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## *Statement of Purpose – Oakdene*

*March 2021*

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*Oakdene uses a holistic approach combining the disciplines of residential care, education, and therapy, all three being important in what they offer to combat the tenets of harmful sexual behaviour exhibited by young people.*

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### *Outcomes*

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The therapeutic model is based upon that of the Good Lives Model. Outcomes are based on a progression of those factors identified for each young person throughout the placement in assisting them to develop the skills, abilities, and motivation to go on to live an offence-free life. Outcomes at end of placement are measurable via psychometric and observational measures. General outcomes include:

- The young person to have experienced positive life events in all areas of their lives, inclusive of experiences of achievement.
- The young person to have experienced safe and supportive relationships
- The young person to have engaged in education and to have begun or ready to begin further education or vocational training.
- The young person to have had the opportunity to develop and reflect on a coherent story of what has happened to them and what is happening to them
- The young person to have had an opportunity to identify and develop talents and interests
- The young person having developed the skills to initiate and maintain positive relationships
- The young person to have developed positive social skills
- The young person to have developed positive problem-solving skills
- The young person to have developed a sense of identity , inclusive of sexual identity
- The young person to have developed an understanding of how to meet sexual needs in a healthy way.
- The young person to have developed independent living skills consistent with their abilities

- The young person to be able to communicate their needs through positive avenues
- The young person to have identified and developed a relapse prevention plan to desist from further offending.
- To have assisted the young person to safely interact with the wider community
- To assist the young person with a positive transition into the community

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### *Achieving the Outcomes*

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In order to enable us to identify needs, encourage change and track progress and success, the following systems are used in order to support the young people to achieve the desired outcomes for their placement:

**ICON (Identifying Current and Ongoing Needs):** This is the assessment and intervention framework for all young people at Oakdene. All disciplines contribute to its completion and it is reviewed in collaboration with the young person, therapist Head of School and his keyworker.

The ICON document incorporates the Good Lives Model, Psychometric outcomes, and Personal Education Plan. The process of completing ICON allows each young person to identify and agree a series of S.M. A.R.T. goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-limited) on which to focus over a twelve-week period.

**Assessment of Risk and Treatment needs:** When a young person begins their placement, Assessment takes on a holistic form. Alongside the behavioural risk assessment described below, the young person completes a number of psychometric assessments which are written into a report format. The allocated therapist engages in collating background information as well as interview through therapy sessions with the young person This, along with psychometric outcomes and conversations with teaching, management and care staff forms a thorough assessment of risk and treatment needs aimed to identify therapeutic needs, engagement/progress in therapy, levels of supervision required and likelihood of further involvement in harmful sexual behaviour. The time period during which a full assessment report is completed will vary, dependent on the young person's abilities and willingness to engage, although ideally this will be within the first three months of placement.

Psychometric assessments are individually tailored to the needs of the young person and are re-administered during the placement to monitor progress of the young person's therapy as well as identify ongoing therapeutic needs.

Should a young person be subject to on-going criminal investigation for an alleged sexual offence, careful consideration involving discussions with multiagency partners (social worker, police) will need to be made to assess whether assessment should await completion of any legal proceedings.

**Behavioural Management Plans & Risk Assessments:** Each young person will have a behavioural management plan and risk assessment prepared for them. This will identify known risk related behaviour and how these risks are best managed; the young people are involved in preparing these plans as their responses to risk management and their views on their own risk related behaviours will form an important part of how staff manage these known risks. These assessments are updated by the Care team at regular intervals throughout their placement and in the event on any additional risk factors being identified. They include reviews of recent Incidents and whether risk management factors have been successful or require changes.

**Key working programme:** Each young person is allocated a key worker, who is their first point of contact when assisting them with their care needs these include behavioural issues, behaviour management measures and liaising with outside agencies to ensure the needs of the young person are met. Key workers produce a monthly progress report and Statutory Review report for each young person.

**Group and Individual Supervision:** Staff benefit from both individual supervision, with a line manager which takes place every 4-6 weeks and group supervision, facilitated by one of the home's therapists; allowing them to gain insight and work through issues which arise from working with young males with harmful sexual behaviour.

**GOAL, SNAP and SNAPB Tests:** The school use the GOAL, SNAP and SNAP B Tests in order to monitor progress, development and achievements for the young people within the school. GOAL is a formative assessment for literacy, numeracy, science, and ICT. This is a multi-choice test which can give National Curriculum levels for each subject. SNAP is a Special Needs Assessment Profile. This profiles specific learning difficulties and related factors, and gives follow-up suggestions for both teachers and parents, all in a user-friendly and comprehensive package where pupils work on the computer. We have found this programme very accurate and useful. SNAPB - SNAP-Behaviour brings to behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties the insights and practical strategies that SNAP-SpLD brings to specific learning difficulties. Again, a computer programme that is user friendly for the pupils to gauge how their behaviour can be measured monitored and strategies suggested to minimise problems.

**A consistent staff team who use clear and firm boundaries:** Staff provide a nurturing, homely environment for the young people to develop emotional resilience and positive relationships with each other and the adults who care for them. Attention is paid to the young people's age and level of understanding and emotional intelligence. Placement plans are devised in order to reflect the young people's levels of ability and understanding and their learning styles.

The staff team work together with the education and therapy teams to provide a consistent approach, and firm boundaries and routines for the young people, which allow them to feel safe and encourage change.

Equality is defined as the condition of being equal, or the same in quality, measure, esteem, or value. When men and women are both viewed as being just as smart and capable as each other; Oakdene aims to promote Equality through positive role modelling for the young people in our care. Staff share roles within the home and there is a mix of male and female staff in senior and management positions.

Staff benefit from both individual supervision, with a line manager which takes place every 4-6 weeks and group supervision, facilitated by one of the home's therapists; allowing them to gain

insight and work through issues which arise from working with young males with harmful sexual behaviour.

*The three disciplines of residential care, education and therapy work together and separately using the above frameworks to achieve positive outcomes for each young person.*

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## *Rationale*

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Young people will come to Oakdene with varying life experiences, but commonly they have often been subject to varying levels of trauma. They may have suffered sexual, physical, emotional abuse or neglect, with the exposure to trauma and/or absence of secure attachments, care, or positive role models. Young people will not have been given the opportunity to develop normal, healthy, and effective cognitions or behaviours; often resorting to maladaptive ways of coping, such as harmful sexual behaviour. Their harmful sexual behaviours have placed themselves and others at risk. Effectively, they are deprived of the capacity to thrive in their own families, within their peer groups, within mainstream schools or indeed ordinary care settings and can feel isolated.

We recognise the vital role that nurture plays in combating the damaging effects of neglect and trauma. We continuously demonstrate our core belief that each child is of unique intrinsic worth, through the excellent standard of care we provide. Of great importance is to ensure that the young people in our care are protected and feel safe at all times. Our experience tells us that a combination of security, support, continuity, and predictability, provides the foundation which has helped the vast majority of those placed with us and is the vehicle through which young people can develop strong attachments and improve their relationships, factors which are inextricably linked to harmful sexual behaviour. We monitor the young people as they progress through their journey at Oakdene in order to support them by providing clear and safe boundaries and achievable goals.

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## *Criteria for Admission*

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Young people are placed at Oakdene when they are ready to work towards fuller Independence. We work specifically with young males who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour and who may have been abused themselves. Although we cannot offer support for profound disabilities, we do work with young people displaying a range of special needs including Dyspraxia and mild – moderate learning disabilities. These include ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome, and young people whose behaviour falls on the Autistic Spectrum.

Due to the nature of the work we do we are unable to offer emergency placements.

The criteria of admission must be that all young people display or have displayed harmful sexual behaviour. It is also important for the work at Oakdene that the young people see this placement as a viable option to them, and that they agree to the terms of the placements and to engage in the

therapeutic process. Young people placed at Oakdene are often referred from Apple Orchard's other homes. This takes place at a time that it is agreed by the home and the placing authority that the young person is ready for this transition.

**Internal Referral procedure:** Once a young person has been identified as being ready to move on to fuller Independence an initial discussion takes place in the Manager's Meeting to share information. Once all parties agree that the move would be beneficial to the young person a compatibility assessment is completed and the young person's social worker contacted to discuss the potential move. Once agreement is in place the young person will have the opportunity to visit Oakdene and spend time with the staff and current residents to gain a full understanding of the home and its focus on preparing the young person for Independence. If all parties remain in agreement after this period then the young person will be allocated a moving date. The social worker and where appropriate the young person's family will be invited to visit the young person at Oakdene and meet the Manager and the staff team.

**External referral procedure:**

- An Initial referral is made by the placing authority either by phone or email and passed to the referral team to assess.
- The Referral team will call the Placements Team in order to gain an overview of the reason for the referral, the current behaviour being displayed by the young person and requirements of the potential placement. All Information is recorded on the Compatibility Assessment form and shared with the Home Manager, Clinical Lead and Headteacher. Placing Authorities are requested to share all information with Oakdene in order to make an honest and clear assessment of the young person's compatibility with the service which is offered. Each will make an individual assessment regarding the identified needs of the young person and whether these can be met, whether the new admission is compatible with the young people currently in placement and whether any additional information, training and support would need to be implemented prior to a placement offer being made. During this process, the most suitable home would also be identified, taking into account the identified needs of the young person being referred and the needs of the current young people placed at each home.
- Initial Visit – the young person is invited to visit the home this allows the young person to gain an understanding of the placement, ask any questions and to meet the other young people. It also allows the Referral Team to determine whether the home would be able to meet the young person's needs. Within this visit the young person will have the opportunity to visit the School and Therapy House and meet with the Clinical Lead and Headteacher. At Oakdene we encourage the young person's Social Worker and Family to visit with the young person.
- The Placing Authority are requested to complete all relevant admission paperwork and to provide all relevant documentation to the home. Any additional information would be added to the Compatibility Assessment and shared for consultation with the Therapy and Education departments prior to any placement offer being made. If the referral is appropriate and each department feel that they are able to meet the identified needs of the young person, an offer will be made for the Young Person to complete an Assessment Week at the identified home.
- Assessment Week – the young person will be placed for an initial 7-day assessment week where they will attend school and have an initial meeting with a Therapist. At the end of this week a placement planning meeting will be held to discuss the outcome of the Assessment Week; If this is

successful, then a full placement will be offered if all parties are in agreement. There are times when an Assessment Week may be extended if this will allow a comprehensive assessment to be made.

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## *Statement of Facilities, Location of home and range of needs*

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The home occupies a large Edwardian building with comfortable living space for up to six young people. There is approximately one acre of grounds that comprise a large garden, basketball court and attractive gardens. There is a Summer house with seating, pool table and football table and a large workshop.

The home is set out on two floors. The first floor is home to five bedrooms, one of which is the staff sleeping in accommodation. There is one bathroom for the use of the young people, equipped with a shower cubicle, bath, toilet and washbasin.

The ground floor is occupied by a large comfortable living room with TV, a games room with television sets for use with games consoles, and a good stock of board games, DVD's, and books for communal use. The kitchen / dining room comfortably seats 10 people enabling staff, boys, and visitors to enjoy meals together.



The kitchen area is modern and fully equipped. All meals are prepared by the young people and staff. There is also a laundry room equipped with two washing machines and a tumble dryer, where the young people complete their own laundry. The staff office is situated next to the dining area. Within the office is a securely locked medical cabinet, controlled drugs cabinet and a lockable cupboard for the young people's case files and confidential records. The

senior member of staff on duty holds the keys to the office.

**Location of the Home:** The home is located in a rural setting, close to a small village with good transport links and near a larger town with leisure and retail facilities. The home's location is risk assessed annually; taking into account any issues or incidents experienced by the home, the local crime figures for the area, as well as, due to the semi-rural location emergency response times.

We liaise with the local Police for the area and the local authority placement teams to identify and manage any issues with the location of the home.

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## *Care*

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Oakdene is careful to recruit staff who have experience working with troubled young people, and who display an aptitude for the work. As a result of this, and ongoing supervision, training and support the team is well managed, stable and consistent which in turn helps meet the needs of the young people. Staff are able to spend quality time with the young people and allow opportunities for open communication, both between themselves and the young people, and between the other disciplines within the home in the form of daily handovers with Education and regular feedback from Therapy. This open communication allows the team to respond effectively to the needs of the young people, both as a group and individually.

The views of the young people are valued, and they have regular opportunities to discuss issues and concerns regarding the quality of their care, make requests and give feedback on their progress. This takes place in daily handovers, weekly meetings, and the opportunity for any young person to call a house meeting to discuss or air any issues that arise during the day. The young people have access to senior staff and the management team to discuss any aspect of their care and are able to raise a complaint either through Oakdene's Complaint process, through their Social Worker or Independent Visitor and through Ofsted.

Young people are encouraged to have an understanding of the progress they are making therapeutically and to be realistic about the changes they have made, and the role they play in these changes.

Young People are allocated a Key worker on their arrival at the home, and every effort is made to match the right person to each child. This allows them to start to develop appropriate relationships to be modelled on for the future. The key worker will be the facilitator in identifying the ongoing needs of the young person, and ensuring their needs are met, however this is not completed in isolation; the keyworker will work with the education staff, the young person's therapist, and the other members of the care team to ensure that nothing is missed. Oakdene ensure that all needs of the young people, including cultural, linguistic, and religious needs are met for each young person, and that the young people are encouraged to make appropriate choices in this area.



Many of the young people placed at Oakdene have a history of difficult relationships and Attachment Disorders, staff work hard to encourage and support young people to be able to develop and maintain appropriate relationships with their peer group, the wider group in school and their family.

Family contact is facilitated extremely well, and the staff team understand the importance of contact for both the young people and their families. Family contact can be facilitated both at the home or



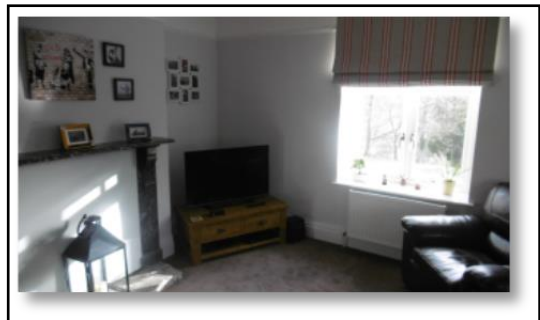
off-site in the local area or in a location convenient for the young person's family. Contact arrangements vary dependent on the needs of the young person and can be supervised and supported by staff if this would be of benefit. Young people have access to a phone in order for them to receive and make calls to family in private if this is appropriate.

Staff encourage those young people who have limited or no family contact to access Independent support through the Independent visitor's programme and Advocacy Service provided by their Placing Authority.

The young people at Oakdene have come to us from a variety of backgrounds; their understanding of their cultural identity can be limited and as part of the key working and therapy programmes the young people are encouraged and supported to explore their heritage and gain a clearer understanding of their backgrounds, ethnicity, and family culture. This will also include their understanding of their sexual identity and support is available through both the staff team and Therapy allowing young people a safe environment to explore their own identity as it develops.

The young people attend Education at Apple Orchard School. Additional linguistic or communication needs will be identified throughout their placement and catered for with external support if necessary, this work is completed in conjunction with their placing authority. Oakdene has experience in working with young people with a wide range of educational needs and those who have previously been excluded from mainstream Education and have assisted them to improve and develop their understanding and use of language and their ability to express themselves. Oakdene promotes care practices in a non-discriminatory way where all children and young people are valued as individuals regardless of age, race, gender, colour, sexuality, disability, or religious beliefs.

Oakdene expect that all young people and their families are treated in a fair and respectful manner and this is positively challenged and discussed with supervision, team meetings and children's/young person's meetings.



We uphold the Principles of Care, for promoting anti-discriminatory practice and promotion of children's rights, respect and dignity as follows:

1. Children and young people have the right to live in a home that is safe, warm, happy, nurturing, stable, valuing, affectionate, and secure, free from abuse and recognises the individual needs of the Young person.
2. Children and young people have the right to have full access to education, health care, social life, community facilities, and have the opportunity to live a full life as possible.
3. Children and young people have the right to be listened to, express themselves, take full part in decisions affecting them, have things explained to them and the right to complain.
4. Children and young people have the right to privacy, space, time, and dignity, have fun and allowed to be a child.
5. Children and young people have the right to their religious, cultural, dietary needs and to celebrate their individuality.



Young People are admitted to the home due to their high-risk behaviours. They often have experienced trauma during their childhood and have had insecure attachments. It is unsurprising that many of the young people have difficulties with Education, self-worth, forming relationships, keeping themselves safe and being safe with others. However, there is a remarkable degree of change achieved as a result of living at Oakdene.

Progress is achieved through the therapeutic approach taken by the home and wider community. This emphasises developing strategies for achieving aims and aspirations without resorting to inappropriate behaviour. The young people have both a Placement Plan, which identifies their long term needs and how these needs will be met over time, and an ICON, which identifies specific goals and tasks for them to work on over shorter time periods. Staff support the young people with their health, welfare, religious, linguistic, and cultural needs and where appropriate engage outside agencies in order to ensure these needs are appropriately met. When nearing 16 years the young people will also have a Pathway plan developed for their transition from care and this also allows specific goals to be identified and the work needed to achieve them.

The home is designed to ensure that it is safe, meets the needs of the young people as a whole and individually and more importantly has a homely environment. Each young person has their own room and are encouraged to personalise it. Staff also ensure that 'home comforts' are added, such



as throws for the bed in the winter and fans and lighter bedding for the summer months, pictures and posters. Each room has a desk to support the young people to homework independently. The young people are also involved in daily chores in the house, allowing them to feel part of the home and have an investment in how the home looks and feels.

The team supports the young people to attend a wide range of activities, staff work hard to give young people new experiences in safe environments. The activities are centred

on being healthy, social, and fun and young people are encouraged to suggest activities they may wish to try. Staff are also keen to nurture talent, and additional activities such as clubs and groups can be identified for a particular young person who is keen to attend.

Young people will often display a number of inappropriate behaviours and coping strategies as they progress through the home and there may be periods where additional support is required to ensure they are safe and cared for. Every effort is made to avoid Police involvement for the young people. Staff are trained in safe Restraint whose focus is on de-escalation before intervention. Each staff member completes initial training and annual refresher training to maintain their skills and update their knowledge. Managers and senior staff review all Physical interventions to ensure staff remain competent in this area and will identify areas where staff require additional training and support. Restraint or physical intervention only takes place if the incident matches a strict criteria; To prevent injury to any person, including the young person who is being restrained or to prevent serious damage to any property, including the young person. Restraint is used for the minimum time frame and with the minimal force required to prevent injury or damage and to allow the young person to calm and regain control. Aftercare is of paramount importance following any Incident and staff take care to ensure the young person's needs are responded to appropriately, any medical needs are

responded to and the young person has the opportunity to discuss and reflect on the Incident when they feel able to.

Staff are adept at managing difficult situations to avoid problems arising and helping the young people to appreciate why the behaviour is unacceptable. Significant Incidents such as physical interventions and measures of control are well recorded, with attention paid to antecedents as well as the particular incident, and a focus on lessons to be learned.

Where these initial efforts are not sufficient to meet the needs of the young person Crisis Management Plans are used in order to identify additional measures to ensure the young person remains safe, this can mean additional staffing during the day (1:1) and additional staff at night. The aim being to avoid, where possible, placement breakdowns. In some cases, it may be advisable for Psychiatric Assessments to be completed, and external support to be used such as CAMHS and Psychiatric support.

Young people are encouraged to undertake independence skills, according to their age and level of understanding, improvements are made on this throughout their placement and will form the basis of any future plans. There is also a free time programme; where young people spend time away from staff supervision. All young people will start the programme with 5-10 minutes' free time, but this can be built up over time and increased trust. Increases are requested by the young people and then discussed in the Management meeting by Home managers, Therapist and head teacher and appropriate decisions made.



There is an increasing need for young people to have internet access in an increasingly digital world and there is an expectation for Oakdene to respond to this need, both in the eyes of the Placing Authorities and Ofsted. Oakdene have recently reviewed their internet policy and propose to develop a system to support the young people to have safe access to the internet in order to gain digital resilience. Resilience is a dynamic process of positive adaptation in the face of adversity or challenge. This process involves the capacity to negotiate for and draw upon personal, social, cultural, and environmental resources. Digital Resilience therefore draws on helping young people to recognise, develop and maintain the internal resources to help them to be digitally safe to self and others when they leave Oakdene.

Towards the end of the young person's placements, staff are involved in their moving on plans. Part of this process involves encouraging young people to take a more active role in the decision-making process and being able to identify future needs. This may include increased Independent skills, college and Work Experience and increases in Free time and Independent travel, thus allowing young people to take an active role in keeping themselves safe in the wider community and travelling to family contact independently and easing towards Full independence.

**Working with outside agencies:** Oakdene has developed a list of contacts within the local community which can offer additional support for the young people and advice when required. These include additional medical support through the Local GP practice which include Stop Smoking Nurse, Dietician and Continence Nurse; referrals to these teams are made through the young person's GP. We also have links with Sussex CAMHS to support the young people with mental health issues and those who take regular medication for conditions such as ADHD and depression, and with Rainbow Clinic at Horsham Hospital for advice on sexual health.

West Sussex County Council run an Information service for young people called "FindItOut" which offers both a drop-in advice service and a website called "Your Space" They offer advice in a number of areas including Careers, employment and Education, Family and Relationships, Health, Housing and homelessness and Personal Finance.

There are also a number of support groups locally which offer advice and support in a range of areas including Drugs and Alcohol and LGBTQ+:

Allsorts Youth Project who are based in Brighton have recently opened drop in centres in Chichester and Horsham and support LGBTQ+ Young people under the age of 26. They have also completed training with our staff team.

Sussex Oakleaf run a service " Be OK" who offer support and advice for young people aged 16 to 25 with Mental Health issues and are based in Haywards Heath, they can support young people who are transitioning between children's mental health services (CAMHS) to adult services, as this can be a particularly difficult time, as well as offer advice and support to carers and families.

There are a number of Churches and Places of worship locally catering for a wide range of religions. These include Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches based in Horsham and the surrounding areas. Quakers, Jehovah's Witness, Muslim and Salvation Army also have places of worship in the Horsham area. Any young person who wishes to follow any religion will be supported by staff to find an appropriate location/ congregation with which they feel comfortable with and to attend regular services.

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## *Surveillance*

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The young people placed at Oakdene pose a risk both to themselves and to others and this is not limited to the wider community. We take the process of surveillance seriously but approach it in a very human way; this allows the young people to develop an ongoing dialogue with staff in regard to their harmful sexual behaviour and their risk. There are no cameras or CCTV on site and there are no recordings of electronic monitoring which is present. The following procedures are in place in the home:

- All bedrooms belonging to the young people have electronic door sensors which emit an audible signal when the door is opened and closed. This is for safety purposes and enables staff to be aware of the boy's movements at all times.
- All safety measures, including the door sensors are consistent with a domestic setting and do not create an institutional impression.
- In addition to this we have plug-in speaker monitors that are placed on the upstairs landing and linked to the dining area for the benefit of the waking-night staff.
- The alarm system and the reasons for having it are explained to the young people, along with issues of safety, prior to admission.

- The placing authority consents to the use of electronic monitoring and a record of this consent is kept in the young person's file.

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## *Education*

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Apple Orchard School has been rated "Outstanding" in its last three OFSTED inspections. The documented and tracked academic progress of the pupils has been praised. A major aim of the school is to have every pupil attending all classes with a 100% attendance record. Many social services have praised the school for changing pupil's attitudes and behaviours from being a school refuser or persistent truant to attending school and stating that they enjoy the experience.

Each pupil is given a baseline assessment after their initial assessment week. Their subsequent progress is monitored, assessed, and documented through regular use of formative and summative assessment to include SNAP and SNAPB tests. These tests give accurate indications of academic and behavioural progress. There is a behaviour modification scheme in place which allows the pupils to learn how to improve their performances, behaviour, self-discipline and to cope with the demands made on them. Small classes, high staff/pupil ratios and supervision levels allow the boys to feel safe and to "blossom", as one parent stated. Every boy has an opportunity to voice any concerns, worries or achievements each day at handover and through student voice, influence the direction of the school. This increases their feelings of self-worth and minimises any chance of bullying or sexually inappropriate behaviours. Each boy attends a meeting every 3 months where their education and behaviour progress is discussed. The aims are incorporated into the young person's ICON and a comprehensive education report and Personal Education Plan is produced every 6 months with the pupil's input.



All boys are encouraged to gain National Certificates in education. These can include Entry Level exams, Adult Numeracy and Literacy, Functional Skills, GCSEs and occasionally AS Level studies. The school can offer English, Maths, Science, ICT, History, Art, PE, and Design Technology up to GCSE levels. There are also enrichment courses for PSHE, Music and Work-Related Learning on the timetable. Over the past eight years all pupils who have completed the course at Apple Orchard School

have left with at least one GCSE and several have achieved five or more GCSEs at level (4) or above. This gives the pupils access to college, work, or university courses.

At Key Stage 5 further education courses at local colleges (Chichester and Guildford) can be accessed by students to support their career choices whilst still being supported by staff from Apple Orchard. Courses available allow students to have a wide range of opportunities, studying areas such as Sports, Horticulture and Catering etc. There has been an example where a student has been accepted straight into university from Apple Orchard. Pupils are encouraged to work hard at school by good role modelling from the highly qualified and motivated teaching staff. There have been stimulating visits to The Big Bang Science Day, London museums and galleries and The Music Box

Society of Great Britain to speak to experts and enthusiasts. One of our students has been awarded the top student award at college and many others have been highly commended for their efforts and achievements. These successes are celebrated within the community.

The school is a member of the Sussex and Surrey Special Schools Sports association and plays regular matches in a variety of sports against other schools. Apple Orchard have been County Champions in basketball, badminton, football, and athletics with individuals winning medals in cross-country, go-karting, and archery. Boys are given the opportunity to engage in outdoor activities such as high ropes course, paddle-boarding, team building exercises, rock-climbing, and dry slope skiing. The improvements in pupils' abilities to perform in situations where they are put under competition pressure and their developing confidence in their own abilities through tasting success in sports has been obvious in their behaviours out with school, at home and in therapy.

Boys have performed in front of their peers in talent displays, speeches, performing short plays and have attended theatre productions, pantomimes, and religious festivals. We have seen improved confidence and self-worth in pupils and have recorded the improvements in speaking and listening assessments for English.

A well-established work experience programme has allowed pupils to test their increasing independence skills in areas such as estate management, car mechanics, hospitality, and hairdressing. In order to access this coveted area, boys have to display increased trust, safety, and behaviour levels. Advantages gained from this scheme have been increased self-confidence and esteem, collecting valuable references from employers and 3 boys have been offered full-time employment from the work experience proprietors.



Some boys are not able to access college courses or work experience placements due to their continuing high risk. These pupils have the opportunity to link into a Vocational Studies Programme, run through the school at Oakdene and Apple Orchard. The purpose-built workshop has been designed to allow boys to learn skills in painting and decorating, car mechanics, electronics, gardening, and landscape gardening.

*When a previously troubled, low-achieving young man with sexually inappropriate behaviour leaves Apple Orchard, as regularly happens, with a lower risk, national certificates and qualifications, increased motivation, and skills to succeed and gain employment, then we know that the organisation has combined effectively to achieve its ambitious aims.*

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## Therapy

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**Individual Therapy:** Individual Therapy at Oakdene continually evolves so that the young people benefit from a therapeutic programme embedded within a secure evidence base and consistent up to date training.

The specific needs of each young person are at the heart of everything we do. With the Good Lives Model at the core, a variety of therapeutic methodologies are used flexibly throughout the young person's placement. This demands a highly skilled approach from our expert therapists to ensure that transparent, open, and agreed aims regarding the young person's harmful sexual behaviour are achieved via an attentive, genuine and nurturing relationship.

Each young person is seen for one hour each week for individual therapy by their allocated therapist. The goals of therapy are openly created between the young person and therapist with a principle objective being to achieve the aims collaboratively. Therapy sessions sometimes include the young person's keyworker to ensure that the issues covered, and goals set in individual therapy are generalised into other areas of the young person's placement, and at minimum consistent communication occurs regularly between therapists and staff members in providing a holistic approach to treatment. It is important to highlight that most of the young people who present to our service have complex needs and often high levels of childhood trauma. As such any focused work on harmful sexual behaviour cannot begin until the young person is feels settled and safe enough in their environment to do so.

**Group Therapy:** The effectiveness of working with young people in groups has long been recognised as having a particular value with young people who exhibit harmful sexual behaviour

Each young person attends group therapy for one and a quarter hour per week in addition to individual therapy, where they are allocated to one of four groups that best facilitates their level of functioning and communication needs. The groups are facilitated by a therapist and staff member, with a third staff member observing and providing reflection

Young people themselves tell us that they benefit greatly from hearing other young people voice similar experiences to their own, as this normalises such difficulties for them, particularly when they have felt unable to talk about them on their own. In group therapy young people are left to challenge and discuss with their peers which results in further concreting of appropriate beliefs for themselves in 'learning through Teaching, as well as building on their social skills, problem solving and tolerance of others.

Researchers have identified some benefits and clinical advantages of group therapy for young people. These include the following:

- Interaction between individuals that can be utilised to facilitate change;
- The reduction of the likelihood of a therapist entering a collusive relationship with a client;
- Group interactions can help young people to become more open about abuse-related thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, and by doing so, begin to address previously unresolved feelings of guilt, anger, and anxiety;
- A safe and supportive group can provide an environment in which new skills and ways of thinking can be learned, practiced, and developed;



- Group Therapy can provide therapists with valuable insights into participants' motivation to change, since participation in a group typically requires public acknowledgement that there are problems needing to be addressed;
- The group setting affords an environment in which young people who have difficulties in expressing emotions and experiences can learn from others, whilst developing competency in self-disclosure.
- Groups can reduce a sense of isolation; particularly for young people whose problem has a degree of social stigma;
- Important interpersonal and social skills can be effectively learned and practiced in a group setting;
- Groups allow a range of experiential activities which actively engage young people but may not be practical within adult-child interactions;
- Peer relationships and positive reinforcement are considered to be particularly effective with adolescents

**Assessment week:** During the assessment week prior to the beginning of the permanent placement, the young person meets the therapist with whom they will work. With the Clinical Lead. Therapy and assessment are explained to the young person and motivation is assessed. The young person is invited to ask questions about the process of therapy and express his thoughts about beginning his placement at Oakdene. The content and structure of the assessment is organised during this stage. Many young people have had previous experiences with therapists, and it is useful at this stage to gauge how they perceived such support. At this stage the therapist will assess where the young person is in terms of stages of change and consider their reflective capacity to engage in a therapeutic process. Consideration is also made as to the best-match in terms of allocating to a therapist for ongoing work if a placement is offered.

**I.C.O.N. (Identifying Current and Ongoing Needs):** I.C.O.N. adheres to the five outcomes for young people from Every Child Matters framework; Be healthy, stay safe, Enjoy and achieve, Make a positive contribution and Achieve economic well-being, and is informed by the Care Quality Standards for Children's Homes. This means that the needs of all young people at Oakdene are identified and met both in relation to their general care and their specific therapeutic goals throughout the whole of their placement. The young person's progress in relation to the aims identified in I.C.O.N. is recorded in I.C.O.N.'s "Progress Tracker" every 12 weeks via Oakdene's internal reviews and L.A.C. review meetings.

**Structured Therapeutic Family Work :** Oakdene Therapy also offer an additional service of Therapeutic Family Work. The role of an emotional confidant is a known strength factor in reducing likelihood of further harmful sexual behaviour. At Oakdene we pride ourselves on our holistic approach and where possible help each young person to build on their relationships with their family. This may require additional support for the young person and his family, and this takes place in the form of Therapeutic Family Work. Such intervention is aimed at helping the young person to reconnect with family, to verbalise difficult issues within the relationship, and to augment the therapy of the young person. Such work is carried out independently to the young person's therapy and is arranged separately according to the need of each young person. Therapeutic Family Work draws from Systemic Family Therapy approaches and Narrative therapy and consists of between six to ten sessions depending on the strength of existing relationship between the family members.



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## Contact

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**Complaints** – If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of the home please contact Kathy Dodd – Principal Manager either by telephone on 01403 783416 or email her directly – [kathy@appleorchard.org.uk](mailto:kathy@appleorchard.org.uk) and she will be happy discuss with you any issues or concerns that you may have. She will also be able to provide you with a copy of the complaints procedure.

**Further Information** – If you wish to access further information regarding Oakdene you can access the website at [www.appleorchard.org.uk](http://www.appleorchard.org.uk). However, if you require specific information and/ or copies of the homes Protection of Children Policy or Behaviour Management Policy, you can do so through the Registered manager.

**Oakdene – Registered Manager -Sheri Weir** [sheri@appleorchard.org.uk](mailto:sheri@appleorchard.org.uk)

Tel: 01403 823090

### Appendix A – Management and Staffing Structure

1. Organisational Structure of the home
2. Details of the staff, including qualifications and experience
3. Details of staff support and supervision
4. Role of the Principal Manager