



**Apple Orchard**

# Statement of Purpose

Oakdene

July 2025

Registered Manager: Sheri Weir



**Oakdene uses a holistic approach combining the disciplines of residential care, education, and therapy, with each having a vital role in managing and changing the beliefs associated with harmful sexual behaviour exhibited by young people.**

## Outcomes

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 the 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

## Achieving the Outcomes

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

**ICON (Identifying Current and Ongoing Needs):** This is an assessment and intervention framework for all young people. All disciplines contribute to its completion, and it is reviewed in collaboration with the young person, their therapist, key worker and the Headteacher. The ICON document incorporates Good Lives Model, psychometric outcomes, and personal education plan. The process of completing the ICON allows each young person to identify and agree a series of SMART goals (Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Time limited) on which to focus over a 12-week period.

**Assessment of Risk and Treatment Needs:** When a young person begins their placement assessment takes on a holistic form. 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 a formulation of behaviour, 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 is completed will vary, dependent on the young person's abilities and willingness to engage, although ideally this would be within the first 3 months of placement.

Psychometric assessments are individually tailored to the needs of the young person and are re-administered annually during placement to monitor progress as well as identify ongoing therapeutic needs. Additional specific assessments can be conducted and sourced where needed.

Should a young person be subject to an ongoing criminal investigation for an alleged sexual offence, careful consideration involving discussions with multi-agency partners (social workers, police) will need to be made to assess whether assessments should await completion of any legal proceedings.

**Behavioural Management Plans & Risk Assessments:** Each young person will have a behavioural risk and management prepared for them upon their arrival with the information provided. This will identify known risk-related behaviour and how these risks are best managed. This is a fluid document and will be updated in line with behavioural risks displayed throughout the placement. It is important to Apple Orchard that the young people are involved in 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 program:** 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 uses 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 program 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, there is a computer program 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 uses 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 care, education and therapy work together and separately using the frameworks described above to achieve positive outcomes for each young person.**



## Rationale

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 value, through the excellent standard of care we provide. Of great importance is to ensure that the young people in our care are always protected and feel safe. 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.

## Criteria for Admission

Young people are placed in 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 and young people whose behaviour falls on the Autistic Spectrum.

Due to the nature of the work that 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 for 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 when 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 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 home. 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.
- 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 is requested to complete all relevant admission paperwork and to provide all relevant documentation for 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 feels that they are able to meet the identified needs of the young person.

### **Statement of facilities, location of the home and range of needs**

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.



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, DVDs, 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.

## Care

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 ensures 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 depending 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 visitors' program 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 programs 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 and some young people will go out to a local college. 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 of 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 expects 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 allow them to be children.
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 because 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 outside agencies engage 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 is 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 do 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 centered 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 criterion; 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 their 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 program, where young people spend time away from staff supervision. All young people will start the program 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 have introduced a digital resilience program that educates the young people about using the internet safely. 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 includes 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 LGBTQIA+:

Allsorts Youth Project, who are based in Brighton have recently opened drop-in centers in Chichester and Horsham and support LGBTQIA+ Young people under the age of 26.

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.

## Supervision

The young people placed at Oakdene pose a risk both to themselves and to others; this is not limited to the wider community. We take the process of supervision 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 within the home and there are no recordings of electronic monitoring which is present. The following procedures are in place in the home:

- All young people's bedrooms 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 always be aware of the boy's movements.
- All safety measures, including the door sensors, are consistent with a domestic setting and do not create an institutional impression.
- In addition to this, at night there are 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. We also have a movement alarm located on the upstairs landing and in the corridor where the downstairs bedroom is located.
- 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.

## Education



Apple Orchard School has been rated GOOD in its last OFSTED inspection December 2022. Students attending Apple Orchard have often experienced extended periods away from education, so one of the main aims of the school is to have every student attending all classes with a 100% attendance record. Many social services have praised the school for changing student's attitudes and behaviours from being a school refuser or persistent truant to attending school and stating that they enjoy the experience.

Each student is given a baseline assessment using Access reading and Maths assessments to enable us to support each individual student's needs. Their subsequent progress is monitored, assessed, and documented through regular use of

formative and summative assessments including end of topic assessments, PUMA and PIRA and SNAP and SNAPB tests.



There are no punitive punishments in school and students are awarded merit points should they perform above and beyond what would be generally regarded as good in a mainstream setting, demonstrating an excellent attitude towards their learning and the teaching staff and the other students.

Small classes, high staff to student ratios and supervision levels allow the students to feel safe and as one parent commented, “are allowed to blossom,”.

Every student has an opportunity to voice any concerns, worries or achievements to their teachers and each day is reflected upon positively at the end of the day. Student Voice is actively encouraged, and the Student Council represents all students and influences the direction of the school. This increases their feelings of self-worth and minimises any chance of bullying or sexually inappropriate behaviours. Students are encouraged to attend meetings every three months where their education and behaviour progress are discussed. EHCPs inform the long-term target setting for students who have them. These targets are broken down into termly targets for the young person’s Personal Education Plan. Students who do not have EHCPs have specific long and shorter termly targets set to help to progress their education and behaviour which are then included in the PEP. All students are set a behaviour and academic SMART target at the beginning of each lesson, reviewed at the end.



### Key Stage 3:

All young people will undertake courses in study leading to qualifications in Key Stage 4. Teaching and subject content will be in line with the National Curriculum for England and includes:

English  
 Mathematics  
 Science (STEM inc. Robotics and coding)  
 Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) Citizenship Education  
 History Geography  
 Art and Design (including photography) Reading  
 Work Related Learning  
 Physical Education (PE) – practical and Theory Computing  
 Design and Technology Food Tech  
 Culture including Religious Education (RE)

### Assessment:

Regular formative assessments to monitor progress Summative assessments at the end of each term or year  
 Access Reading and Maths  
 PIRA and PUMA  
 SNAP SPLD and Behaviour  
 Outside access arrangements and Dyslexia assessment



**Teaching Approach:**

Emphasis on developing independent learning skills  
Encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving  
Use of interactive and engaging teaching methods

**Personal Development:**

Focus on building self-awareness, self-esteem, and resilience  
Development of social and emotional skills  
Encouragement of healthy lifestyle choices and well-being

**Therapeutic Approach:**

Creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment  
Addressing emotional and mental health needs alongside academic goals  
Incorporating therapeutic practices such as mindfulness, emotional regulation, and conflict resolution  
Providing individualized support for students with specific needs  
Promoting positive relationships and a sense of community within the school

**Citizenship:**

Understanding of democratic processes and political systems  
Promotion of active participation in the community  
Education on rights, responsibilities, and respect for diversity  
Leadership programs and student councils

This structure not only supports academic achievement but also fosters personal growth, emotional well-being, and responsible citizenship, preparing students for Key stage 4 so that they are well-rounded individuals and active members of society.

**At Key Stage 4:**

All students are encouraged to gain National Certificates over the 3-year study plan. These can include Entry Level qualifications, Functional Skills, and GCSEs. The school can offer English Language, Maths, Combined Science, History, Art, PE, and Geography up to GCSE level and ICT Functional Skills. Further Learning for Employment (Construction & DT) Open Awards and enrichment courses for PSHE and Music. Over the past eight years all students have left with at least one GCSE; however, most have achieved multiple GCSEs up to grade 3, and several have achieved five or more GCSEs at Grade 4 or above. These achievements give the students access to Further Education or Post-16 apprenticeships.

**At Key Stage 5:**

Further education courses are available at local colleges which 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, Motor Vehicle and Catering. Opportunities are designed to support the student's personal development, employability and to enhance their academic study.

Those who have not met the academic requirements at Key Stage 4 can revisit core GCSEs. We offer a Post 16 curriculum to support students who are at college, which includes: Foodwise (Food Preparation & Cooking), Leadership, Road wise (Preparation for Driving), Environmental (in conjunction with the Wildlife Trust), Sport & Fitness, Citizenship and Land Based (Gardening or Animal Care). Levels are also available at KS5, for those looking to future university entry.





## Staff

Students are encouraged to work hard at school by good role modelling from the highly qualified and motivated teaching staff. We proactively seek to appoint the best teachers we can and ensure subject specialists in all core areas.



## Sporting Activities

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. Students are given the opportunity to engage in outdoor activities such as high ropes courses, paddle-boarding, team building exercises, rock-climbing, and dry slope skiing. The improvements in students' 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 have been obvious in their behaviours out with school, at home and in therapy.

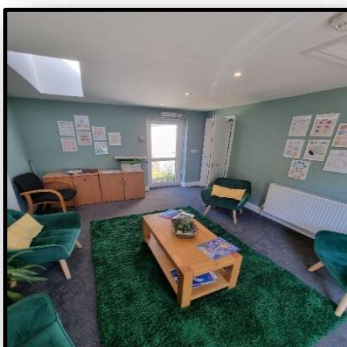
## Extra-Curricular

Students 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 students and have recorded the improvements in speaking and listening assessments for English. Students are offered football coaching after school, as well as peripatetic guitar and piano lessons within school time.



**Young people mature and develop at Apple Orchard School. They leave with the motivation to succeed and the skills and qualifications to meet their future ambitions.**

## Therapy



**Individual Therapy:** Individual Therapy at Oakdene continually evolves so that the young people benefit from a therapeutic program 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 principal objective being to achieve the aims collaboratively. Therapy sessions sometimes include the young person's keyworker to ensure that the issues are 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 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 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 concretising 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



**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 the 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 needs 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.

## Contact

**Data Protection** – If you have a concern or question regarding Data Protection, GDPR or information storage and use, please email this to [DPO@polariscommunity.co.uk](mailto:DPO@polariscommunity.co.uk)

**Complaints** – If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of the home please contact Jodie Parker – Responsible Individual either by telephone on 01403 783416 or email her directly – [jodie.parker@appleorchard.org.uk](mailto:jodie.parker@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 complaint's 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, Sheri Weir

Oakdene – Sheri Weir (Registered Manager)  
Tel: 01403 823090 [sheri.weir@appleorchard.org.uk](mailto:sheri.weir@appleorchard.org.uk)

## 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 Principal Manager

