

Children's Home Planning Statement

1. Number of Children, Age Range and Average Length of Stay

The proposed children's home is intended to accommodate up to two children. In practice, occupancy will usually range between one and two children at any given time, depending on individual care requirements. In some circumstances, a child may require one-to-one support due to complex needs, meaning that only one child can be accommodated despite the physical capacity of the property. The age range of children accommodated will be between 7 and 17 years. Lengths of stay vary significantly according to individual circumstances and care plans. Children may remain in placement for as little as three months or for several years, with some placements lasting up to nine years. Generally, older children tend to stay for shorter periods as they approach adulthood, while younger children may require longer-term support. This variation in placement duration creates a balanced and dynamic environment. Longer-term placements promote stability, familiarity and continuity, while shorter-term placements ensure flexibility in meeting changing care needs. Overall, the home maintains a stable residential character while providing responsive care tailored to each child's circumstances.

2. Staffing Arrangements and Shift Patterns

The home operates a straightforward staffing model designed to provide continuity of care. Staff members work 12-hour shifts from 8:00am to 8:00pm and remain on-site overnight to support bedtime routines and provide sleeping-in cover until the following morning. Typically, one or two staff members are on duty at any time, depending on the needs of the children. The maximum staffing level is two staff members. This arrangement allows for a highly personalised approach to care and enables consistent support from familiar adults. The continuity provided by the same staff members throughout both day and night contributes to a stable, home-like environment rather than an institutional setting.

3. Parking Arrangements

The property benefits from three dedicated parking spaces. The parking area has been designed to provide sufficient space for vehicle manoeuvring, including a particularly wide parking area on the right-hand side as shown on the site layout plan. As a result, vehicles can enter and exit the site without difficulty, and there are no significant issues associated with tandem parking arrangements. The parking provision therefore does not alter the residential character of the property or create additional disturbance for neighbouring properties.

4. Security, Fire Safety and Building Features

All bedrooms and office areas will have lockable doors fitted with thumb-turn locks, ensuring both security and ease of use. One bedroom will also function as an office and will have the same locking arrangement. The property will be fitted with interlinked smoke alarms in all bedrooms, hallways, the kitchen and living areas. Fire extinguishers will be installed in appropriate locations throughout the property. There will be no security alarm system or internal door buzzers. External CCTV cameras will be installed solely for security and safeguarding purposes. These measures provide a safe environment while maintaining the appearance and atmosphere of a typical family home rather than an institutional facility.

5. Professional Visitors

The primary professional visitors to the home will be children's social workers. Visits will generally occur every three to six months, although the frequency may vary according to individual care plans and statutory requirements. There will be no routine visits from therapists, tutors or medical professionals. Most children attend school regularly, and educational support can be provided by trained staff where required. Medical professionals will visit only when necessary for routine healthcare or emergencies. The limited number of external professional visits supports the home's residential and family-oriented character, helping maintain a private and homely environment.

6. External Changes to the Property

No external alterations are proposed. The property will remain visually unchanged and will continue to appear as a normal residential dwelling within the local community. Any internal modifications will be minor and primarily related to safeguarding and operational requirements, such as lockable doors and fire safety equipment. These changes will not affect the external appearance of the building. The intention is to provide a comfortable, welcoming and homely environment for children while preserving the established residential character of the property and surrounding area.