act for the regulation and inspection of social care services throughout England.

## **An Introduction to Owlswick School and Home – Who are we?**

### **Our Aims and Ethos**

The primary aim of our school and home at Owlswick is to support, care for and educate young people in a nurturing and stimulating environment. We provide high quality care and education to young people who for a number of different reasons are unable to live within a family environment during this period in their life. We aim for young people, who have experienced traumatic life experiences and significant personal adversity to feel safe, recognise their potential, learn personal resilience and be enabled to leave Owlswick as independent and confident young adults. We pride ourselves on our commitment to Owlswick providing the most positive experience possible for a young person during their placement with us.

Owlswick is an Independent Registered School and Home established in 1981, recognised and approved by the Department of Education, that provides both residential care and accommodation and education for male and female young people. We are also registered to provide day placements at our school.

Young people who come to Owlswick may have with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and moderate learning difficulties or are diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum. We provide a 24 hour, 52 week per year service and provide placements for young people country wide, with the majority coming from London and the South East. Young people referred to Owlswick will have an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) which relates to their educational, care, health, emotional and behavioural needs. Most young people are unable to receive their education within a mainstream environment and will therefore receive their education from our on-site school provided by our experienced education team.

Owlswick seeks to provide a well-developed and supportive school and home, which operates as a large family style unit where young people are encouraged to reach their full potential. For some young people this residential provision is their first experience of a consistent, caring and stable environment and we aim to provide high levels of personal support and individually tailored education and care in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

Our ethos is to enable young people, who have often experienced considerable disruption to their lives, to feel valued, secure and successful. We have created a home in which every individual can feel safe and be supported to confront and deal with specific issues which may be impacting on their health, wellbeing and personal development. By creating an environment of mutual respect, providing an empathetic, nurturing approach and setting clear professional and personal boundaries, we are able to demonstrate that the young people who live at Owlswick learn, thrive and develop resilience. We aspire for each individual to feel that they are significantly achieving in both their educational and personal experiences. It is very important that young people tell us that their experiences at Owlswick are positive, stimulating and that they feel cared for.

Our aim is for each placement to achieve positive outcomes for each individual in our education and care. Our staff teams are responsible for the development of careful and well thought out education and care plans which focus on child development through learning, building life skills which give confidence, knowledge and enables independence whilst considering personal safety and risk.

A core element of the Owlswick ethos is preparing young people for the next stage of their lives by introducing them to the world of work, further education, financial management and independent living. We encourage young people to build the necessary skills to manage themselves confidently in social situations and the work place in order to have the best possible life chances when they leave Owlswick.

Owlswick does not define itself as being a therapeutic community. Our ethos is for our staff to work in a therapeutic manner with young people and embrace therapeutic principles to support each individual when they are experiencing difficult personal challenges which are impacting in a positive manner on their emotional and physical well-being. We are continuing to embed our Thrive therapeutic programme across both our home and school.

## **Meeting the care and education needs of young people – age appropriately**

As Owlswick offers placements to a wide array of young people there can be times when both older young people and younger children together live in our home. Young people may come to Owlswick following difficult experiences and a big part of our ethos is to provide social interactions within a family style environment where young people learn to live with others and respect their views.

By having a diverse age range there is recognition that there may be occasions where divisions occur. The young people will be living together as a group with different ages such as siblings will do in a family. This means they may have periods of time where they do not want to interact with one another and their relationships move between being friends and not getting on with another person. Staff will seek to provide opportunities for the entire group to socialise and eat together with the aim of creating positive associations however recognise that it is important that young people feel that they have freedom of choice in who they want to spend time with.

Our staff offer individually tailored care and education and recognise that this may differ significantly dependent on the age and ability of the young people. There will be a need to offer age appropriate games and activities for example. Staff will assess the different levels of independence each young person is able to achieve and this will be dependent on age and an assessment on the capability of a young person to keep themselves safe. We aim for the communal living spaces to be used by all however there may be a need to create a quiet space for younger children to play and be together for example. This will be dependent on the needs of the young people at the time and the communal areas are able to be used flexibly. The young people will also be consulted on as to how they want their living spaces to be used and how they wish these to look and feel.

We are aware that coming to Owlswick may be a significant and daunting step particularly for a younger child. We will ensure that a younger child has their bedroom situated closer to the

staff sleep-in room to ensure that they feel secure during the night and have easy access to the staff member if required. All young people have staff settling them at night, and ensuring they are in a comfortable place to sleep. Staff will read a book or a story with the young people if they like to do so. All young people will be made aware how to access support during the night time from the waking night staff and care staff member.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that the home is a safe place for all who live there and provides an environment where all young people can express that they feel secure. Staff will be alert to any peer pressure being placed on a younger child from an older group member (or vice versa). Through their knowledge of the young people they will discreetly observe the interactions between individuals. This is in order to ensure that a younger person is not being bullied by an older young person for example or feeling coerced into doing something they are not happy with but do not feel confident enough to speak about. Staff will regularly check in with all the young people to talk about how they are interacting with others and create an environment where young people feel confident that they will talk about if they are worried, scared and/or anxious about another young person.

## **Children's Homes Regulatory Requirements and Quality Standards**

It is the responsibility and requirement of Owlswick to ensure we are meeting all legal requirements set out in The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015. There is also a requirement that we are meeting (and where possible surpassing) the Department for Education Quality Standards 2015. Owlswick evaluates its services against the quality standards in order to demonstrate where individual standards are being met and where there is a need to make further developments and improvements.

## **Our location and facilities**

Owlswick is a large country house set in 3 acres of grounds on the outskirts of the village of Kingston, 1 ½ miles from the vibrant town of Lewes and 6 miles from the South East coast and from the city of Brighton.

The home is set up as a family home with comfortable recreational facilities in well maintained surroundings.

The school is housed in a separate, purpose-built building, which offers, amongst other facilities, a computer suite, science area, design technology facilities, a multi-purpose hall and large, bright class rooms.

The main part of the house has 10 bedrooms for children with staff sleep-in rooms. We have developed a separate self-contained flat area for two senior young people, with a separate lounge, kitchen and bathroom.

Our home aims to create a friendly welcoming environment with the young people being consulted regularly about how they want the communal spaces to look and feel and how these are utilised.

There are two well-furnished lounges, a large dining room, kitchen and laundry area as well as a cinema room. There is also a staff office, meeting room and first aid and medication space.

The accommodation has been developed over the life of the home and is continually improved and upgraded in order to meet the changing needs of the young people who live there.

## **What do we provide and how can a young person access our services?**

We provide both care and education services to young people. Owlswick has the advantage of being able to offer young people the opportunity to access care support, education and therapy on one site delivered by two teams of staff. Our school and home are close together in two separate buildings as we understand the importance for young people to make a clear distinction between home and school time.

Owlswick offers flexible placements where a young person can be placed between 38 – 52 weeks. We aim to be as flexible as possible in the placements offered in order to meet the requirements of young people, parents/carers and referring agencies. We are also able to offer day placements to young people who may need to access education from our school and then return to their home environment. We are not able to take emergency admissions.

Young people come to Owlswick following a referral made by a local authority children's social care or education service. Parents/carers can, and do, make enquires directly to Owlswick and we would refer them to their local authority in order to move forward their request for a child to be placed at Owlswick. Owlswick can offer advice and support about this process. We are also part of the East and West Sussex Local Offer Scheme.

Most young people will have a number of personal challenging issues and/or Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and are usually subject to a care order and/or EHCP. Placements are made following a rigorous assessment process; planned visits and consultations made with the referring agency, the young person concerned and, where possible, significant family members. Staff visit young people within their current home environment with added opportunities to visit Owlswick and meet staff and other young people.

A medical history is required prior to the placement being agreed. This includes relevant documentation of the young person's physiological and psychological history and assessment. A complete health review will follow once the placement has begun and any special medical needs will be overseen by a named GP from the local surgery and other health professionals as required. Health and wellbeing is an important factor of any placement and we ensure that the mental, physical and sexual health of each young person is included as part of the individual care and education planning process.

Individual cultural and religious needs are supported and understood by the staff team in order to ensure that the young person is receiving culturally sensitive and appropriate education and care. This would be reflected in individual lesson planning, care plans, dietary

requirements, and opportunities for religious worship, personal items hygiene and social arrangements for example.

It is important for all young people at Owlswick to be able to take part in social activities both internally and externally in order to develop social networks, skills and peer groups. Young people choose activities that they would like to undertake and are encouraged to take part in various clubs, groups and social situations. Any activity, whether in school or in the home, is risk assessed. Staff ensure they get to know the friends and families that are in contact with the young people and their contact details. Addresses are obtained and visited wherever necessary and meetings arranged with families and friends to create positive relationships.

Statutory reviews with everyone involved in the life of a young person are held every six months in care and three times a year in education. Such review meetings always include the young person and any other relevant parties. An assessment of the progress of the placement takes place to ensure it is meeting the requirements of parents and carers and the referring agency, as well as ensuring they are benefiting the young person. Frequent reviews are also held with the young person and with staff from the education and care teams in order to assess progress, address any concerns or anxieties and ensure that individual, personal development and education needs are being met and addressed.

An important part of developing independence is our independence programme which prepares young people for independent living. This programme operates by setting out a comprehensive series of tasks that young people follow in order to build a set of skills that rise in complexity with measurable outcomes. These can range from making a bed, cleaning a room and handling personal laundry, to money management, purchasing and preparing meals, looking after health and well-being and developing relationships outside Owlswick. The programme is adjusted for each young person according to their level of ability.

When a young person enters into a placement, the nature, frequency and particular circumstances of contacts with family members, foster carers and friends are established; where appropriate, contact is agreed. Young people are encouraged to re-establish and/or develop relationships, and visits are agreed and arranged at suitable times. The facilitation of family contact can be arranged and supported by Owlswick care staff. Staff are skilled and experienced in the management and support of contacts in order to ensure that these are the best possible experiences for all concerned. Contacts are carried out in a safe internal environment or external context with set parameters agreed in advance with all involved. We believe that one of the most important aspects of a young person's placement is to develop a relationship with those closest to them in order for everyone to be supported and involved throughout the time a young person spends at Owlswick.

Where family relationships have been, and continue to be, a difficult issue for an individual child and it is not possible to carry on with these for any period of time, Owlswick may identify a caring adult, befriender or independent visitor who will take an interest and maintain an appropriate contact with an individual young person. All visitors are subject to rigorous statutory checks and agreement from a placing authority in order to ensure their suitability before any contact is made.

Parents, family members and carers are encouraged to visit and spend time with their young person in the home. It is important to us that young people feel that they can bring their family and friends into their home and know that they have a right to do so. These visits can be facilitated and supported by staff if needed.

We are also committed to ensuring that young people develop positive relationships with the significant people in their lives as well as with our staff members and external contacts they will have during their placement. These contacts need to be appropriate and safe with the aim of benefitting the young person.

## **Listening to our young people and their wishes and feelings**

We believe that our young people should be encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and influence the way their home is run. We do not assume that any young person is unable to communicate their views and seek their opinions and those of their families or significant others. We actively seek to understand and listen to our young people and their wishes and feelings.

We meet with our young people on a monthly basis and/or on a requested basis. We encourage the young people to take a lead in these meetings and set the agenda as well as talk about topics that we need to explore such as if there has been an increase in young people not getting along with one another. All young people can access the Registered Manager and Responsible Person in the home and there is an open door policy for young people to express their views to managers with the aim that these will be listened and responded to.

Owlswick is monitored on a monthly basis by an external Regulation 44 visitor. This is a requirement of the Children's Home regulations and the purpose of this visit is to scrutinise safeguarding arrangements, staff working practice and adherence to policy and procedure. The monitor meets with our young people on a monthly basis as well as talking to staff. They consult with social workers and parents and carers as to their views on how their young person is progressing in the home. They submit a monthly report of their findings to Ofsted and the Registered Manager/Responsible Person and makes recommendations for the home to respond to which includes making improvements to working practice and the environment.

## **Therapeutic intervention – Home and School**

We continue to evolve our approach to the provision of the therapeutic support that young people who live and receive their education at Owlswick can expect to receive. Our Therapeutic Lead takes the lead in this programme of work and is an experienced Counsellor/Psychotherapist. They are based on site and works as an integral member of both the senior management and staff team.

The therapeutic lead forms part of the assessments of any prospective young people where information regarding the history, attachment difficulties, traumas and resulting behaviours of the young person are gathered and considered. They are part of the resulting assessment process when a young person is being considered for a placement and provides professional opinion on whether Owlswick is able to meet as young person's needs in terms of their

behavioural and psychological needs due to past life experiences and exposure to traumatic events.

Assessments made by the therapeutic lead are analysed and presented to both staff teams in the visual form of the Behaviour Tree, which offers psychodynamic thinking to explore the known experiences of the young person and the resultant impact on them as individuals.

An important aspect of our therapist's work is to advise on the overall development of our staff's approach to working in a therapeutic manner in both school and home. Their expertise and understanding of young people who have experienced complex traumatic life events which have impacted on their health, wellbeing and ability to manage themselves is invaluable. This advice and insight influences and guides how our staff support individuals and ensuring they adopt the right approach to the benefit of the young person.

Our therapist is available to talk and work with parents and carers where appropriate in order to offer support in managing any issues or difficulties arising in their relationships with the young person. This support and intervention may take the form of therapeutic life story work for example.

The evidence to support the development of our therapeutic approach comes from having extensive knowledge of the young people in our care and understanding them as individuals. Our young people have usually experienced distressing pasts and challenging personal situations which they are trying to understand and come to terms with. We discuss the therapeutic needs of young people with those who are involved in their care and education, including professionals and parents/carers in order to advise and guide us in our approach. This information is also gained through previous care plans, psychiatric reports, assessments and conversations with local authority' psychologists and other evidence and material that relates to a young person's previous experiences.

We make recommendations for therapeutic work when we feel we know the young person and their specific needs/background. We liaise with other qualified professionals and, where appropriate, will access other external therapeutic services as identified. Our therapist forms part of these discussions and will only offer specific therapeutic work once all professionals involved in the young person's care are in agreement. Therapeutic support in the form of conversations and getting to know a young person starts as soon as their placement begins.

Staff are a critical aspect in ensuring Owlswick works therapeutically with young people and undertake regular training in terms of developing listening skills, dealing with anger, understanding the impact of trauma and creating strategies for the management of this and supporting young people to cope with loss and bereavement. This training provides staff with continuous professional development and enables the ongoing development of practice

Our outcomes framework will demonstrate how the therapeutic approach adopted by our staff team has a positive and beneficial effect on the young people. We will be measuring and evidencing how our input, nurturing and care has enabled a young person to cope more effectively with feelings of anger and distress for example in a manner that achieves a

positive resolution for the individual. We will make this evidence available to the relevant people in the young person's life as well as providing information to monitoring agencies.

We also have access to guidance and support of child and adolescent consultant psychiatrists from the local mental health trust, as well as accessing the local CAMHS and consultant services as and when needed.

## **Our Thrive Programme**

At Owlswick we know the young people in our care are here because of experiences they have encountered in their lives so far. Fundamental to the Owlswick philosophy is a child centred approach that views any difficult behaviour as a normal reaction to abnormal circumstances.

Our goal is to enable our young people to make sense of their lives and move into adulthood with an appreciation of their history and an understanding that they do not have to be 'driven' by past events.

We continue to invest in the therapeutic programme which is called Thrive. This means that the Thrive approach continues to influence and impact on all that we do at Owlswick.

Thrive is 'a systematic approach for the early identification of emotional developmental needs in children and young people. Based on attachment theory and neuroscientific research, Thrive believes that by addressing the emotional developmental needs of each young person we enable emotional resilience, self-awareness and empathic understanding to develop. Also, with its emphasis on differentiated provision for each child it offers a greater opportunity for learning. It is preventative, reparative and pragmatic.

The Thrive philosophy underpins both home and school thus allowing our residents to enjoy consistency throughout their daily lives both in school and in the home. It is a programme that is used in a number of other residential settings and we have researched the beneficial effects of adopting this programme to support young people.

Thrive sets the foundation for Owlswick's work with young people, with each young person undertaking regular work with our therapist. Therapeutic provision is tailored to each young person's specific behaviour difficulties, attachment history and current struggles. This input will vary from short term crisis work to long term developmental work depending on each individual's needs. Such need will be determined and negotiated between the young person, the therapist and where appropriate key worker and/or primary carer.

As well as offering a therapeutic space for young people to achieve an understanding of their inner world, we are also able to offer Therapeutic Life Story Work with the primary carer and young person.

Therapeutic Life Story work differs from the Life Story or Life History work that a Social Worker would usually complete. Therapeutic Life Story work is defined as an approach offering a process that enables exploration of a child's history and the wider history of the

family via direct work. This is carried out with the young person and the primary carer so that both can develop their knowledge of each other and begin to understand the behaviours, feelings and cognitive processes that manifest within the placement. The therapy is designed to introduce the past as a set of markers for the present. Once these are understood the child can then be supported to consider if they want to be led by the past events, or to make significant changes as a result of new awareness. This method of working has proven effective where a placement may be in danger of breaking down and is a long term therapeutic process that benefits all involved. It is also a NICE (National Centre for Clinical Excellence) recommended therapy for children in care.

*It is difficult to grow up as a psychologically healthy adult if one is denied access to one's own history. (Fahlberg 2008)*

### **Information regarding our Therapeutic lead**

The therapist at Owlswick is Sue Rogers. Sue has over 25 years of experience working with developmental trauma, attachment issues, sexual abuse, eating disorders, self-harm, anxiety conditions, ADHD, loss, bereavement and various emotional/psychological difficulties. She has a Diploma in Therapeutic Life Story Work and is also a Thrive Practitioner. She would describe herself as working in a humanistic way with Art, Play and Narrative therapy whilst using psychodynamic thinking to inform her practice. She is also a Lecturer in Person Centred Counselling and the author of the counselling curriculum at a local College. She has worked as a Supervisor and Trainer for 20 years and is an Accredited Member of the BACP. She is the published author of a therapeutic book for children exploring loss. In order to work to the BACP Ethical Framework our Therapist accesses external clinical supervision from a trained and accredited external supervision.

## Our Care Service

### What can young people, parents and carers expect from us?

Our care service is provided from our main house by our experienced team of care practitioners.

Each young person can expect:

- To be treated with dignity and respect by all staff members of the care team;
- A safe and secure home where staff listen and take time to understand who they are: their interests, personal histories and current state of wellbeing.
- Support from all of the care team on a daily basis and the opportunity to talk about anything that they are concerned about, or an issue that may be affecting the way they are feeling or are behaving;
- Staff to build and maintain individual positive relationships;
- A baseline assessment in order to understand the starting point for an individual which will subsequently track progress through their placement;
- An Education Health and Care plan (EHC plan) as provided by their local authority;
- A learning support (LSP) plan linked and related to any objectives set out in the EHC plan have been put in place by their local authority;
- An individual key-worker who will provide one to one support and is an advocate on behalf of the young person as needed;
- Access to social and recreational opportunities both internally and externally;
- Access to therapeutic support and external individual therapeutic interventions as agreed by their placing authority;
- Individual risk assessments, behaviour management plans and safety plans;
- Opportunities to take part in daily and monthly meetings to talk about their school and home day and give opinions and views on Owlswick;
- Individual choice about their bedroom space and how they want this to look and feel.
- A say on what they want to see happen at Owlswick i.e. the food they want to eat, how the house is decorated, activities they want to take part in.

Each parent and carer can expect:

- A named key-worker and school tutor for their young person with whom they can talk and liaise;
- Regular access to the management team and all staff to talk to and express any concerns, comments, requests for information or progress updates;
- A learning support plan (LSP) for their young person;
- Regular updates and reports on their young person;
- Opportunities to talk about difficult issues in their relationships with their young person and support to resolve and develop these in a positive manner;
- Their individual young person to receive high quality care provided by staff who strive to know and understand them;

- The care staff to share and work with the teaching staff in order to create a 'Team around the Child' approach to their young person;
- The young person to receive a high quality education programme tailored to individual learning needs reflecting targets set through SEN's/EHCP's.

Key-workers take overall responsibility for individual progress, care and wellbeing as well as developing a supportive relationship through regular key working meetings. Key-workers aim to work closely with the young person to agree individual, realistic and achievable goals and set these as part of their learning support plan; goals are regularly reviewed in order to ensure that these are relevant and meaningful. Progress is charted in order for each young person to recognise and acknowledge the changes they are making. Building a young person's self-confidence and positive self-image and supporting them to understand reactions and emotions through good rapport and positive connections are the most important objectives of the key-working time/relationships.

Our outcomes framework progress assessment will be applied to all individual young people. This system enables us to measure the progress of individuals throughout the life of their placements. This will provide us with a detailed analysis of areas in which young people are meeting their placement objectives and where there is an ongoing need to develop their skills, experiences, emotional resilience and independent living skills.

All young people are encouraged to work through any difficult issues or feelings in order for them to get the most from their time at Owlswick. There are always opportunities during the day for the young people to talk to the staff, managers and/or proprietors on a one to one and/or group basis. There is a formal meeting between the Registered Manager, Proprietors and young people every month which enables the young people to talk about Owlswick. This allows for an emphasis on discussing and making choices about the home (including meals, decoration, activities, decisions made, outings and events) as well as feeding back on how they feel about home and school and staff support with suggested changes being implemented where it is possible to do so.

The involvement of parents/carers is a critical part of the positive placement experience for the young person. We aim, wherever possible, to work in partnership with the young person's family members/carers and to involve them in all aspects of a placement.

## Our Education Service

### What can young people, parents and carers expect from us?

Our school vision is 'To enable every student at our school to receive a great education and positive experience of learning.'

Everything we do at Owlswick School is underpinned by the four principles of maximising learning, enjoyment of learning, creating creative learning opportunities and developing skills in order to be independent.

Each young person can expect:

- To be treated with dignity and respect by all staff members of the education team;
- An individually tailored programme of learning based on their independent learning style, current level of ability and assessment and understanding of their educational needs. This learning programme references and responds to the objectives set out in the Local Authority EHC plan;
- Access to an inclusive and differentiated curriculum which seeks to overcome barriers that may have prevented previous success in learning and meets individual needs
- A weekly school timetable which sets out the lessons for the week ahead;
- Staff to build and maintain positive individual relationships;
- One to one teaching and support in the classroom where this is needed
- To be taught in small groups;
- To be taught by staff who understand and are experienced at teaching young people who are not able at this time to be in mainstream education;
- To be confident that staff will be empathetic and supportive to any personal issues that can impact on their ability to learn and affect motivation to study;
- To enter a well-planned lesson with clear and visible learning objectives;
- The opportunity to learn and be taught in a creative manner in order to support a young person to enjoy and thrive in a school setting;
- To self-assess own progress and contribute to the goals and targets that they want to meet in their learning and self-management;
- To achieve academic qualifications dependent on individual ability;
- To access Post 16 further education (both internal and external) and work experience opportunities.

Each parent and carer can expect:

- Their young person will be taught by qualified, experienced and knowledgeable teaching staff;
- High standards of teaching, planning and assessment as would be found in a mainstream school;
- Their young person to be set targets which aim to stretch in order to attain the highest possible level and for these targets to be constantly and regularly reviewed;

- Staff to listen and be empathetic to an individual and understand how personal experience and current emotional wellbeing can impact on learning and development;
- Regular liaison with the Headteacher and teaching staff to discuss progress, issues of concern and comments on the school and education being delivered;
- The school staff to share and work with the care staff in order to create a 'Team around the Child' approach to their young person using the principles of Thrive.

Accessing our on-site school is one of the advantages of a placement at Owlswick for young people who are not at this time able to access mainstream education. The School delivers a broad and balanced curriculum, presented in flexible and creative ways which is appropriate to the needs of each individual student. The teaching team seek to ensure that each student is able to gain confidence, maturity and increase knowledge and skills in an environment that promotes equality of opportunity in the classroom. We have a high ratio of staff to students, meaning individuals can access one to one support as needed. The education team's aim is to provide quality teaching in every lesson and for each student to achieve their full potential within the classroom. Each young person will have an EHCP which is used to inform their individual learning plan at Owlswick. EHCP targets are translated and assessed into achievable and realistic learning objectives which are reviewed on a six weekly basis in order to track progress against these.

The initial focus of our education team is to enable any new student to feel secure and be re-introduced to an educational environment which recognises this may need to be done at an individual's personal pace. School groups are small and intensively supportive, encouraging students to understand how to improve levels of self-esteem, manage their behaviour, and recognise and reward effort and achievement.

We have trained one of our teachers to become the Thrive programme lead in the school and they, alongside our therapeutic lead are currently responsible for further embedding the Thrive approach within the school. Our aim is for Thrive to enable the education team to recognise and assess the mood and responses given by young people, which may be a barrier to them learning and participating in their school day. Our team are trained in the use of Thrive practices and use these tools to empathise with and support a young person to understand why they are behaving and responding in a certain manner. The teaching staff will aim for the young person to learn ways to regulate themselves and their emotions when these are triggered by a moment, memory, event or experience for example. Our therapeutic lead will continue to support the education team to understand the past experiences of the young people and advises and guides on approaches and interactions to respond with.

We are also registered to offer day placements to students in order for them to receive their education at Owlswick and remain living with parents/carers

### **Qualifications, GSCE's and Functional Skills**

Every student at Owlswick School will be guided through programmes of study that will enable them to achieve recognisable accreditations from their education. From Year 6 to Year 11 every learner will be required and supported to sit Functional Skills examinations in Maths, English and ICT. These examination courses range through Entry Level 1, 2 and 3 and end with Level 1 and 2. Level 2 is an equivalent level to GCSE but is not a GCSE.

There are opportunities to take GCSE qualifications if a student is able to work through this level of education programme. Staff will actively aim for students to take these courses of study with the aim of sitting the end exam (with the support that will be provided for young people with a special educational need).

Alongside Functional Skills Owlswick School offers further accredited programmes of study through the proposed development of the BETEC programme. Such programmes are practical and vocational based courses where learners can achieve recognition by certification. The view is that every learner leaves Owlswick School with some level of Functional Skills accreditation, GCSE and vocational qualification.

Owlswick has developed strong links with local vocational skills and education projects which together with the school timetable aim to offer young people a menu of education during their week. These include:

Amex Stadium Education Project  
CRE8 Vocational Education Project  
DV8 Vocational Education and Arts Project

The school is currently reviewing and developing the process used to assess progress for each student with the aim of implementing a system which will allow teachers to more thoroughly monitor progress and to set learning objectives/targets for individuals more accurately. An in-depth review of progress against targets is carried out every half term enabling the education team and each individual young person to view progress, highlight any areas of concern, encourage strengths and build strategies to support the learning process for each student within the classroom.

Through this provision of learning opportunities, including access to accredited qualifications, students can take part in programmes of study that eventually lead to work experience, link courses at local colleges and full time further education placements or training.

### **Post 16 pathways, further education and work experience opportunities**

Post 16, young people are mainly educated externally to Owlswick in a range of mainstream local education facilities such as Brighton Metropolitan College. Pathways planning will take place during the final year of secondary education as to the next stage of an individual's education, both applications and interviews being supported.

Each young person is supported by our teaching and care team to manage their coursework and maintain attendance on whichever course they attend. Owlswick is registered to teach Post 16 and learners can continue to study Functional Skills, GCSE's and plans for BETEC courses on days where they do not need to attend further education.

Owlswick School will be further exploring the opportunities for young people to apply for apprenticeship schemes and vocational qualifications over 2019.

## Enjoying and achieving at Owlswick

An important part of a young person's development is having many opportunities to enjoy and achieve whilst at Owlswick. Each young person participates in a way that suits them and their individual personalities and interests.

Key-workers and the wider staff team will get to know the young person and find out what their interests, skills and cultural needs are. Activities will be built around these interests and there will be opportunities offered both within Owlswick and outside of the school and home in order to develop external peer groups. It is important that each young person is treated as an individual who may need to acquire a sense of self-confidence and self-belief that they have a right to enjoy themselves and have something to offer before they can actively participate. Activities also need to be based around personal preferences and individual ability.

Staff will support a young person to move at their own pace and ensure that any activities or social situations offer opportunities to develop a mix of creative, physical and social skills and interests. There is a strong emphasis on young people being able to enjoy their recreational free time and have a feeling of freedom and choice in what they take part in. Activities are varied and staff research the local community in order to find clubs, groups, events, volunteering, work-experience and social opportunities that a young person can explore and test out. Young people can also access leisure opportunities within the community, such as joining the local leisure centre. An activity programme is provided by the staff and young people can take part in this at their choosing.

Owlswick celebrates young people's achievements and staff are proactive in providing opportunities for individuals to achieve through social, educational activities, building self-confidence and independent living skills. We seek to ensure that each young person is able to take part in activities or events where there will be an outcome of achieving something, however small. This could be participating in a community volunteering programme with other young people or shopping for and cooking a simple meal for the first time. Both are just as significant for young people and we will ensure that the young person is able to acknowledge the achievement they have made and this will be shared with their parents and carers and other significant people in their life.

## Health and Wellbeing

Ensuring good health and well-being and achieving good health outcomes is an important part of a young person's placement. Each young person has an individual health care plan. These plans detail the health outcomes to be achieved as advised by their placing authority and other health professionals involved in their care. This plan is reviewed on a six monthly basis by the key-worker to ensure all physical, mental and sexual health needs are being monitored and met, any treatments are provided by the relevant medical professional with external health services being contacted as and when needed. A record is kept of all activity regarding the health of a young person.

Owlswick works in partnership with a range of health agencies in order for young people to access external health services as required. These include GP's, CAMHS, dentists, opticians and sexual health services. Each young person is registered with the local GP practice and

their parents/carers consulted and informed about any medical appointments attended or treatment prescribed.

Supporting young people to manage their individual mental health and any diagnosed conditions such as ADHD, ODD, etc. is a significant aspect of the staff's role and responsibilities. Our aim is to work with a young person to develop coping strategies and alternative responses if they are feeling angry, anxious, scared or alone and advice and support from agencies such as CAMHS, is critical to informing how the staff agree their strategies and approaches in this area.

All young people are encouraged to eat healthily and the daily menu is carefully planned in order to provide nutritious food with great variety which is attractive and appetising for young people to eat. The young people choose meals and foods that they would like to eat and make regular suggestions about meals and preferences in discussions with our cook. We also ensure all dietary requirements/food allergies are catered for and encourage young people to participate in the cooking of meals for all. Healthy snacks are always available with occasional treats as would be present in a family home.

All young people are encouraged to undertake regular exercise and take part in doing something active on a daily basis. The grounds at Owlswick offer many opportunities for exercise and recreation. There is a football pitch, basketball hoop, and table tennis table, which are well used. Staff will take young people running or play a game in the garden, local park or beach. Young people also go swimming on a regular basis as part of their school PE session or in the evening/ weekend. They can join a sports club such as the local rugby club/gym for example in order to learn a new skill, improve their fitness and play in a team.

## **Understanding and meeting everyone's cultural needs**

All Owlswick staff recognise, and are committed to, promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of our services. We work hard to celebrate diversity amongst the young people who live with us through our working practice, the manner in which Owlswick operates and the physical environment.

We understand the importance of anti-discriminatory practice in order to ensure that an individual young person's circumstances and behaviours are not discriminated against in terms of the care and education received. Most of the young people in our care have experienced discrimination in some shape or form in their previous lives and it is vitally important that our ethos and practice demonstrates that each individual is treated with respect, courtesy and acceptance.

We will provide a culturally sensitive service where all young people are respected as individuals regardless of gender, age, race, religious beliefs, linguistic and cultural background, sex and sexual orientation, emotional and behavioural skills, social skills and academic ability. Our care and education policies and services reflect difference and diversity in a positive manner, thus ensuring our provision meets the unique individual cultural needs of every young person and ensures that they are respected, nurtured and valued. Young people's LSP's are also shaped around their individual cultural, religious, social, gender and life experiences.

Our staff receive training in equality and diversity. Incident reporting is one way in which the Headteacher and Registered Manager are able to track any issues regarding young people being bullied or discriminated against for example and then take the necessary action to resolve the issue.

## Responding to Children and Young People's Rights

Respecting and upholding young people's and children's rights is very important to our staff. We recognise that young people have rights and that these need to be upheld in an environment where choice and rights have at times been removed from an individual. This is particularly important when plans are being made for young people to move on from Owlswick and they still need to receive significant levels of support.

We promote children's and young people's rights respect and dignity as follows:

- Children and young people have a right to live in a home that is safe, warm, happy, nurturing, stable, valuing, affectionate, secure and free from abuse and recognises the individual needs of each person;
- Children and young people have the right to full access to education, health care social life, and community facilities and have the opportunity to live a full life as possible;
- Children and young people have the right to be listened to, express them, take full part in decisions affecting them, have things explained to them and the right to complain;
- Children and young people have the right to privacy and space, time and dignity have fun and are allowed to be a child;
- Children and young people have the right to their religious, cultural and dietary needs and to celebrate their individuality;
- Young people can access an independent advocate to talk to as and when need and this is provided by the POWHER advocacy service. Young people also have information on contacting Ofsted, ChildLine and the Office of the Children's Commissioner if they want to talk to someone independent or share an issue or concern.

### The responsibilities of our staff

Our staff have a duty of care to ensure that children and young people are safe, supported according to their individual needs and abilities and are protected from any act or omission of harm

### Our staff will:

- Act as role models for young people;
- Act a key worker for each young person and promote communicator and relationships between Owlswick and the significant other people in their lives;

- Ensure effective placement planning and monitoring and evaluation systems to demonstrate the young person's development;
- Support the young person to participate in the education element of their placement with the aim of promoting a positive approach to education and learning;
- Respond quickly and be flexible to ever changing needs of young people and work proactively with other professionals.

## **Feedback and the Owlswick commitment to continuous change and development**

Feedback about our education and care services is very important to us and we want to listen and respond to everyone's views.

We seek regular informal and formal feedback from parents and carers about our services in order for us to make continual improvement and ensure that these are fit for purpose.

Opportunities for parents/carers and Local Authorities to feedback to us is formally given through monthly LSP and LAC reviews/meetings, emails and telephone conversations with comments recorded and responded to. We encourage parents and carers to tell us what they think and comment on where they would like us to make changes or improvements. We will act on this feedback wherever it is possible and relevant for us to do so and ensure that we let people know if we are taking action as a result of their views, or why it may not be possible to affect a change.

We are in the process of strengthening and developing our feedback system in order to ensure that this includes evaluation of our services by our young people and an annual feedback survey for parents/carers and partner agencies.

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection.**

### **How do we keep children and young people safe?**

One of the most critical areas for Owlswick to effectively manage and continually review is the safeguarding and the protection of the young people and children within our education and care setting. It is important for us to create a balance between young people being able to be independent and have free time as well as staff ensuring and monitoring that they feel and are safe in everything they are involved in.

We are required to ensure that we are meeting all legal and policy requirements in the area of safeguarding as well as those set out in the DfE' statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2018), in all aspects of our safeguarding practice and services with young people.

When young people are on the Owlswick premises staff ensure that they know the whereabouts of each individual at all times. Young people are monitored in a discreet and informal manner as it is important for them not to feel stifled and feel able to act and be themselves. Staff are highly vigilant and aware of the need to safeguard both individuals and groups meaning they focus on creating a safe and informal living environment for all where the young people feel secure and protected. Staff will closely observe the interactions between young people in order to ensure these are appropriate and are keeping individuals safe.

Staff will monitor the movements of young people when they are outside of Owlswick. This will again be undertaken in a discreet and informal manner, allowing independent activity where it is safe to do so and has where a young person has been subject to specific risk assessment.

Young people are aware and regularly reminded of how to tell a member of staff and/or report anything they feel concerned about relating to their own or another's safety and how this will be listened and responded to.

We understand that safeguarding is an umbrella term for a number of specific areas. This includes young people going missing, child sexual exploitation, young people being radicalised, young people being involved in crime and gang culture, self-harm and suicide, being bullied and all aspects of internet safety and the use of social media. This is not an exhaustive list and highlights the areas where staff are required to be additionally vigilant in their safeguarding practice.

Our education team has been trained by Sussex Police on the Prevent WRAP3 programme and are aware of how to make a channel referral as and when required if there are any concerns regarding a young person at risk of being radicalised etc.

Staff safeguarding training is regularly renewed. Staff are also trained to be vigilant for signs of abuse and neglect in a young person. They will intervene and seek guidance and report this to the relevant authorities if there are any concerns.

Staff operate a strict risk assessment and checking process for young people when they mix with their peer groups/engage in social activities outside of Owlswick as this forms part of the safeguarding process. When young people are engaged in external activities these are checked out in advance by a staff member and the individual will be accompanied as necessary. If they are meeting friends then staff will check in with them during the time out, by phone and in person, and there will be set times to meet and be picked up to return home arranged in advance. Staff will also visit a club or group and make contact with the group leader and discuss the safety arrangements in place in advance of a young person joining them.

Comprehensive individual risk assessments are developed for each young person in order to assess their safety and current ability to keep themselves and others safe dependent on their own circumstances and needs. These assessments are constantly reviewed and revised and linked to individual behaviour management and safety plans.

Owlswick aims to protect young people by having a robust Missing Person's and Absence policy which is regularly reviewed with Sussex Police. It is currently a rare occurrence at Owlswick for a young person to go missing and all staff are aware of the policy and the procedure that needs to be activated if and when this occurs. This policy includes informing Sussex Police in East Sussex as well as the placing authority. When it is appropriate to do so (and within 48 hours) a young person is interviewed by a manager (or another significant person in the young person's life) when they return to Owlswick and their risk assessments would be reviewed and revised.

If a safeguarding, child protection allegation, concern regarding a young person or member of staff, is suspected or made, the safeguarding policy will be immediately activated by the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy in their absence. The relevant external authorities would be informed and the safeguarding allegation reported as per the procedure. Owlswick operates the 'My Concern' reporting and recording system which enables any safeguarding concern regarding a young person to be recorded and shared with designated staff members and specifically nominated external agencies. 'My Concern' enables a complete secure electronic record to be made of all safeguarding concerns and allegations and the action taken to manage these.

The staff code of conduct (which is part of the staff handbook) sets out the standards and behaviours that we expect our staff to achieve and maintain in terms of safeguarding young people.

The Registered Manager, Deputy Manager/Head of Care and Headteacher are members of the Independent Schools Safeguarding Group. Our safeguarding policies and working practices are informed by national regulations and legislation for this area.

Leon Creenan, the Registered Manager is the designated child protection lead for the Care Service. Leon also takes the overall designated child protection lead for Owlswick.

Barry Godden, the Deputy Manager/Head of Care is the deputy designated safeguarding lead for the Care Service.

Olu Odunsi, the Headteacher is the designated lead for the Education Service and School.

All of our safeguarding policies are available on the Owlswick website, [www.owlswickschool.co.uk](http://www.owlswickschool.co.uk) or can be made available by contacting the Registered Manager.

## **Behaviour, Boundaries, Consequences and Rewards**

Our young people are likely to have experienced issues with the management of their own emotional wellbeing and behaviours. The approach at Owlswick is focused around enabling individuals to learn about themselves and why they react and respond in certain ways to certain situations. The environment and ethos enables individuals to express their feelings/emotions and we aim for young people to do so in a safe, nurturing and controlled way. This involves staff actively listening and exploring with a young person what has caused an emotional reaction and seeking to move forward with greater understanding and self-awareness, plus an increased resilience and strategy to manage their emotional state.

The approach at Owlswick is to only use physical interventions as a **last** resort. Staff must assess that a young person is in a position where they may be a danger to themselves or others, or they are not able to bring themselves under control by talking and expressing their feelings before any intervention is used. There may also be significant damage to property before an intervention is used.

Staff will always assess a situation before any physical intervention is chosen as a response and will **only** undertake this when a range of de-escalation techniques have been used to diffuse a situation. It is important that the safety of both the young person and staff members involved in the intervention is paramount on every occasion.

We continue to evolve our philosophy and approach to interventions and all staff have been trained in the use of the MAYBO methodology. Our continuing aim is that our practice is even further firmly rooted in de-escalation, listening and achieving a positive resolution for the young person using an approach which can evidence that the numbers of interventions are reduced when it is employed. The MAYBO training will be regularly refreshed so working practice and techniques are refined and improved upon. The MAYBO training is delivered by a qualified MAYBO practitioner.

MAYBO's Accreditation and qualifications are as follows:

### **ISO 9001**

The ultimate global benchmark for quality management, ISO 9001 means that MAYBO has adopted a Quality Management System (QMS) in line with the International Standards Organisation (ISO) and demonstrates that they are serious about delivering quality to customers through tested processes.

## **ISO 14001**

ISO 14001 is the standard that covers the design and implementation of an Environmental Management System, ensuring that MAYBO focuses on reducing its environmental impact, supported by effective management processes.

## **BILD**

MAYBO's programme for staff working with children and adults with learning disabilities are accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) in the teaching of physical intervention skills.

The Registered Manager will assess working practice of staff and analyse each intervention undertaken in order to reflect on why this happened and how staff could have used alternative methods to have prevented escalation. The manager also reviews all interventions in order to ensure these were appropriate and have followed agreed practice. They track patterns and trends in interventions and these are then discussed and reviewed by the staff team in order to continually improve practice. Our aim is to continue to reduce the low numbers of interventions on a monthly basis and ensure that young people are aware of how staff will seek to de-escalate a situation if this occurs.

Owlswick uses the School Pod reporting and data management system which enables the recording of challenging behaviours. This data will be subject to analysis by the senior management team in order to influence and inform the behaviour management systems and plans employed by the staff team.

Young people are aware that there are consequences when they exhibit certain behaviours or behave in an aggressive or angry manner. There is a list of consequences that can be given which have been discussed and agreed with the young people and they can make choices about these with the staff team. Positive consequences are also recorded and rewarded.

Rewards are given and earned by the young people in both school and home. Young people can earn rewards in school which convert into points to be spent in the school on-line shop by choosing an activity or game for example. Young people can earn rewards for completing household jobs or being kind or helpful to another person for example and these can be in the form of activities or money.

**Anti-bullying – Zero Tolerance at Owlswick**

**Anti-Bullying Statement from the Owlswick Young People**

Bullying means:

**Boring**  
**Uncalled for**  
**Laughable**  
**Liability**  
**You are mean**  
**It is not clever**  
**Never bully**  
**Go away bullies**

**'The most important thing to do if you are being bullied is to tell someone'**  
**Quote from a young person**

We view bullying as a persistent and personal abuse of power to an individual. Bullying is defined as the unjustified, unprovoked and repeated display of aggressive, verbal or physical behaviour on the part of one individual or group to torment, inflict pain or humiliate, to the extent that the victims lose the power of will to defend.

The minimum criteria for bullying as recognised by Owlswick is:

- the intent to cause harm;
- imbalance of power and repetition

Bullying is recognised as a serious problem that can affect a person's mental and physical health and well-being. Bullying and any other form of intimidation is not acceptable. Internet bullying will be monitored by all staff ensuring that children and young people access appropriate safe sites and is part on our online safety policies. Staff use many forms of alternative and augmented communication to help children and young people to divulge their feelings including things such as feeling bullied. Staff are observant and alert to any patterns of behaviour that may indicate a child/young person is bullying or being bullied. The child/young person's behaviour plan will address aspects of behaviour that may be causing harm or distress to another young person. Staff will also

Any form of intimidation that increases the risk of significant harm to a child/young person will be dealt with accordingly.

All young people are aware that Owlswick operates a zero tolerance policy to bullying and there is a well-developed policy and procedure to deal and respond to bullying that has been developed in conjunction with the young people. We are aware that the nature of the environment of the home and school can mean that bullying can occur and that this can be both covert and overt in nature. If there is a bullying incident then staff will offer assistance and guidance to both the person being bullied and the person who is being the bully as it is recognised that both parties need support for an issue to be tackled and dealt with. Young people will also receive support external specialist sources if they are either being bullied or acting as a 'bully'.

Owlswick is an associate member of the Anti-Bullying Alliance and use their resources to inform working practice and educate both our staff and young people regarding bullying and how to respond to and be confident about reporting any concerns.

The challenging behaviour presented by some children and young people can sometimes be directed at others and could be interpreted as "bullying". Because of the combined learning difficulties, the children and young people often may not understand the concept of bullying and it can therefore very difficult to address the behaviour by applying "normal measures" used to counter bullying. Staff are aware that young people may not recognise certain behaviours as being 'bullying behaviours' or that young people may describe being bullied due to another young person not agreeing with them or reacting to something they do not like. Mitigation and education strategies for these types of behaviours are reflected in individual behaviour management plans.

## **Complaints, Concerns and Comments**

All relevant concerns, comments and complaints raised by the young people, parents, carers and outside agencies are documented and dealt with in accordance to our agreed complaints policies and procedures. Our aim is to ensure that these are brought to a conclusion satisfactorily and do not impede a young person's placement and personal progress. Young people are aware of the internal complaints process and can expect that any complaints made will be investigated and responded to within two working days.

The Registered Manager/ Deputy Manager/Headteacher and Responsible Person can all be contacted directly by any young person, parent/carers or external agency to make a complaint.

Independent representatives/advocates can be contacted from outside the Owlswick environment in order to offer support to the young person to make a complaint as and when required.

The complaints policy is available on the Owlswick website [www.owlswickschool.co.uk](http://www.owlswickschool.co.uk)

## **Health and Safety**

Health and Safety is a critical area for Owlswick in terms of ensuring that we are not only meeting national standards and regulations, but also guaranteeing the health and safety of the young people and those in our care and employment.

Regular health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out by qualified staff in order to highlight and assess issues that need to be addressed in both home and school. Assessments are made on activities, locations, equipment and vehicles and these are recorded. A monthly health and safety check is made by the responsible person. The Regulation 44 monitor checks on compliance with health and safety regulatory requirements.

Fire safety equipment is regularly checked by staff and outside professionals and emergency procedures are clearly detailed for both staff and young people with rehearsals and checks being systematically carried out as well as logged. The Fire log is updated on a weekly basis. All staff are trained in fire safety and this is regularly updated.

## **Leadership and Management at Owlswick**

### **Our Proprietors – Registered Providers**

Michael Mayne and Sarah Hawke are the proprietors and registered providers of Owlswick. The company that owns Owlswick is Mayne Enterprises Ltd, trading as Owlswick School and Home. The workplace address for the company is:

Owlswick  
Newhaven Road  
Lewes  
BN7 3NF

Michael Mayne's role is that of a Director at Owlswick. He has over 20 years previous experience of working at Owlswick as both the manager of the care team, and then as the Registered Manager.

Sarah Hawke role is that of the Responsible Person and manages all aspects of the administration and strategic planning and management of Owlswick. She has over 20 years' experience of working in the public sector to Director Level and managing large teams of staff. She ensures the provision of a high quality level of service by making sure that support systems are developed and well-maintained. She also is responsible for checking and ensuring adherence to Quality Standards and Children's Homes Regulations and internal quality assurance standards alongside the Registered Manager and Headteacher

Both Sarah Hawke and Michael Mayne also take the role of School Governors for Owlswick School.

### **Our Senior Management Team**

Leon Creenan is the qualified Registered Manager at Owlswick. He has over 23 years' experience of working with young people in residential care settings. He is responsible for overseeing all of the day to day operational management at Owlswick and ensuring that the care provided is of a high and consistent quality whilst meeting internal quality assurance standards. He also works closely with the proprietors to plan the strategic direction of Owlswick and aims to make continual improvements to the quality and depth of care provided to young people. His role ensures that national Quality Standards and Children's Homes regulations are being met and adhered to. Leon manages the senior managers in the care team.

Olu Odunsi is the qualified Headteacher at Owlswick School. He has over 33 year's previous experience in:

- Special Education (SEMH, ASD and residential) as Headteacher, Head of School and Deputy Headteacher;
- Mainstream Education as Pastoral and Curriculum Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and as a Head of Science.

Olu has also been a teacher of sciences, technology and IT across the UK maintained and independent sectors. He is a published co-author of two science Teachers' Guides.

Olu is responsible for all aspects of the education provision provided and ensuring that young people are receiving an individually tailored education service. He is responsible for ensuring that all the national standards and Department for Education regulations for education are being met and quality assurance standards adhered to. He also manages the education team.

The senior management team comprises of Sarah Hawke, Leon Creenan, Olu Odunsi, Barry Godden - Head of Care, Sue Rogers – Therapeutic Lead.

## **Our Staff Teams**

Our staff comprises of two distinct teams; education and care, members of whom are either qualified for working in this type of setting, or undertaking training to gain the necessary qualifications. All staff are integral members of either the care or education team and meet on a regular basis to share good practice, resolve issues and offer peer support. In order to provide high quality and experienced role models to the young people in our care, we aim to continually develop and maintain two balanced teams in terms of experience, skills and expertise.

Staff share responsibilities as part of a care team structure. This currently comprises, a Registered Manager, Deputy Manager/Head of Care, team managers and care officers. All care staff either have achieved the QCF Level 3 in residential child care or are currently studying for this qualification.

The provision is managed by the Registered Manager, Leon Creenan. Barry Godden is the head of care and has three Team Managers whose responsibilities cover all of the care service. These managers oversee and supervise the care officers.

Our three Team Managers are Abi Thomas, Thomas Hillier and Ashley Kempton.

The education team is managed by the Headteacher, Olu Odunsi. He manages all staff in the team.

The education team has a qualified Headteacher, 1 Assistant Headteacher 3 qualified full time teachers, 1 qualified part – time teacher, and 2 additional teaching assistants.

## **Supervision and continuous professional development**

We are committed to ensuring everyone in our staff team is effectively supported and there are opportunities to meet with a line manager and review working practice, evaluate performance, address any issues of concern and plan the work programme for an individual member of staff.

## **The Staff Supervision Model**

The model of staff supervision used is based on the Proctor and Inskipp Generic Model (1995)\* and forms three distinct areas, Normative, Formative and Restorative.

The intention is to find the balance between support and challenge in order for the supervisee to become increasingly reflective and self-monitoring of their working practice. The aim is for supervision to impact on individual performance and to enable the staff member to focus on their professional development and includes a review of the individual responsibilities of each member of staff.

The Normative part of the model is concerned with the competency, performance and ethics of the staff member and is important for the monitoring and safeguarding of young people. Each member of staff will receive normative supervision every six weeks with their designated Line Manager.

Topics covered by normative supervision sessions may include:-

- Workload/Key-working
- Action points from the previous supervision
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding and child protection
- PREVENT
- Policies and Procedures

The formative and restorative parts of the model are combined into one supervision session. This supervision will be carried out by the Therapeutic Lead who is a qualified supervisor, trainer and counsellor demonstrating Owlswick's commitment to the emotional and psychological wellbeing of the staff team. Each member of the care team will attend this form of supervision every 4 weeks

The formative area will explore the supervisees' attitudes to the young people and responses to specific incidences. This is where facilitation of learning regarding own triggers, the Thrive Approach and the qualities of PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) is appropriate.

The restorative part of the model is possibly the most important as this aims to offer support, care and understanding to the supervisee. It aims to provide a time and place where the staff member is able to offload their thoughts and feelings and stresses regarding specific events and/or conflicts without the fear of being judged. It enables the supervisee to explore personal stresses, both internally and external that may be impacting their work with the young people.

Topics covered by the formative and restorative supervision sessions may include:

- Supervisee's Health and Wellbeing
- Actions since the previous supervision session
- Positive Feedback

Reflection on incidents – response and self-management by the staff member  
Staff/Team issues and dynamics  
Teaching and Learning regarding Thrive and PACE, Personal Development/Triggers and ways of working with these  
Feedback to the Supervisor  
Any other matters

A rolling annual staff training programme is in place to update, refresh and build staff skills and knowledge and this is provided both internally and by external agencies.

All staff are trained in basic requirements such as residential child care skills, health and safety, first aid, food hygiene and safeguarding as well as having training in listening skills and managing anger and physical interventions. A clear policy is followed which details procedures, requirements and responsibilities when dealing with incidents requiring physical interventions. All incidents and procedures followed are recorded, assessed and reviewed to consistently improve on practice. Staff also receive training as to the responsibilities for safeguarding following the East Sussex Local Safeguarding Board policies and procedures.

Each member of staff is conversant with National Children's Homes Regulations and Quality Standards and how these need to be applied in practice.

All of our staff team are expected to adhere to our Staff Code of Conduct and this is reviewed on an annual basis.

### **Conclusion: Our most important aspiration**

Our most important aspiration, and the fundamental reason for the existence of Owlswick's, is to provide high quality, safe, consistent and well-resourced care, support and education for every young person who we have the privilege of meeting and forming a relationship with.

We aim to enable each individual to come to terms with their past, encourage a recognition of self-worth, promote positive feelings and relationships and focus attention on realising their own potential both at the present time and in the future.

Our staff offer a wealth of knowledge, experience and skills which are used constructively to support each young person to achieve a positive placement experience in order to leave us as confident, mature and competent independent young adults.

We assess that the outcomes for young people who experience our care and education services are consistently at a high standard. We aspire to make continued improvements and ensure that all our young people feel safe, happy, develop a sense of self-worth and know they are valued and safe.



### Contact Details

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