



HAZELDENE

Family Assessment Centre

Statement of Purpose

Part of Break

Registered Charity Number 286650

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HAZELDENE FAMILY ASSESSMENT CENTRE

Statement of Purpose

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1.0 STATEMENT OF AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Hazeldene opened as a Residential Assessment Centre in October 2009. Hazeldene provides a safe environment for parents who have had difficulties in caring for their children. We promote and assess parenting skills to ensure that children are safe and protected. We offer families an opportunity for intensive support to help them recognise the needs of their children. Safeguarding vulnerable children is our prime focus and the clarity of our assessments inform the referrers whether a child's needs can be adequately met by parents or carers or whether there is a need for intervention and alternative care arrangements that will secure the longer term future for the child.

Our aim:

Our aim is to work with all those involved in the lives of children referred to the service, to provide and plan for their best possible care and the longer term future. We further aim to provide families with as pleasant an environment as possible giving them the maximum opportunity to settle and focus on the care of their children without feeling overwhelmed.

Objectives:

- To work in an open, honest and sharing way with all parents and carers.
- To look at all the needs of children.
- To acknowledge skills, strengths and abilities in parents/carers.
- To identify areas of weakness or concern which might prevent parents and carers from providing the care their children need.
- To model good care practice and provide advice or information to enable parents/carers to change their behaviour and responses in ways that would enable them to meet their children's needs.
- To provide a comfortable, supportive and caring environment in which this work takes place.
- To provide high quality, clear, professional assessments, both verbally and in report form to referring workers, case conferences and courts.
- To assist professionals in the formulation of care plans for the children.

- To supervise and monitor the care and welfare of children with minimum intrusion into family life, but with sufficient oversight to ensure their safety.

The Centre strives to offer an equal service to all family groups regardless of race, cultural background, religion, gender, sexual orientation, intellectual ability or family composition. However, given the layout of the building the Centre is not able to accept people who are unable to climb stairs.

We work with a maximum of four families at any one time. This small number allows staff to work intensively with each family and to produce thorough, balanced and clear assessments that help ensure good outcomes for children.

Although referred by Children's Services Departments, families come by mutual agreement or are directed to do so by the court. We recognise that the assessment is stressful and we do everything possible to be supportive, fair and open in the way we work with families.

In order to complete a thorough assessment, placements generally last between eight to twelve weeks. The length of placement is, however, subject to review: in exceptional circumstances it can be extended or be terminated early if necessary.

Some assessments take place in the community and these families do not come to Hazeldene.

2.0 FACILITIES, SERVICES AND THE ASSESSMENT AT HAZELDENE

Hazeldene is a three-storey Arts and Crafts-style property, located in a quiet residential street in Lowestoft. There is easy access to shops, schools, health facilities and the beach. There is a large garden which provides play and relaxation opportunities for families staying at the Centre.

It has on the ground floor:

- A large playroom/lounge with observation window.
- Four separate, fully equipped kitchen/diners (one for each family in residence).

- A laundry with washing machine and tumble drier for the use of families.
- A families' pay phone.
- A toilet.
- A general office for staff.
- Manager's/admin office/meeting room.

The first floor includes:

- One family bedroom consisting of two rooms, one for parents with double bed, sofa, TV etc and an adjoining child's bedroom with cot and/or single bed/s as appropriate. All rooms have en-suite facilities, including a shower.
- Two family bedrooms with en-suite facilities (including a shower), equipped for parents and a young child in a cot.
- One staff sleep-in room with en-suite.
- One family bathroom with toilet.
- Meeting Room.

The second floor includes:

- One family room plus en-suite (including a shower), suitable for a couple and a baby in a cot.
- One staff sleep-in room with en-suite.
- Staff office.

The property has full central heating.

There is a wide range of shops and facilities within walking distance of the property. When there is a need to travel further afield there are good transport links from Lowestoft. The centre does also have a 'people carrier' to assist when necessary.

Families who are referred to Hazeldene for a parenting assessment arrive and leave in a planned way. This will include a visit to the Centre prior to admission, where they can meet staff, look around the building and discuss how the parenting assessment will take place. At this point they are also given a copy of Information for Families, which

answers some questions and contains a contact number for any further enquiries.

Towards the end of any parenting assessment, a planning meeting is held that supports a transition to the community and encourages the views and feelings of parents, children, staff and other professionals involved with the family.

Our work is inclusive of families and their participation is encouraged throughout the placement, in every aspect of the process. We use a Signs of Safety approach to the assessment which promotes individuality and respects the family as the people best able to understand their situation.

Each placement begins with a Family Placement Plan meeting, often on the day that a family moves into the Centre. This document sets out the expectations and guidelines to all interested parties: the parents, staff and Children's Services. It will create the individual blueprint for the parenting assessment and dictate some of the work to be done during the family's time at Hazeldene.

The parenting assessment is reviewed regularly: weekly between parents and staff, every 4 weeks between parents, staff and other professionals working with the family. Parents are an active part of planning session work and contribute to their risk assessment. The Signs of Safety format is used for both weekly and monthly reviews.

LAC reviews and CPCC meetings can be held at the Centre.

During the parenting assessment, parents are supported and observed by staff trained in working with families and child protection. They undertake session work that is guided by a case manager and the particular individual needs of the family. This may include practical demonstration and modelling by staff, ie cooking, play sessions, managing behaviours.

We have three waking night staff, working a rota pattern, to monitor and support parents at night. This may be done by way of a visual monitor, which is located above a baby/child's cot – the camera does not pan around the room but ensures that a baby is not left waiting for a feed for too long and is returned to the cot once the feed and associated care tasks are complete.

Staff are on hand 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to ensure the safety and care of families accommodated at the Centre. We encourage feedback from families and a Families' Forum is held once a month, so

that all resident families can share ideas, hear about any new resources and community groups and share any group issues that are worrying them. There is a robust complaints procedure and we ask for feedback at the end of a placement on the family's stay and any improvements we can make as a team.

We work with Children's Services to support families to attend groups and sessions in their own local community where possible.

3.0 RESPONSIBLE BODY

Break was established in 1968. It began as a charity providing holidays for children and adults with learning disability. Over the years a much broader range of services has been developed along with expertise in working with children and families.

In order to meet legal requirements, Break is a Registered Charity No 286650 and a Company Limited by Guarantee Registration No 1699685 England. VAT Reg. No 595 3666 89.

Although the services operate widely, Break's Head Office is at:

**Schofield House
Spar Road
NORWICH
Norfolk
NR6 6BX
Telephone: 01603 670100
Email: office@Break-charity.org**

Break operates the following services:

- Seven mainstream children's homes.
- One residential children's home for young people with learning disabilities (Trafalgar Lodge).
- Two Children with Disabilities' Short Breaks homes.
- One Residential Family Assessment Centre.
- Families House-support for families in difficulty especially following separation.
- Mentoring for young people in care and transition support for young people leaving care.

- A Therapeutic fostering service.

Many of these services are registered and inspected.

In order to maintain professional relevance and awareness Break is a full member of a range of professional bodies:

- National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations (NCVCCO).
- National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).
- Association for Residential Mental Care (ARM C).
- British Institute of Learning Disabilities.
- Consortium of Residential Family Centres.

4.0 RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL AND MANAGER

The Manager of Hazeldene is:

Name: **Carole Childs**
Address: **Hazeldene
20 Corton Road
Lowestoft
Suffolk
NR32 4PL**

Telephone: **01502 560344** Fax: **01502 587928**

The Manager is responsible to:

Name: **Graeme Malcolm**
Position: **Operations Manager**
Address: **Break
Schofield House
Spar Road
Norwich
Norfolk NR6 6BX**

Telephone: **01603 670100**

The Responsible Individual is

Name: **Hilary Bridget Richards**
Position: **Operations Manager**
Address: **Break**

**Schofield House
Spar Road
Norwich
Norfolk NR6 6BX**

Telephone: **01603 670100**

Qualifications:

- BA (Hons) Business Studies 2.1
- Diploma in Social Work
- MA Applied Social Studies
- Accredited Practice Teacher
- Executive Diploma in Management

Experience:

- 18 years post qualification experience in Social Care, predominantly working with vulnerable children and families. Initially working in Cleveland before moving to Norfolk in 1997.
- 4 ½ years in Norfolk working in the field of child protection followed by a further 4 years as a senior practitioner.
- 5 years working with NCSC/CSCI as a Regulation Inspector.
- Employment with Break commenced January 2007 as an Operations Manager.

5.0 STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staffing

Details of the staff team and their qualifications are contained in Appendix 2.

Staff Appointments

All staff at the Centre are subject to a rigorous vetting procedure in accordance with the Warner Code of Practice. This includes:

- A personal or preliminary interview.

- A formal panel interview, including, where possible, the involvement of service users.
- Satisfactory references.
- DBS check.
- Local Authority Check (Disqualification for Caring for Children Regulations 1991).
- Declaration of any pending prosecutions for a criminal offence.
- Medical report.
- Department of Health, Children's Division Register check.
- Probationary period of a minimum of six months.

Mandatory training for staff includes Child Protection, Food Hygiene, First Aid, Fire Safety, Principles of Manual Handling, Aggression Management, Risk Assessment and Care of Medicines.

Staff Development

All staff have regular supervision to oversee and manage performance, assist personal development, provide professional support and maintain a good level of morale. One and a half hours are allocated for formal monthly supervision sessions. Supervision within the Centre can be formal and informal sessions, planned and ad-hoc sessions, and group and individual sessions. Supervision is undertaken by the Manager, Deputy Manager and Senior Members of staff. Annual appraisals are carried out to review performance and progress against clearly identified competencies.

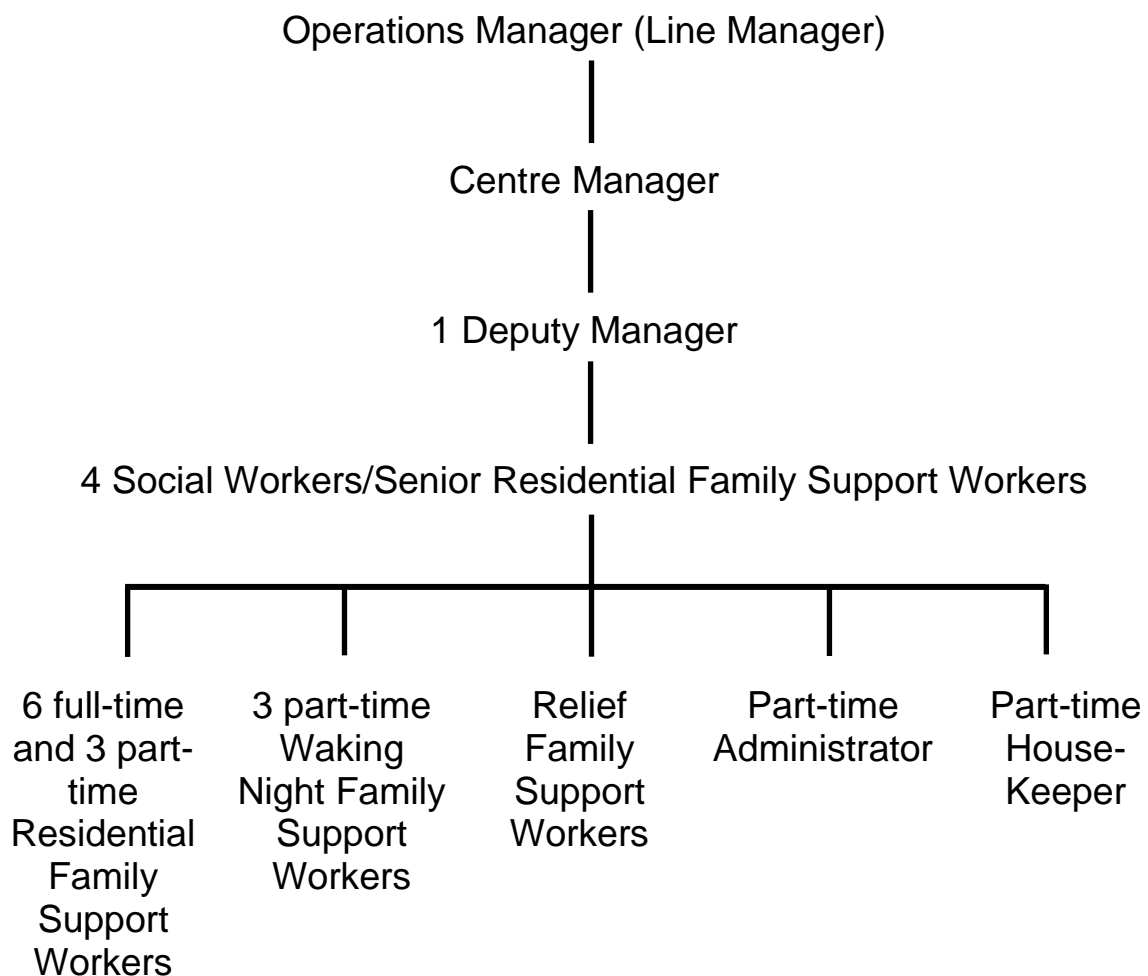
Break has a formal induction programme for all staff and subsequently provides a range of training to develop skills and knowledge of staff as appropriate to their area of work. Training needs are identified as part of the appraisal and the information from them is used to develop an annual Training Programme. Break promotes continuous professional development and all staff are provided with folders to assist them in this process.

Residential Family Support Workers will be qualified in NVQ 3 or equivalent. Senior staff will be qualified in NVQ 4, social work or similar. The whole team is trained in the Solihull approach and Signs of Safety. There is expertise in the team regarding PAMS

assessments, The Freedom Programme, Newborn Behavioural Observations, learning disability and mental health issues.

6.0 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Hazeldene has a Manager, 1 Deputy Manager, 4 Social Workers (Assessment)/Senior Residential Family Support Workers, 6 full-time and 3 part-time Residential Family Support Workers, 3 part-time Waking Night Residential Family Support Workers, a number of bank staff, one part-time Administrator and one part-time House Keeper. The management structure is as follows:



The Manager makes a regular written report to Break's Executive Committee and Council of Management covering all aspects of Hazeldene's function.

Staff rotas are arranged to cover a six-week cycle ensuring that the Centre is staffed 24 hours a day while families are in residence.

The Centre operates an on-call system to ensure that a senior member of staff (Manager, Deputy or Social Worker/Senior Residential Family Support Worker) is available at all times to provide advice, undertake urgent decisions or attend the Centre if needed. If necessary the Manager would in turn consult with or advise the Operations Manager, or Break's Director of Care, as appropriate.

The Manager is available to all staff for discussion over any concerns to do with the well-being of Hazeldene.

Hazeldene is visited monthly, unannounced, by a Regulation 25 Visitor (Care Standards Act 2000) who makes a report, in writing, to the Council of Break (Responsible Authority).

7.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

We currently have a Service Level Agreement with Norfolk County Council for all four family places in the Centre. However, there is agreement from Norfolk County Council that the fourth bed can be released for spot purchase by another authority should a vacancy occur.

Parents do not incur any financial cost to themselves whilst at Hazeldene.

8.0 REFERRALS

Referrals are made initially to the Manager. They are made by social workers from Norfolk Children's Services. The referral is acknowledged by the Manager and details of the consultation/family information are placed on a referral form, the essential information pack is passed to the Social Worker along with a copy of the Statement of Purpose.

The Manager is responsible for prioritising family admissions, with the support of a representative from the Clinical Commissioning Team for NCC.

We would prefer that placements are well planned and where possible, the family visits the Centre and discusses the proposed placement with the Manager. They are also able to meet their key worker/s and there is a discussion about key issues for the assessment. An admission date is then set. Moving to a new placement is always unsettling, so where possible, we encourage all admissions to be planned. We accept that this is not always possible, therefore in

exceptional circumstances, same day placements can be accepted, as long as the admissions criteria are met.

On the day that a family moves into the Centre, we hold a Family Placement Plan meeting and if all parties agree to the placement, the Family Placement Plan is signed by the Parent(s), Social Worker and Manager. The specific issues in the Family Placement Plan form the basis for the work with the family.

A review group is identified. This consists of the referring Social Worker, his/her Team Manager, Hazeldene staff, Children's Guardian (if applicable, local Health Visitor and any specialists involved e.g. Learning Difficulty Psychologist or Social Worker.

Each family is allocated two key workers to co-ordinate their work plan. The work of the key workers and the overall implementation of the work plan, based on the Family Placement Plan, will in turn be overseen by a senior member of staff (Case Manager) who will produce reports for and chair review meetings, be responsible for producing the Centre's final report and attend Court to give evidence as necessary.

The report process involves an initial two week check list, followed by a 1st Review Report, and then the Court Report. Interim Reports are offered when requested or necessary. Reports are shared with families prior to the meetings and comments invited. Minutes are prepared and circulated to members of the Review group. The Family Placement Plan, Review Reports and Minutes are attached as appendices to any final court report.

Referral criteria:

- Families where the children are at risk of significant harm and an assessment would be in the best interests of the child/baby.
- Single-parent or two-parent families where there is a history of inability to cope and decisions need to be made about the future care of the child/children.
- Pregnant women with or without other children with arrangements for admission being made before the birth of the child where the concerns are as above.
- Parents of any age; children must be under eight years of age, ensuring that the child's needs are within the scope of the Centre.

- We give consideration to those families who are actively and seriously engaged in rehabilitation/therapy programmes providing that there is a clear treatment programme and a partnership approach between the parents, the specialist services and Hazeldene.

Hazeldene is not suitable for:

- Parents/carers who exhibit extremes of frequent violence/aggression to adults or children.
- Frequent and persistent solvent/drug abusers.
- Frequent and persistent alcohol abusers.
- Schedule 1 Offenders.

The Manager has the final decision on the suitability of referrals, taking account of the needs of other adults and children in the house. The Manager consults with Break's Operations Manager where a second opinion is required.

9.0 VALUES, STRUCTURE AND PHILOSOPHY

We believe that:

- The welfare and needs of children are paramount.
- Children have the right to grow up in a stable family environment where they are loved, nurtured and protected.
- Wherever possible the needs of children are best met within their own family.
- Parents and carers who come to the service will have their worth, dignity and privacy respected.
- Every person has strengths, skills and knowledge that are important for children.
- All people, whatever their background, history and difficulties, can, with support, encouragement and information, change their behaviour and responses.
- Even where it is felt that parents/carers cannot safely meet the needs of their children, such decisions should be shared sensitively

and every effort be made to enable them to make a positive contribution to their children's futures.

The main assessment tool used for families at Hazeldene is the Department of Health's Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (the Assessment Framework). We focus our attention on "parenting capacity", addressing in our assessment each of the "dimensions" within this "domain" of the framework. We work on and assess parents' ability to provide basic care, safety, emotional warmth, stimulation, guidance and boundaries; and stability for their children. In the interests of providing a holistic assessment we also comment, where appropriate, on the dimensions of the Assessment Framework, covered under the two domains of "the child's developmental needs" and "family and environmental factors".

We believe in being open and honest with families throughout the assessment process. This begins with a Family Placement Plan which clearly identifies the issues to be looked at and how the assessment will be conducted. Families have access to their daily notes and weekly summaries. Reviews are held during the assessment and these happen as a two week checklist report, 1st Review and Court Planning, interim reviews and reports are held when necessary or requested. These meetings are not only useful for updating families and professionals about how families are progressing and for families to have their say, but are also part of an ongoing refinement of the assessment as it progresses.

The parenting capacity of the majority of parents who come to Hazeldene with their children has been limited, or otherwise adversely affected, in one way or another. There are usually a number of different causes that play a part in this. Consequently a range of different techniques (handouts, discussion, videos, "modelling" by staff, structured play sessions and session work applicable to individual needs of each family) is used to reinforce and test the ability of families to learn and use advice given. Aside from the more hands-on aspects of parenting, families will take part in structured sessions and receive advice on a number of areas ranging from diet and nutrition to anger management.

We use a number of techniques and theoretical models to support the assessments. These include questionnaires and structured discussions from the Assessment Framework's "scales and questionnaires" and a variety of other sources, including the City of Salford Community and Social Services' "Conducting Family Assessments" Practice Guide.

During the assessment we make use of Attachment Theory and The Solihull Approach. We are also able to provide PAMs assessments (Dr Sue McGaw) as a tool to assess parenting ability.

Developing a working relationship with families is of central importance. To this end we aim to treat families with respect at all times and to balance their rights to family life, as stated in the Human Rights Act 1998, with our need to gain information to assess their parenting and to ensure children's safety.

We aim to engage families in the process of the assessment at all appropriate opportunities, by sharing information with them verbally and via their notes/reports and encouraging them to comment, again both verbally and in writing. We work in an inclusive manner with parents where English is not their first language or have additional learning needs. We take into account preferred learning styles and abilities and adapt our resources/communications accordingly.

We place as much emphasis on what parents do well, and build on that, as we place on what they are not doing "well enough". In seeking to work with families in this way we are embracing both the notion of partnership, that is central to the Children Act 1989, and the principle of participation found within the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child.

10.0 ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Staff at the Centre are committed to giving the best quality care and support to the families they are working with. To facilitate this, Break is committed to providing a workplace environment conducive to supporting and developing the staff team in their role, to enable them to cope with the demands of the job.

Support and Supervision takes place on a regular basis, every 2 weeks for new members of staff during their probationary period and monthly for those team members who have completed their 6 month probationary period. However, in between prearranged formal sessions staff can request informal discussions or extra supervision regarding issues that are affecting them.

The team have quarterly supervision with a Social Work Manager employed by Break who has extensive experience of providing therapeutic and group supervision. The staff team also has a Peer Group meeting every 6 weeks to discuss issues and ideas without the

Senior team present, the agenda from the Peer Group meeting feeds into the monthly team meeting.

On a day to day basis staff are offered advice and guidance on the work with families by members of the Senior team at the Centre. All staff have access to an on call Manager from Hazeldene out of hours and support and guidance is offered by one of the Break Management Team as back up for more complex issues.

Break offers a counselling service to staff through Norwich Centre Projects (01603 613515) and staff can self refer to this service.

11.0 FIRE SAFETY

The Role of the Fire Safety Officer

A member of staff is appointed Fire Safety Officer for Hazeldene. Each shift also has a Shift Fire Officer appointed to take responsibility in the event of a fire or drill. The Fire Safety Officer is responsible for making weekly checks on all fire alarm bells, all fire doors, including automatic closing mechanisms, all fire safety equipment, including all types of extinguishers and blankets and that these checks are recorded in the Fire Book .

The Fire Safety Officer also carries out the fire safety element of induction for new staff and families.

Any fault in the smoke detectors and emergency lighting system must be reported to the contracted company, Kings and Barnham, on 01328 863254.

Break's Health and Safety Officer, in conjunction with the Fire Safety Officer, conducts the Fire Risk Assessment in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Fire Procedures

Break's Emergency Procedures for Fire are detailed in Supplement 6 to its Statement of Health and Safety at Work Policy which can be supplied on request

The recording of all activities relating to Fire Precautions must be carried out fully and in a timely manner. To this end, Hazeldene has a Fire Book and it is the responsibility of the Manager to ensure that the proper procedures, set out below, are carried out.

Tests and Inspections

All fire alarms and emergency lights are tested weekly and the result of the tests noted in the Fire Book.

All fire equipment is inspected and serviced by the retained Service Engineer at six-monthly intervals (12-monthly for fire extinguishers), or otherwise when required. The results of these external inspections are recorded in the Fire Book by Centre staff, who also ensure that during these visits, the inspection records affixed to appliances such as fire extinguishers are annotated by the contractor.

All fire doors are examined weekly to ensure that they close fully. Any faulty fire doors discovered at any time are reported to the Manager who is responsible for initiating repairs.

Drills

Four Fire Evacuation Drills are facilitated per annum, in a form agreed with the Fire Officer. These will incorporate both announced and unannounced drills as thought appropriate. Drills will take place at differing times of the day – including after dark – to assist both staff and families in managing this occurrence.

General

Whenever new members of staff, including volunteers, are inducted, their names are recorded in the Fire Book as having had a proper introduction to fire procedures in force within the Centre. The member of staff carrying out that part of the induction signs and dates the note, as does the inductee.

Fire Books are subject to periodic, unannounced checks by the Chief Executive, the Fire Officer, the Homes Inspector (Ofsted) and Break's Appointed Visitor.

Fire procedure notices are displayed on all floors.

Documentation

The following forms will be required in the above procedures:

- a) Fire Equipment Check.
- b) Fire Equipment Maintenance Record.
- c) Fire drills record.
- d) Instruction of Fire Equipment and Drill Procedures.

These are kept in the fire file in the admin office.

12.0 REPRESENTATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

Introduction

It is hoped that all families who stay at Hazeldene will find no cause for complaint about the service. However, we recognise that difficulties do occur, particularly due to the nature of the work. It is the right of any parent or child to make a complaint should they feel unhappy about any aspect of the work. Break takes all complaints seriously. Parents may also make suggestions and compliments and a box is provided for this purpose. Monthly Family Forums will also be offered as an opportunity to discuss such issues as appropriate.

Every family is issued with a summary of the complaints procedure on arrival, which includes a form with which to make a complaint or suggestion; this is reinforced verbally at the time. Should a visitor to the Centre have cause to make a complaint, the procedure will also be explained to them and appropriate information given. In the event that an individual has a disability that restricts their ability to understand and make use of either the summary or the full procedure, every effort will be made to enable that person to access and make use of the policy. When a child or parent makes a complaint or expresses a wish to make a complaint, staff will take every opportunity to talk and listen to them, if necessary in private, and will respond sympathetically to their distress and concerns. Every effort will be made to help solve the problem(s) discussed. Staff will record any complaints made in the Centre's Complaints Book and will inform the Manager.

Any complaint that cannot be resolved by informal measures will need to be put in writing by the complainant and will be dealt with, using the stages set out in the summary of the complaints procedure, until a satisfactory outcome can be reached. Assistance will be given to those who need it. Any child or parent who has put their complaint in writing will have it signed by the Manager and will be provided with a copy of their statement. The original copy will be filed in the Complaints Book and monitored by the Regulation 25 Visitor and the Operations Manager. The Centre Manager will ensure that all complaints are fully responded to within a maximum of 28 days and parents or children are kept informed of the progress and outcome of their complaint.

When a complaint has been fully investigated the parent or child, if appropriate, should read and sign the record in the Complaints Book to

show whether they are satisfied with the outcome of the investigation. If a parent or child requires assistance to do this staff will ensure that they are provided with appropriate help.

If a parent or child is not happy with the outcome of their complaint they can take the matter further using Break's formal Complaints Procedure. If necessary, staff will help them to do this.

Under the formal Complaints Procedure, a person independent of Hazeldene is appointed to investigate the complaint and to report back to the complainant within 28 days.

In the event that a complaint is received from agencies such as Health, Education or the Police, with whom we have professional communication, the Centre's Manager will again strive to resolve these under these procedures. If this is not possible they will be dealt with through the relevant channels within the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

In addition to talking to members of staff at Hazeldene, families may choose to discuss their complaint with the Centre's Regulation 25 Visitor.

Parents and children have access to a telephone within the Centre where they are able to make calls in private. Above the families' telephone the numbers of local services are prominently displayed.

A parent or child making a complaint has the right to take their complaint to an independent agency, such as the Children's Services Department, Ofsted or the Regulation 25 Visitor if they wish to do so. Details of these independent agencies are also provided in the families' Summary of Complaints.

**Ofsted
Picadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD**

Tel: 0300 123 1231

**Norfolk County Council
Children's Services Department**
The Complaints Officer can be contacted on **01603 222102**

**Children's Commissioner for England
Sanctuary Buildings**

**20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT**

Tel: 020 7783 8330

<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/contact-us>

13.0 GUIDELINES AND CONDITIONS FOR FAMILIES

These are set out in the Information for Families leaflet which is given to the Social Worker prior to the placement commencing, ensuring the family gets the chance to read about Hazeldene prior to coming to the Centre. As well as providing information that will be of assistance to families, it sets out the basic guidelines for living at Hazeldene.

A copy of this guide is attached in Appendix 1 to this Statement.

14.0 POLICY ON DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND PRESCRIBED MEDICINES

At Hazeldene we are aware of the significant part that drug, alcohol and substance misuse can play in creating problems within families; these issues place children at risk of significant harm and limits parents' ability to promote their children's development. Many families that come to Hazeldene may have struggled with, or be struggling to overcome, difficulties in this area. Our first priority is the welfare of children followed by the promotion of good parenting.

To this end:

- The use of drugs other than those prescribed by a doctor is not permitted.
- Families take responsibility for the storage of prescribed drugs and other medicines and are provided with their own individual lockable medicine cabinets for this purpose.
- The misuse of solvents and other substances is strictly forbidden.
- Alcohol is not allowed on the premises. Breaching this condition, drunkenness or the misuse of alcohol, may result, subject to discussion with the family, Children's Services and the Centre Manager, in families being asked to leave.

- Under some circumstances parents on a Methadone prescription (or similar) will be allowed to come to the Centre for an assessment. This will usually be subject to a written agreement covering the safe storage of the Methadone and also being part of a recognised rehabilitation programme with ongoing weekly testing for illicit drugs on the part of the parent(s).

At Hazeldene we recognise the importance of storing medicines correctly for health and safety reasons. The incorrect use of prescribed medicines could adversely affect parents' ability to care for their children.

Parents take responsibility for the storage of most prescribed drugs and other over-the-counter medicines. For this purpose they are provided with their own lockable medicine cabinet in their kitchen.

Families should be aware of the need to store medicines correctly. The following guidelines are for general information only and families should always follow guidelines issued with the medicine.

- Always keep medicines in the lockable medicine cabinet.
- Medications that require storage in a refrigerator are kept in the family's own fridge, which is not accessible by young children.
- Ensure the key is kept secure at all times and not accessible by children or other parents and their children.
- Always wash your hands before taking medicines or giving medicines to child/children.
- Keep bottles of medicine clean from drips so as not to obscure the label and the dosage instructions.
- Always keep to the prescribed dosage.
- Never use medicine that has been prescribed for someone else.

Written records will be kept of all medications families are using, noting dosage and all entries will be signed by the parents and the member of staff supervising if necessary.

We ask parents to sign a medical consent form for their children in the event of an emergency situation where their child needs urgent treatment, and the parent is absent from the Centre and the child is in the care of staff.

It should be noted that any misuse of medication may result in families being asked to leave, subject to discussion with the family, Children's Services and the Centre manager.

15.0 THE PRIVACY, DIGNITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF FAMILIES

Privacy

Children come to Hazeldene with their parents because there are concerns about their welfare and the parenting they have been afforded. Many will have been deemed "at risk of significant harm". Because of this the privacy afforded the parents and children at Hazeldene must necessarily be balanced against any harm they are at risk of suffering.

It is recognised that privacy is a fundamental human right. Every effort is therefore made to respect and preserve this in a way that does not place children at risk. Room searches will only be undertaken as a safeguarding precaution to promote the safety and welfare of families, or as part of our monthly Health and Safety check.

Families are provided with private spaces: they have their own bedrooms, washing facilities and kitchens. In most of these areas they cannot be observed without agreement and staff will only enter with permission or if there is reason to believe a family member is at risk or in an emergency. The lounge, which is shared with other families, does not always provide opportunity for privacy; therefore we have another meeting room available for families to use if required.

It is recognised that families need to be alone at times. The staff do their utmost to exercise sensitivity when handling personal matters and give families every opportunity to discuss any problems they may have in private.

Individual attention for families is a priority and is reflected in the number of staff on shift at any given time.

Whilst it is recognised that many parents choose to have mobile phones, Hazeldene provides a payphone for the use of children and their parents both for receiving and making calls. This payphone is situated away from the communal and office areas of the Centre, providing some measure of privacy. The Centre phone is available for families to use when contacting professionals i.e. Solicitors, Benefits Agency, Social Workers etc.

Families continue to provide their own meals and eat in private unless this is an agreed area of work or concern.

As mentioned earlier the right to privacy will only be over-ruled where staff may have reason to believe that a criminal offence may have been committed or that a family member may suffer serious harm unless action is taken.

Dignity

Dignity recognises the value of people regardless of circumstances. It requires that families are treated with respect and that there is recognition of their uniqueness and personal needs. Our approach aims to:

- Recognise the right of all its families to be treated with respect and to live in a dignified manner.
- Respect the wishes of families, their relatives and advisers (where appropriate) especially regarding their care and treatment.
- Take account of cultural, religious and other needs and seeks to understand its families in terms of their situation and life experience.
- Encourage families (within the constraints of the duty rota) to choose the member of staff whom they wish to assist them in matters of personal care. Care is undertaken with sensitivity and in private.
- Provide an environment in which families' skills, abilities and customs are respected.

Independence

Independence is the opportunity to think and act without reference to another person. Our approach includes a willingness by staff to incur a degree of calculated risk. Whenever possible, we help and encourage families to act independently.

We aim to:

- Encourage families to express their views and wishes about their preferences.
- Provide a physical environment which enables families to do as much as possible for themselves without having to rely on staff.

- Ensure that a reasonable balance is achieved between independence and risk taking.
- Justify any limitations on a family's scope to act independently.

Religious Belief

Hazeldene is part of Break which is a non-religious organisation; as a consequence there is no religious or faith aspect inherent in day to day life. It is recognised, however, that for many people their faith is of utmost importance and a central part of their life and identity. Consequently staff will do all that they can to support families in their faith, taking account of any special requirements or specific practices where possible.

Many of the faiths are celebrated within the Lowestoft area and should it be appropriate, then staff will assist families in attending places of worship.

Anti-Discriminatory Practice

Break takes this whole area very seriously and aims to ensure that the principles of anti-discriminatory practice are embedded in every aspect of the organisation: from recruitment and training, through relationships between staff and management, the way we work with and on behalf of the families who stay at Hazeldene.

Break has clear policies on Equality, Diversity and Anti-Discriminatory practice.

Regular monthly family forums are held within Hazeldene where families views are noted, staff are also always available for informal discussions if required.

16.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

General

Confidentiality is central to any professional code of ethics. In the same way that financial, legal and personal records are expected to be secure, family members are entitled to the same standards.

Records

All staff are responsible for ensuring that records are kept securely, either electronically or written. Information contained in case files must only be used for the purpose for which it was obtained unless a child

protection concern or other serious threat to life or safety, necessitates its sharing.

Disclosure of Information

Information will not be disclosed to any outside agency even if its disclosure appears to be in the interest of the family member unless its use has been determined and agreed.

Only in exceptional circumstances will staff disclose information to a third party without the agreement of the provider of that information. In any event, information will not be handed over to anyone unless staff are satisfied that:

- a) The person/agency has a bona fide entitlement to that information.
- b) The identity of the person/agency can be established without any doubt.
- c) The person/agency will maintain an appropriate ethical approach to the confidentiality of the information provided.

The 'Information for Families' leaflet, explains for families, the circumstances and manner in which information about them will be shared. This leaflet also explains the policy of encouraging families to read and make comments on all records that are kept about them and reports written about them, to which they have open access.

The Family's Access to Information

Under the Data Protection Act 1988, family members will only have access to parts of the case file and to specific information which relates directly to them. However, in addition, there are some types of information which, although relating directly to the family member, must remain "classified" or "closed".

In general, reasons for keeping information from each family will be:

- a) The protection of information received from a third party, unless that party consents to it being shared.
- b) The protection of information received about a third party, unless that party consents to it being shared.
- c) The protection of the person from information which may harm them.

17.0 ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROTECTION

Children and Young People under 18

All those staying at Hazeldene are entitled to the best quality care and protection from harm. Sadly abuse does arise and may even occur within the families staying. As part of the duty of care staff must be equipped to deal with such instances. Abuse can arise in a variety of settings – in the family, in the community, in education or care settings.

All staff receive training in this area as part of their induction. This is designed to ensure that they have a basic awareness and understanding of the subject, as well as knowledge of how to respond when abuse may be suspected.

At Hazeldene, staff attend training organised by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Break has formal policies on this subject which are based upon, and compatible with, the Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures. Copies of these documents are held within the Centre.

As the geographical location of Hazeldene is in Suffolk cross county protocol arrangements have been put in place. As the placing authority, Norfolk Children's Services will investigate safeguarding referrals but Suffolk Children's Services will be notified. Please refer to the Child Protection folder held in the Manager's office.

Within Hazeldene the Manager is responsible for vulnerable adult and child protection matters; in her absence the Senior staff are responsible.

Adults

Sometimes adults can themselves be the victims of abuse. Break has formal policies and procedures to give staff guidance on the recognition of such abuse and how to respond. These are drawn from Norfolk's multi-agency protocol on working with vulnerable adults.

The Manager is responsible for these matters with the Deputy Managers covering in her absence.

A factor in ensuring the protection of children and adults whilst at Hazeldene is the maintenance of rigorous recruitment procedures to ensure that only staff who are suitable, will be employed in the service.

18.0 MONITORING/SURVEILLANCE

Families can be monitored at night by use of a baby monitor and staff will enter the room as necessary (as agreed in the Family Placement Meeting). Hazeldene has waking night staff who will support families in the evening, through the night and in the morning. This will be carried out for the first 2 weeks of the assessment in order to support the parent(s) and help the family to settle in. In some cases, with the agreement of Children's Services, a visual monitor will be used, this is focussed on the baby's cot and will not be used to observe any other part of the room. Families can come and look at what staff can see on the screen and they will be informed when the camera is on.