



# Statement of Purpose

## Woodthorn View

*Date of Original Document: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022*

**Date of Issue: 27/01/25**



**Registered Manager\***

Cat Rollason

Contact: [catherine.rollason@rocgroup.org.uk](mailto:catherine.rollason@rocgroup.org.uk)

TEL: 01325 317153

**Responsible Individual**

Helen Redhead

Contact: [Helen.redhead@rocgroup.org.uk](mailto:Helen.redhead@rocgroup.org.uk)

TEL: 01325 310009

**Registered Provider:**

ROC Family Support Ltd

Hope House

Newton Aycliffe

Co Durham

DL5 7ER

Tel: 01325 310009

Email: [info@rocgroup.org.uk](mailto:info@rocgroup.org.uk)

Web: [www.rocgroup.org.uk](http://www.rocgroup.org.uk)

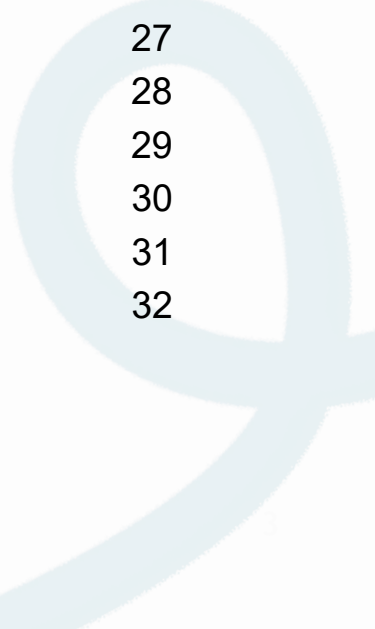
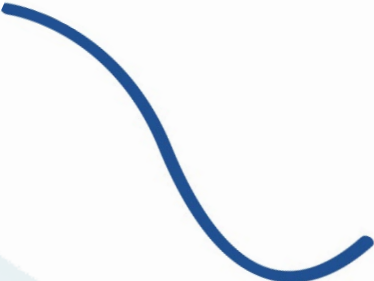
Ofsted Registration Number: 2688209

\*The Registered Manager must ensure a copy of The Statement of Purpose is on display in the home and that a copy is given to all residents, parents, team members and social workers involved at Woodthorn View.



# Contents

Who We Are	4
Core Values	5
Our Objectives	6
Woodthorn View	7
Placement Types & Admission Criteria	8
Admissions	9
Emergency Admissions	10
About the House	11
Woodham/Newton Aycliffe Area	12
Equality, Diversity & Identity	13
Family & Friends	14
Having A Say	15
Safeguarding	16-17
Emergency Safety	18
Security	19
Unauthorised Absence	20
Managing Behaviour	21
Physical Intervention	22
Education	23
Having Fun	24
Health & Wellbeing	25-26
Staff Rota	27
Team Structure	28
Audits	29
Big Picture	30
Compliments & Complaints	31
Complaints Contacts	32




# Who we are

ROC Group was founded in 1999 and has for twenty years been delivering bespoke packages to meet the needs of children and young people across the Northeast of England. Our vast expertise covers children with complex needs, personal care, supported accommodation and supervising family time. Woodthorn View is the first ROC Home specifically for children and young people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and emotional and behavioural difficulties. We have a strong team who are well trained, experienced and knowledgeable to meet the individual needs of our children and young people. We provide very individualised, person-centred care whilst enabling our children and young people to continually build on their independent skills and reach their goals.

We are passionate about making a difference to the lives of the people we work with and our teams go over and above to make sure this happens. What makes us special? **Our People**. The culture they have created is award winning! Some of our ROC Group accolades include;

- National Care Employer of the Year 2022 (Children & Young People's Awards)
- National Housing with Care Winner 2022 (GBCA)
- Investors in Children Gold
- CQC Outstanding at 4 Consecutive Inspections
- Ofsted "Good" Provider
- Enhanced National Association of Child Contact Centre's Accreditation
- IASME Governance certified



ROC Home

providing safe, nurturing and caring homes for  
children and young people

*ROC Home Mission Statement 2019*



# Core values

As a team we have eight core values, which are very important to us. They run like golden threads through everything we do and how we treat people. They are:



**Integrity,  
transparency and  
respect**



**The rights of children  
and young people**



**Working together**



**Listening and  
consultation**



**Safeguarding**



**Recognition**



**Learning and personal  
development**



**Equality and diversity**

# Our aims

- To provide a high-quality, residential service which has a focus on continuous improvement and quality assurance
- To ensure all homes offer stability, security and a warm, safe caring environment in which children can positively thrive.
  - To provide children and young people with structure and consistent boundaries
- To encourage children and young people to express their views, to listen to them and act on them where feasible
- To ensure children and young people in our care receive educational support
  - To provide therapeutic-based support to children / young people assessed as having complex needs/behaviours
  - To provide consistent and reliable team members who are excellent “role models” for our children and young people
  - To positively influence behaviour using behaviour management strategies tailored to the needs of each young person which develop their understanding of the significance and consequences of their behaviour, enhancing the possibility of change
  - To actively encourage children and young people involved to work together with decision making in the home for example, planning activities, house rules etc
- To establish strong links with the local community and build lasting positive relationships
- To ensure diversity is celebrated and the cultural / religious needs of each individual person are met
- To encourage children and young people to get involved in social and leisure activities and to use their free time positively
- To enable young people to transition to leaving care by supporting them with a range of life skills training.
  - To promote good communication and effective working relationships with team members, young people, local authority, police and a range of other professionals involved in the lives of the children who live in the home
- To provide team members who have relevant knowledge, skills and experience required to provide a service delivered to national standards
- To promote family time with birth families and significant others
- To provide 24-hour telephone support, via an on-call service
- To adhere to company policies and procedures
- To maintain “Investors in Children Gold” Accreditation



investing in children



# Woodthorn View

- Woodthorn View is a specialist home providing solo or dual placements for up to two children and young people, of any gender (dependent on matching) from age 8-17yrs, with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The manager will consider adaptations to the home when assessing placements and the needs of individual children. Young people usually stay with us from several months up to a number of years, depending on their individual plans.
- There are 2 team members on duty at all times, working on a rota pattern. Waking nights are not usually provided but may be considered depending on the needs of the individual.
- We aim for children and young people to develop safe, stable and secure relationships with us by working very closely with them and getting to know them thoroughly. We allocate a keyworker to each young person for individual attention and support who plays an important role as a core member of the team around the child, contributing to planning and decision making.
- The practices are both inclusive and supportive. We strive for our children and young people to reach their individual potential with the life - skills, independence, physical, emotional and mental resilience they require to either return home, move on to another placement or live independently. Whilst there may be some challenges and barriers along the way, we do not give up easily on our children and young people because we genuinely want them to succeed, be happy and lead fulfilling lives.
- We believe in equal opportunities for all. Young people will not be discriminated against on the basis of age, race, religion, pregnancy, gender reassignment, sex, sexual orientation or disability. All team members receive training in equal opportunities and diversity.
- Young people are sensitively supported in exploring their identity, in relation to any and all strands of diversity as appropriate. We actively assist young people where they follow any particular religion, and will forge links with local providers to ensure that any cultural needs in terms of diet, clothing etc are met.
- Woodthorn View receives regular consultation from CATs Therapeutic Services. CATs provide advice and support for the team and children and young people through therapeutic supervision. This can range from developing a knowledge base, skills, expertise in understanding complex presentations, reflective practice on behaviours that may challenge.
- The home uses the principles of PACE and positive behaviour support to provide a nurturing environment with a focus on long term outcomes.

# Placements

## Placement Types:

- Solo Placements
- Dual Placements

## Admission Criteria:

Woodthorn View is open to up to two young people of any gender aged 8 to 17 years with one or more of the following needs:

- Physical disabilities
- Learning disabilities
- Sensory impairment
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties





# Admissions

We recognise moving home can be a really stressful time: We focus on children and young people feeling very welcome, included and 'at home' here from their very first visit.

To help do this, we have an admission meeting which will include the young person and their family, the social worker and representatives from the home (usually the manager and a keyworker).

Information will be shared between all parties, to enable us to care for the young person effectively, and the placement agreement and safety plan will be made and signed.

The child or young person will be shown around the home and introduced to other residents and the team. They will be given a welcome pack, which includes some goodies, and a guide containing information such as fire procedures and how to make a complaint. A keyworker will spend time with them, to help them settle in, and pick which paint colour they would like for their room! On some occasions, there will be several visits, and overnight stays, to prepare the young person for their move.



Young people already in the home will be prepared for a new admission by 1:1 keyworker sessions or sometimes young people's meetings. Appropriate information will be shared with them, to help to minimise the impact of change on them.

## Emergency admissions

Admissions will usually be on a planned basis, to make sure the individual needs of all the children and young people in the group are met. The admission process is governed by the needs of the young person, for example sometimes a quicker move may be needed.

On rare occasions admissions may be made in an emergency, where this is in the best interest of the child.

The following criteria must be met:

- The placement is part of a care planning process which addresses the needs of the young person
- The placement will provide the best available method of achieving the aims and objectives of the plan for the young person and will meet the young person's assessed needs
- The placement is in accordance with the home's Statement of Purpose
- The home is able to provide levels of care appropriate to the needs of the young person
- The young person's needs will be assessed in conjunction with the needs of the young person already resident at Woodthorn View, and there are no grounds for considering that this placement will significantly impact on any current young person or the young person themselves
- A care planning meeting must take place within 48 hours of the placement

The decision regarding the placement will be based on all of the above, after considering the available documentation, e.g. care plan, assessments, risk assessments, talking with the child/ young person, parents, the social worker and other agencies, if applicable.

## About the house

Woodthorn View is a semi - detached 4 bedroomed house situated in a quiet position in Woodham Village a residential area built in the 1970s. The house has been converted to meet the requirements of children and young people as set out in the Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

All areas of the setting are well presented and resourced, child and young people friendly, clean, hygienic and safe. In the event of repairs or alterations required, ROC Group maintenance team provide wide ranging services.

Each young person has his/her own bedroom. There is also a lounge/diner, breakfasting kitchen, office with sleep in facilities for team members, 2 bedrooms for young people (1 includes en-suite wet room, with toilet wash basin and shower & through floor lift), 1 team member sleep in room,(all bedrooms are located upstairs) bathroom which contains toilet, wash basin and shower,1 shower room for team members, 3 toilets in total, and a spacious paved garden area outside with wheel chair access, the children and young people have opportunity to put their own stamp on the home through Decoration and Accessories, The home has a small cold water fish tank with 6 cold water fish that the young people chose.



# The local area

Woodham is within twenty minutes walking distance of Newton Aycliffe town where there are more amenities such as schools, libraries, sports and leisure centers, play parks, tennis and football facilities. Excellent public and private transport links lead to Durham, Darlington, Newcastle and further afield. However, we have our own car to support children, use of an adapted mini bus and team members cars.

Close by there is a local GP practice, dental surgery, opticians, shops, garage, pub, takeaway food outlets, Indian restaurant, care home for older people, churches, community centre, golf club, play parks and grassed areas.







# Equality & diversity




We believe in equality of opportunity for all and ensure young people are not discriminated against on any basis such as age, race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation or ability. All team members receive training in equality and diversity and make no assumptions about the preferences of children and young people with emotional behaviours difficulties and complex health needs. We are opposed to all forms of discriminatory behaviour such as prejudice, intimidation, harassment or bullying and actively challenge unfairness.

We are proud to embrace diversity and provide an inclusive learning, working and social environment where individuality is valued and celebrated and everyone is encouraged to fulfil their own unique potential. The service we provide respects the rights, dignity and voices of everyone involved.

We believe everyone is entitled to respect and to live and work in a welcoming, safe, non-threatening environment. Any complaints of unfairness are treated seriously, fully investigated and appropriate action taken. We are strong advocates of children's rights; if a young person feels their views are not being heard, we offer them the support of an independent advocate through NYAS.

As part of the admissions process, we make enquiries about a young person's religious and cultural beliefs. We discuss these with them and their parents / carers including any resources / arrangements required to enable them to follow their preferences. For example, we are happy to provide special diets, source cultural clothing, celebrate festivals and travel to religious venues.

We fully recognise and appreciate each young person has a different way of thinking about themselves, how they want to be seen by others and how they feel they 'fit' into the world. Team members sensitively support them to explore their self -identity, choose resources and activities, follow their religion, celebrate festivals, and be involved in decision making.







## Family & Friends

Team members at Woodthorn View support and maintain positive relationships between young people, their families and friends in the knowledge these relationships have a significant impact on their overall progress and development.

Family time arrangements including overnight stays are agreed during the admission process and facilitated by team members who support communications, provide practical support and transport to meeting places. Such arrangements, as well as any restrictions related to family time, become part of the Placement Plan and are explained fully to the young person and other relevant parties.

Families are offered regular feedback in their preferred format regarding their child's progress to keep them actively involved in their care. Wherever possible, decisions about young people are made in consultation with parents / carers. Any serious incident, accident, illness, injury, or missing from home is communicated with them in accordance with pre-agreed plans.

When visiting Woodthorn View, parents and relatives are made welcome and offered refreshments. Such visits are appropriately recorded in the visitor's book and in the young person's file. However, a young person retains the right to refuse these visits if they wish; if they are under the age of 16 years, where mediation is unsuccessful, team members may seek further professional advice. Team members adopt a restorative approach when trying to resolve difficulties arising between young people and their relatives.

We do our very best to enable children and young people to maintain as much time as possible with their friends to combat feelings of loneliness or disadvantage. Existing friends may visit the home, new friendships are encouraged, supported, facilitated and all are suitably supervised.



## Having a say


ROC Group are proud to have been awarded Investors in Children Gold status by demonstrating our commitment to listening to feedback and acting on it. We place great importance on forming positive, open relationships with young people, their families and professionals involved in their lives. We regularly consult them and encourage them to express honest opinions and ideas about the day-to-day decision-making smooth running of Woodthorn View and the quality of care provided, because we know how important this is to them.

Their views are encouraged both verbally and via quarterly feedback forms. Any areas identified for change or improvement are always considered / actioned if feasible and our website news facility is used to communicate any changes. Young people's views on a variety of topics such as bullying, restraints, rewards and consequences are recorded on our electronic 'Charms' system and used to formulate part of our monitoring records in relation to Regulation 45 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

Bi – weekly house meetings are held with our young people; they are encouraged to set their own agenda, chair their own meetings and the minutes are recorded for them. Topics can be wide ranging such as menus, pocket money, activities and holidays. We recognise some children and young people are not comfortable expressing their views in a group situation, especially if they have learning or communication difficulties, therefore regular one to one key working sessions take place and keyworkers ensure their views and wishes are shared and afforded equal concern.

Team members will communicate with children using different communication aids dependent upon their needs. For example, communications cards such as menu and activity options so the young people can express their preferences without speaking if required. We also have a toolbox of communication aids available for the young people to access and use where required and seek advice from SALT and CATs therapeutic services around specific communication needs unique to each child in our care.

As part of Regulation 44 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015, an independent visitor from Skylark visits Woodthorn View on a monthly basis to check we are providing the best possible service for our children and young people. During these visits, they communicate with our children and young people about the care they receive and to team members about how we provide it. They may also speak with parents, carers and other professionals. Their overall findings are shared with the management team and with Ofsted in a written report which may result in us implementing actions to change or improve the service we provide.



# Safeguarding

Woodthorn View is subject to the Durham Safeguarding Procedures. All team members undertake safeguarding training and are made familiar with these procedures. Safeguarding refresher training is available via e-learning courses.

We use safer recruitment processes in line with Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership, (DSCP), and practice safe care procedures. We also have lone working policies and procedures to safeguard everyone involved.

We have created an open culture, where team members and young people are able to discuss any concerns of a child protection nature, without fear of consequences. We encourage speaking out about concerns around practice, where it is felt that it cannot be dealt with through normal routes, or they are of sufficient seriousness, to warrant bringing to the attention of the Responsible Individual or Directors.

Team members can often be the first to realise that there may be something wrong within the organisation, but they may not feel comfortable expressing their concerns, as they might feel that “speaking out” would be disloyal to colleagues, managers or the organisation.

In instances of team members allegations, we will ensure that the Local Authority Designated Officer has been informed.

Team members will be trained to know how to report immediately any abuse, or suspicions of abuse whether this has taken place inside or outside of the home. This is covered within our Whistleblowing and Safeguarding policies.

Children and young people are advised on what to do if they are being hurt or abused in any way. They are provided with our Guide which has numbers for NYAS, Ofsted, and Child-line etc. They will have access to a telephone which they can use without supervision, unless it is not appropriate.

As part of key working sessions, we will discuss with young people their rights and how to pass on compliments and complaints.

Woodthorn View has a policy on countering bullying which is reviewed annually. These policies include identifying bullying, addressing bullying and how to support victims and perpetrators of bullying. Key workers talk to young people about bullying and how to stay safe.

All child protection incidents are recorded according to Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, and cross referenced within the homes’ electronic database (Charms).

We make it our business to understand what is happening in the local community, working closely with neighbourhood police, to pool information in order to keep young people safe. We record any known risks in a locality risk assessment and review this as required, to keep the information current.

The Registered Manager is the lead person in the home to take responsibility for overall safeguarding issues.

Our full child protection policy can be obtained by contacting Lynn Cunningham on 01325 310009 or [Info@rocgroup.org.uk](mailto:Info@rocgroup.org.uk).

## Safeguarding contact numbers:

Name of Local Authority / Gov Agency	NAME	website/ADDRESS	EMAIL	TELEPHONE
Durham	First Contact Service	<a href="https://www.durham-scp.org.uk/">https://www.durham-scp.org.uk/</a>	<a href="mailto:scd@durham.gov.uk">scd@durham.gov.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:firstcontact-gcsx@durham.gcsx.gov.uk">firstcontact-gcsx@durham.gcsx.gov.uk</a>	03000 26 79 79; Fax: 0191 383 5752; Minicom: 0142 988 4124  Emergency Duty Team 03000 267 979 Text: 0778 602 7280. Call: 03000 267 979
	Safeguarding Adults	<a href="http://www.safeguardingdurhamadults.info/">http://www.safeguardingdurhamadults.info/</a>		Call: 03000 267 979
	LADO	County Hall Durham	<a href="mailto:lado-gcsx@durham.gcsx">lado-gcsx@durham.gcsx</a>	03000 268 835
Ofsted		Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD	<a href="mailto:whistle.blowing@ofsted.gov.uk">whistle.blowing@ofsted.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk">enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk</a>	0300 123 3155
Police				101 non emergency 999 emergency

A copy of our Safeguarding policy can be obtained from:

ROC Group, Hope House, Burnhope, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, DL5 7ER

Tel: 01325 310009

Email: [businesssupport@rocgroup.org.uk](mailto:businesssupport@rocgroup.org.uk)



# Emergency safety



- All team members receive training and guidance around health and safety, which includes fire safety. This is regularly reviewed and updated. The Registered Manager audits and monitors health and safety within the home.
- We comply with guidance provided by the Health and Safety Executive, (HSE), and local fire authority, to keep children, team members and visitors safe. All young people are given information about what to do in the event of a fire, when they first visit the home.
- Risk assessments are carried out and recorded in writing on our data base. The Registered Manager will regularly review the implementation and effectiveness of actions identified.
- The Registered Manager ensures that Woodthorn View's fire procedures are adhered to. This includes ensuring that regular fire drills are carried out, including in the hours of darkness, and all children and team members know the emergency evacuation procedures for the home, in the event of a fire.
- The Manager and team members will make sure that Woodthorn View, its premises, equipment, furnishings and fittings are physically safe and secure and that any defect is promptly remedied.
- The local environmental Health Service assess the food storage and preparation provision of the home and will be consulted as required if any concerns are raised.
- ROC Home has an Emergency Contingency Plan which will be implemented if required for any major crisis. The on-call rota operates 24/7. The duty worker will work with team members on duty in the home to seek the best resolution for residents, should a serious situation arise. This could include transfer to alternative ROC properties, or hotel accommodation







# Security



We want children and families to feel safe and secure in our care, however we do not want them to feel inhibited from enjoying their day to day lives as independently and freely as possible: We have carefully balanced security measures in place at Woodthorn View which reflect these needs.

Woodthorn View has in place security systems ensuring the home, contents, and the people who live and work here are kept safe. For example, certain doors may be kept locked without prohibiting team members and young people from leaving the premises, but preventing access from the outside. Similarly, if a young person who has complex needs regularly attempts to leave the setting unaccompanied, measures may be put in place to ensure they are unable to do so but this is done to protect them from harm rather than to deprive them of their liberty. On some occasions, internal doors may be locked for specific health and safety reasons or for confidentiality e.g. the door to the team members office.



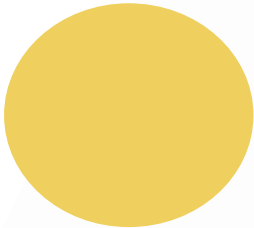
Young people have their own lockable storage facility in which to store any valuables / personal items and may be offered a key for their bedroom door depending on what is agreed in their placement plan.

An alarm system and door alerts is also fitted in certain areas of the home to alert team members to any access or movement. This is solely intended to protect people within the home, not to monitor the movement of individuals.

There is a CCTV camera in operation on the exterior of the building for prevention of crime

## **NB**

This list does not include any system of tagging etc imposed by a court or prison authority as part of Youth Justice Board actions.



# Unauthorised absence

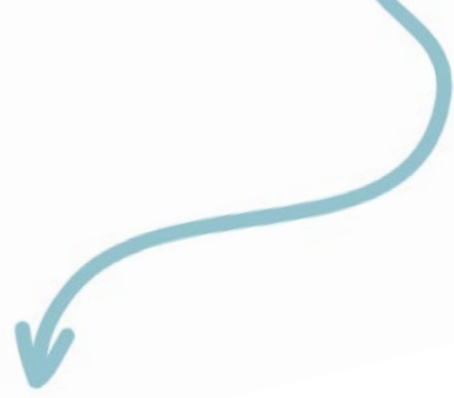
Sometimes staying out late happens because children and young people may be having fun with their friends, but sometimes this isn't a safe thing to do. Children and young people who are absent from our home, without consent, are protected in line with The Police and Durham County Council's joint written policy and guidance on Children who go Missing from Home or Care. This policy is consistent with national legislation.

To help prevent non-agreed absence, and to protect them if they do not return, we:

- Go out and look for them, if we have any idea where they may be
- Contact friends and family to find out if they know their whereabouts
- Work hard to build positive relationships with children and young people and engage them in pro-social activities, within the community to promote confidence, self-esteem and a sense that this is their home
- Support their friend, family and social networks, unless we have grounds to believe this is not in their best interest
- Provide guidance about relationships appropriate to their age and understanding
- Ensure that where a child/young person has a history of going missing, this will be reflected in the safety plan, along with how we aim to keep them safe, whether they are missing or absent from their designated proper place.
- Share all information with the police and Emergency Duty Team (EDT), in a timely way to ensure that there is a multi-agency response to the individual needs of the child/young person who is missing, particularly if risks are high
- Arrange an independent Return from Missing interview
- Document, report and record incidents of absence from the home, and discuss in Service Performance Meetings and quarterly Board meetings to establish trends and design mechanisms to prevent further absences

Where a specific risk is identified, or the child has been missing several times, we take part in multi-agency meetings with the police, and members of the care team, to make sure our safety plan is robust and we are working together to minimise risk.

# Behaviour



We use Positive Behaviour Support to improve the quality of life of our children and young people, increase their positive behavioural repertoire and teach new skills. We use functional assessments where necessary to determine the reason behind the behaviour and develop strategies which motivate the child/young person to change their approach to having their needs met.

- We respond positively to positive behaviour
- We share and acknowledge good behaviour
- We work on rewards, rather than punishment
- We use our positive relationships with young people to deal with issues in a restorative way

## Learning Lessons

Whilst we feel consequences for actions are a necessary part of growing up, we are fully aware certain sanctions are not permitted under The Children's Home Regulations 2015 and we abide by these rules. For example, withholding food, drink or medicine. To see a full list of prohibited sanctions, please visit: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/541/regulation/19/made>

- If a consequence is deemed necessary, team members negotiate what is appropriate and congruent with the young person's abilities and level of understanding. Examples may include the removal of privileges, missing out on a leisure activity, or the repair of an item.
- Young people's views regarding consequences of actions are recorded in our database (Charms) and their effectiveness monitored. Should a particular consequence be deemed ineffective for an individual it may not be repeated.
- Our policies on behaviour management discourage the use of physical intervention unless as a last resort. However, team members attend mandatory annual refresher courses (please refer to physical intervention section below), on how to apply correct and reasonable physical intervention techniques for children and young people.

A copy of our Behaviour Management Policy, can be obtained from:

ROC Group, Hope House, Burnhope, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, DL5 7ER  
tel: 01325 310009 Email: [businesssupport@rocgroup.org.uk](mailto:businesssupport@rocgroup.org.uk)



## Physical Intervention



A vital aspect of our team members development programme at Woodthorn View is to support team members to understand how best to work with children and young people with complex needs and emotional behavioural difficulties. We receive support where required, from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services(CAMHS), CATs therapeutic services and Local Authority Social Workers which reduces the need to use physical intervention in the home.


Team members are trained and refreshed regularly in physical intervention training via Positive Behaviour Management (PBM), which includes deflection, distraction and de-escalation techniques. Their competence is assessed by a qualified trainer and any issues fed back directly to the Registered Manager who decides on their fitness to be involved in physical interventions.

Team members will take part in Restraint Reduction Network certified training to learn skills to prevent the need for physical interventions

Each young person has a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP), detailing current warning signs, complex needs, disabilities, learning difficulties, health issues, triggers for their behaviours and strategies to address this behaviour. However, physical intervention is only ever performed as a last resort, for example where there is a threat to life.

Where physical intervention is applied, it is recorded on our electronic data base including the name of the young person involved, the team member who carried out the intervention, which technique was used, how long it lasted and whether or not any injuries were sustained and/or medical intervention was required. The young person's views are also included.

A life space interview, is carried out with the young person to discuss the incident and agree on ways in which similar future situations could be approached differently. Life space interviews can be communicated in various ways, dependent upon the communication needs of the child. This can be done verbally with team member, or via communication aids where required. The use of physical intervention is closely monitored by the Registered Manager and their social worker and family are informed. Where it has been necessary to use physical intervention more frequently to keep young people or team members safe, advice is sought from outside agencies, such as CAMHS, to ensure we are working in their best interest.





# Education




Team members at Woodthorn View adopt a culture whereby attendance at school, training or work is the norm, as supported by our education policy unless placement plans state otherwise. We are committed to improving the life-chances of each and every child and young person, taking into account any behavioural difficulties, complex needs, learning difficulties and / or disabilities they may have.

During the admissions process, a multi-agency team decision is reached including the views of the young person and their family regarding the viability of maintaining a young person's current education placement which is deemed a high priority.

We work closely with Looked after Children's Educational Services, (SEND), who allocate a keyworker to assist us with attendance monitoring and educational progress for all of our young people of statutory school age. Keyworkers work closely with Designated Teachers and Form Teachers, enabling excellent channels of communication and our young people are made aware we are working together to help them achieve their full potential.

Any identified barriers to learning are shared amongst professionals and significant effort is made to ensure our young people are supported with the provision of resources and equipment to achieve without limitation to gender roles or complex needs. Education is extended by keyworkers supporting them with home studies, educational activities / outings, attending certification days, open days, sports days, and actively celebrating the efforts and educational achievements of each of our children and young people.

For young people outside of statutory education, keyworkers ensure appropriate services are accessed to assist them in finding and sustaining suitable training or employment opportunities suitable for their individual capabilities and in accordance with their needs and wishes.







## Having fun

Every child and young person has the right to have fun!

We understand how exposing young people to a range of leisure experiences and activities can improve self-esteem and support learning and development. With this in mind, young people are encouraged to participate in hobbies, clubs and activities. Our aim is to help young people access activities within the community which they can continue into adulthood.

Keyworkers will find out from young people what leisure pursuits they enjoy, and what they are good at, and facilitate the continuation of any hobbies. Young people will be given the opportunity to participate in the activities they wish to pursue, which encourages the development of creative skills e.g. painting, poetry, and music, as well as sporting and physical activities. Team members will participate in these activities, where appropriate, to provide encouragement and support.

The home has a wide range of puzzles, craft equipment and games. We will normally have games consoles and a computer for the young people to use for leisure and home study purposes (which will always get priority over game playing!). It is linked to the internet which can be used with supervision as dictated by a young person's risk assessment.

The children's homes team members will consult with young people about the provision of opportunities, which promote the development of cultural and artistic needs, and plan for such opportunities will be done at both a group level i.e. in young people's meetings and in key-working sessions and planning meetings.

The issue of parental consent will be considered for activities which are provided outside the children's home i.e. leisure centre, youth club etc.

Our young people benefit from Durham County Council schemes to encourage children to become involved in sport and leisure activities, meaning that many of these can be accessed free by use of the council's swipe card process.

We also take the young people at Woodthorn View away on holiday for a maximum of 14 nights throughout the year, normally within the UK.

Monthly 'Participation meetings' are in place which are directed by the young people and come in the form of: trips, activities and events. The agenda and planning are led by the young people who attend. This group provides a forum for listening to the young people and their 'voice' is used to shape the service delivery of ROC Group.



## Health & wellbeing

Our team are focused on helping the young people in our care be healthy and happy. At Woodthorn View, we have a health champion who promotes healthy objectives and supports our young people to take care of their health. This could include going shopping together for healthy food and then making recipes together, gaining access to local gyms or motivating the young person towards a health goal.

Public Health England reports that 60% of Looked After Children have some form of emotional or mental illness. We work to provide stability for young people, so that they can be supported to navigate these issues. We undertake direct work with the young person, but also provide support and training for our team where a young person's needs are particularly complex, or where the child is not ready to engage with services. We also utilize provisions such as our local CAMHS team who are at hand to offer help and advice to team members as well as supporting young people with their mental health needs.

The team members are trained in substance misuse and have made links with County Durham drug and alcohol services to remain informed on current drug use trends in the region.

Young people, on admission, are always registered as a matter of urgency with a local G.P., a dentist and an optician of the child's choice if possible. We have designated team members who take a lead role in health and attend health representatives' meetings, and filter information throughout the team.

Young people will be encouraged to undertake regular health checks to monitor progress in this area and to help us assess the effectiveness of our approach, along with our health colleagues, including the Looked After Nurse.

Keyworkers will work closely with families and other agencies to ensure that our health information is comprehensive, and health targets will always form part of the Placement Plan for each young person. These targets will be evaluated and reviewed to ensure health plans are making a difference to the young person.

Team members also have links to the local pharmacy who will advise us on safe storage and disposal of medication as well as a range of health issues. Training can be accessed by staff from the Looked after Nurse and other health professionals. Where a young person has specific health needs, advice and training will be sought from a relevant specialist.

Part of our role is to provide guidance and advice around health issues. We will actively discourage smoking, alcohol and substance misuse and ensure that young people are aware of health risks associated with these actions. We have team members trained to give age appropriate guidance around sexual health and relationship matters, and will always provide this for young people. We will also give general advice and support around how to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and will encourage young people to eat well and exercise. Where any of these issues are

a concern for an individual young person, specific targets will be included as part of the Placement Plan, and help from other agencies may be sought.

Team members will not smoke in the presence of young people or consume alcohol while looking after children and young people.

Where required, specialist advice will be sought to provide for the needs of children and young people from minority ethnic and cultural groups, or where a young person has a particular health issue, disability or condition.

We will always check that health professionals have appropriate qualifications and experience, if they are not employed by the local authority.

All team members are trained in paediatric first aid. We also have a core of team members who have undertaken 'First Aid at Work' training, or equivalent. A designated first-aider will be identified on each shift.





## Team rotas

The team work a variety of duties which, full time, equate to 38.5-40 hrs per week over each month. The manager works flexibly throughout the week in order to observe practice for all team members and manage the home during different aspects of day to day life.

The intensity of rota cover depends upon the number of children residing at the home, at a given time, and the assessed risks for each child. For example, 2 young people with low risks, have 2 team members with additional oversight from the Registered Manager at varying times of the day. Throughout the night, 1 team member may be sleeping and 1 awake, or both may be sleeping, dependent on individual needs and risks. There are six full-time team members employed to cover the care of the young people, as well as the Registered Manager. If there is a need to increase staffing levels, we have a pool of appropriately recruited, qualified, trained and experienced team members from our other ROC Group services who are able to accommodate any extra requirement. A rota is available to be viewed to see who is on duty at any time.

A lone working policy is in place in the home. Staffing levels are regularly reviewed as part of the risk assessments of individuals and groups of young people. Rota's may be altered to suit the varied needs of our residents.

Additional cover, where a team member is absent due to sickness, or where there is an identified need to increase staffing to support safety plans, will be covered wherever possible by The Woodthorn View team, this will achieve continuity of care. When this is not possible the manager will endeavour to use team members from other ROC Group services that are known to the children/young people. Agency staff will only be used when all other avenues have been exhausted.

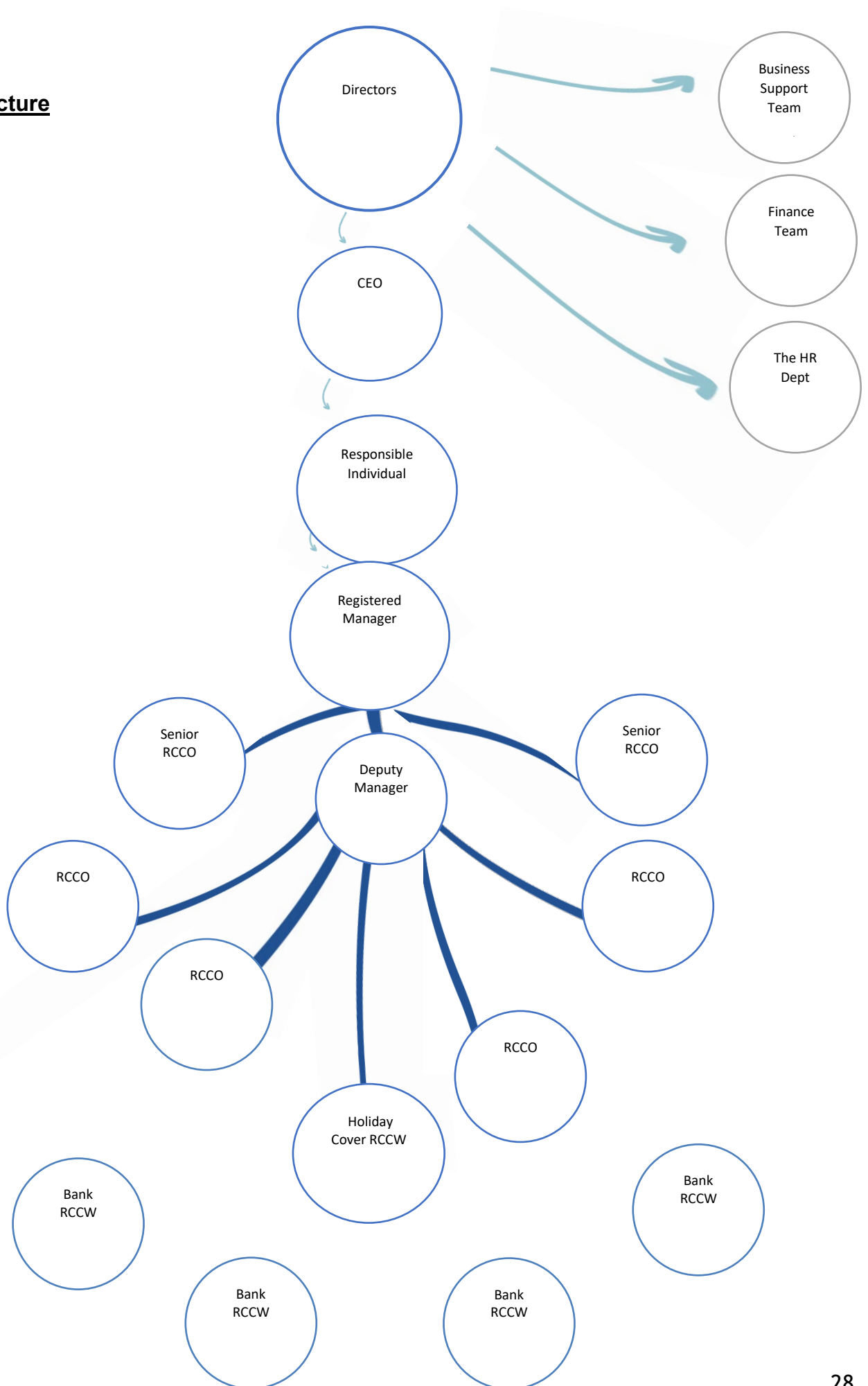
All activities will be risk assessed and team members allocated accordingly. Where activities are provided by an external agency, we will consider whether residential team members need to support them, and ensure that risk assessments are undertaken.

Rotas, where practicable, will show a mixed gender of team members. Where this is not possible, for anything other than a short period, we may consider, depending on the views of young people, swapping team members with other homes to maintain a gender balance. There may be occasions where the child's safety plan indicates that only female or male team members can be used. The duty rota will show which team members and young people are sleeping at Woodthorn View each night.

Housekeeping will be on a rota to complete tasks on a flexible basis, to meet the needs of the young people. Cooking and domestic chores will be undertaken by the residential team members, with children and young people encouraged to contribute.

In the absence of the Registered Manager, the residential worker on duty will assume overall responsibility for the home. There is also an On Call Manager system in place which provides Managerial support to team members by telephone, 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

## Team Structure







# Audits

Weekly and monthly audits will be carried out by team members in the following areas:

- Health and safety
- Fire Checks
- First Aid Equipment checks
- Building Audit
- Car checks including insurance, MOT, Fire Extinguisher & First aid kit

The management will audit all paperwork and young people's files on a weekly basis.

Once a month, an Independent Visitor from Skylark conducts a full regulation 44 audit of the home to ensure all standards are met. An action plan will be given to the manager to complete by next visit. Every six months the Registered Manager and Responsible Individual will meet with the Reg 44 visitor, review previous six months and compile report Regulation 45 to send to Ofsted. The Registered Manager will complete monthly Reg 45 reports which will be analysed in monthly Service Performance Meetings with the Responsible Individual.

OFSTED will conduct unannounced inspections and will grade the home appropriately.

Fire checks will be carried out yearly by the local fire brigade and PAT Tests CP12, Health and Safety and NICEIC Electrical tests will also be completed by an independent company.

The company also has extensive liability insurance and there are contingency plans in place in case of incidents and emergencies.

The Executive Leadership Team meet on a monthly basis and have a responsibility for:

- Strategic Vision, Direction and Forecasting of the Organisation
- Culture, Values and Principles
- Quality Assurance
- Policies and Procedures
- Annual Business Plan
- Training and Development Issues
- Financial Management and Expenditure
- Legal / Health and Safety Compliance of the Organisation
- 

ROC Group's Board, meet quarterly and have a responsibility for:

- Strategic decision making
- Financial viability
- Strategic reporting

# The big picture

Woodthorn View is dedicated to preparing young people for their life ahead and equip them with the skills they need to thrive.

Whilst we want every young person to feel at home at Woodthorn View, we know that the day will come when each resident will be ready to move on into independence. We aim to have given them the support they need to be able to accomplish their dreams, whilst being able to manage things such as securing their own tenancy, budgeting, cooking and being able to care for themselves outside of our home.

We have developed a 'Staying Close to Home Model', where If the young person would like to stay within the ROC Group family then they can move on into our supported accommodation provisions. This could either be our supported housing charity, ROC Solid, or if a greater package of support is needed and they are between 16 and 18 then they can move into our Transitions service. If you would like to know more please contact 01325 310009 or visit [www.rocgroup.org.uk](http://www.rocgroup.org.uk)



**ROC Solid**  
Supported housing charity



**Transitions**  
Supported accommodation 16-18s



## Compliments & Complaints

At Woodthorn View we actively seek the views of young people, and their families, to help us to improve our services. We treat complaints, comments and compliments seriously. Information regarding how to make a complaint is recorded in the Young People's Guide which is received on admission. Complaints in the first instance can be made to the Registered Manager, by contacting her via email at [catherine.rollason@rocgroup.org.uk](mailto:catherine.rollason@rocgroup.org.uk) or telephone 01325 310009.

Young people are made aware of the function of independent advocates, NYAS. Every young person is given contact information for this organisation.

We usually try to settle any issues locally, using restorative approaches; this is generally the most effective way of resolving any problems between people. We aim to do this in an inclusive way with the young person, their family and social worker, if appropriate.

There are times, however, when it is helpful for someone outside of the home to have a more independent view. If this is the case a more formal process may be followed, using the framework set out in Woodthorn View's Complaints Procedure. Where a complaint cannot be resolved internally, an independent Investigating Officer from a company such as 'The Children's Society' will be appointed to look into the issue.

Complaints and representations will be recorded in Charms, along with actions taken, the outcome and the lessons learnt. Our complaints are monitored by the Responsible Individual.

Copies of our complaints, procedure can be obtained from:

ROC Group Ltd  
Hope House  
Burnhope  
Newton Aycliffe  
County Durham  
DL5 7ER  
Telephone number: 01325 310009  
Email: [info@rocgroup.org.uk](mailto:info@rocgroup.org.uk)



# Complaint contacts

## INVESTING IN CHILDREN:

Tel: 0191 3729200  
Email: [iiccic@outlook.com](mailto:iiccic@outlook.com)

## NYAS:

FREEPHONE 0808 8081001  
Email: [help@nyas.net](mailto:help@nyas.net)

## SKYLARK (Reg 44):

Email: [steve@skylark-consultants.com](mailto:steve@skylark-consultants.com)  
Tel: 07496160221

## THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS COMMISSIONER:

The Office of the Children's Commissioner  
Sanctuary Buildings  
20 Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT  
Freephone: 0800 528 0731  
Tel: 020 7783 8330  
Email: [info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

## OFSTED: Young people, Parents, Social Workers or team members can also complain directly to

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

If you would like to see a copy of our policies and procedures, please contact Lynn Cunningham on 01325 310009 or [info@rocgroup.org.uk](mailto:info@rocgroup.org.uk).

