



# Cedar House School

## Statement of Purpose

Spring Term 2012  
Updated January 2012

## **CEDAR HOUSE SCHOOL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Cedar House School is a co-educational special school for children who exhibit emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. The range of difficulties catered for by the school includes the following diagnosed or described conditions: -

Emotional Social and Behavioural Difficulties Relating to:

- Social Conduct Disorders
  - Conduct Disorder
  - Oppositional Defiant Disorder
  - Aggressive or Challenging Behaviour
  - Social Relationship difficulties
- Attention Disorders
  - Attention Deficit Disorders
  - Sensory integration Disorders
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders
  - Higher Functioning Autism in which communication with peers is possible
  - Aspergers Syndrome
  - Atypical Autism
  - Autistic Tendencies
- Attachment Disorders
  - Including the full range of Attachment disorders
- Learning difficulties
  - Generalised Learning Difficulties including Mild, Moderate and borderline severe learning difficulties (where communication with peers and inclusion into small classes is possible).
  - Specific Learning Difficulties
  - Underachievement
- Emotional Difficulties
  - Generalised Anxiety Disorders
  - Resolving depressive illness
  - Self Harm
  - Emotional Containment difficulties (eg difficulties controlling anger)
  - Difficulties with emotional approach to learning
- Physical/Medical Difficulties
  - Developmental Dyspraxia
  - Delayed physical development
  - Mild hearing or visual or physical difficulties such that the child can largely take part in normal activity

- Mild or controlled Epilepsy
- Chronic conditions (such as Cystic Fibrosis)
- Communication Disorders
  - Semantic Pragmatic Disorders
  - Speech difficulties
  - Receptive and Expressive Language Difficulties

Most frequently children attending Cedar House present with a range of the above difficulties. Children are considered suitable for admission when a commitment to change is anticipated, the child is felt able to integrate with the current population and take advantage of the educational opportunities offered and where the home environment is felt able to encourage and support change.

There is a formal admissions procedure. Grounds for declining placements are always linked to the ability of the school to meet the pupil's needs; if it is deemed that a pupil's needs are outside our expertise then a place will not be offered. This would be more likely when considering, for example, pupils with major disabilities, a history of serious criminal activity, a history of serious self harm, a proven history of serious inappropriate sexual behaviour towards others or known addiction to illegal drugs or alcohol.

The school is approved by the DfE (No S1(D)909/6037) to cater for 88 children between the ages 7 to 16 years, on a day or residential basis. The school is situated in the village of Low Bentham in North Yorkshire, but borders the counties of Lancashire and Cumbria. There are established links with the local community.

The school has excellent facilities to meet the needs of children; good use is also made of local resources. Residential accommodation is maintained to the highest standard and consists of single rooms with en suite facilities. A range of leisure facilities are available on the school site, for example, a large indoor sports hall, an extensive playing field, fishing rights on the river bordering part of the school grounds and a woodland area which can be used as an outdoor classroom.

The role of education is seen as critical and embraces a wide range of academic, vocational, therapeutic and leisure activities. The school provides access to the National Curriculum and a range of external examinations are offered at GCSE and Entry level. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy and a Learning Support Team has the specific brief of enhancing attainment. Individual Learning Programmes are written where required to ensure that all children achieve to their full potential. The more formalised curriculum is enhanced by a vocational component which encourages pupils to support and work within the community. Close working relationships have been

developed with a number of external agencies including the John Muir Trust, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and The Bendrigg Trust alongside local charitable organisations.

### **THE SCHOOL ETHOS**

The ethos of the school is geared towards providing a safe, secure and caring environment within which personal growth and development is promoted. Opportunities to experience success, learn from mistakes and build trusting relationships serve to enhance confidence and self-esteem.

Every pupil has an Individual Care and Education Plan which identifies needs in five main developmental areas, ie Physical and Sensory, Emotional, Communication, Social and Behavioural and Educational. This detailed planning has enabled the school to meet the needs of children with complex and long-standing educational, behavioural and emotional difficulties.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Cedar House is committed to the following principles:

- To respect the value of all individual pupils and staff
- To provide the highest standards of care and education
- To ensure safety, security and opportunities for success

We aspire to being an exemplar of best practice for children locally, regionally and nationally. We have a clear view of our purpose and practice and this is articulated in the theoretical and philosophical basis of our work.

## **PHILOSOPHICAL ORIENTATION**

Our high view of young people is rooted in a theoretical base of “Resilience Theory” which itself holds the principle that *“the individual has a combination of personal characteristics and skills that allows them to function beyond what would be expected in the light of that person’s vulnerability or exposure to adversities.”* This high view of the individual is also expressed in the basic assumption of Cedar House’s educational and therapeutic practices. These are future and solution oriented rather than focusing on the past and its problems.

We believe that the potential for future development of the pupils placed within Cedar House rests primarily within the individual child, but this ‘potential’ is encouraged to fulfilment through the supporting work of the teachers and child-care staff working in partnership with parents and other primary carers.

## **STAFFING & MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL**

Cedar House School is part of the Witherslack Group whose registered office is:

Witherslack Group Ltd  
Lupton Tower  
Lupton  
Carnforth  
Lancashire  
LA6 2PR

Telephone: 015395 66081

Headteacher: Mrs G Ridgway B.Ed ALCM

The Headteacher has a wide range of teaching experience within mainstream and special education.

The school employs approximately 75 full-time equivalent staff including Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Residential Child Care Officers, Administrative, Ancillary and Maintenance Staff. The school is managed by the Headteacher and a Senior Management Team consisting of Deputy Head (Head of Care), Deputy Head (Education), Head of Day Services and Senior Teacher.

The school has rigorous employment policies and procedures and all staff are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau. New staff follow an induction training programme and all staff have access to regular training in all aspects of their work. Residential Child Care Officers are required to achieve NVQ Level 3 in Child Care. Managers are required to attain NVQ Level 4 in Child Care together with a relevant management qualification. The Head of Care and Deputy Head of Care both hold a Registered Managers qualification. Resident pupils live in single-sex age-appropriate 'house' units. Each unit is managed by a Unit Leader and Deputy Unit Leader and staffed by a team of Residential Child Care Officers. All work under the direction of the Deputy Head (Head of Care).

### **MEETING THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN**

The school has a range of educational facilities on site, including modern classrooms, Library, ICT Suite, Science Laboratory, Food Technology room, Design and Technology room, Drama and Music studio and Learning Support rooms. Children are educated in accordance with the National Curriculum, differentiated to meet individual needs. Day pupils travel from the surrounding area and are fully integrated in class with residential pupils. Residential provision includes single en suite rooms for 38-week boys and girls, in accordance with individual needs. Each House area includes appropriate facilities for recreation and leisure, including facilities for private study. Every child has an Individual Care and Education Plan which sets out targets in a number of areas. Pupils participate in the setting and review of these targets.

Residential pupils are offered a '24 hour curriculum' which promotes their participation in recreational, sporting and cultural activities via an evening and weekend activity programme and inter-school teams and fixtures.

Residential Pupils register with the school's General Practitioner, who liaises with the child's home Health Authority as appropriate. The school

employs a School Nurse to attend to day-to-day medical issues. The school employs an Educational Psychologist who oversees the medication procedure for pupils with mental health difficulties. The Educational Psychologist also supports the school in its assessment of pupils' needs and appropriate management strategies. In addition to this a CAMHS Worker (Creative Therapist) works closely with the school on a part-time basis alongside other professionals including a Speech and Language Therapist, Psychotherapist and relevant support from external counselling services as required.

All pupils are allocated a Keyworker. Issues, complaints or concerns can be raised informally through the Keyworker, via the Schools' Council or formally via the complaints procedure. Pupils are issued with a 'Pupil Handbook', which offers guidance about all aspects of the school.

### **SCHOOL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

The school has a comprehensive set of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. These include guidance for staff, pupils and parents. They include policy on the control, restraint and discipline of children. The school subscribes to the 'Team-Teach' ethos of behaviour management. All staff having direct supervisory duties have regular Team-Teach training; the school has two Advanced Team-Teach Instructors and two Intermediate Team-Teach Instructors. Only trained staff are authorised in the use of physical intervention.

The school has comprehensive Child Protection Procedures and employs a full-time Child Protection Member of Staff/Safeguarding Officer; Andrew Campbell. There is a strong anti-bullying and anti-discriminatory policy and the school works hard to respect children's rights.

### **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Protection of our children is of the utmost importance. We have a strict visitor's policy and access to the Cedar House site is controlled. External doors are security coded and alarmed after dark. Each residential House unit has a member of staff sleeping in and is patrolled by Waking Watch throughout the night. Unauthorised pupil absence from the site is reported to the Headteacher, Senior Staff on Call and the Police where appropriate.

Each House unit has a staff telephone and a payphone for the use of pupils. Parents may telephone children outside of lesson times and visits to children may be made by prior arrangement with the Headteacher.