

The Boulders Ltd Children's Home

“Park Road”

Statement of Purpose and Function

August 2008

This is a Statement of Purpose and Function for The Boulters Ltd Children's Home, "Park Road" (Registration Number HO60000633) and is compiled as required under Regulation 4 and Schedule 1 of The Children's Homes Regulations 2001.

Park Road is registered with Ofsted at:

**National Business Unit
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA**

Telephone: 08456 404040

**This document has been endorsed by The Director and Responsible Individual,
Anthony Boulter:**

Signature:.....

Date:.....

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1 Overall aims of the Home and objectives to be attained.

Park Road is a semi-detached house near to the town centre of Sittingbourne, North Kent. The property has been turned into a comfortable and spacious four bedroom children's home.

The aims of the home are to:

- To provide security and stability for young people "looked after" in the care system.
- To offer high quality residential care to young people based upon the foundations of exemplary primary care.
- To provide as near to a family environment as is feasible.
- To offer accommodation to young people on a medium to long-term basis dependent upon their care needs (nine months upwards).
- To provide facilities to enable young people to achieve positive change in their lives.

In order to achieve these aims the following objectives have been set:

- The creation of a warm, safe and welcoming environment.
- The development of a multi-skilled and highly trained staff team.
- An effective key worker system.
- Effective assessment and recording systems.
- Establishing The Boulders Ltd philosophy "work hard and play hard" through challenging activities and adventures.
- The opportunity to move through The Boulders resource as the young person matures and develops.
- To encourage positive relationships and support for the placement with all people involved in the welfare of the young person.
- Successful integration and transition into the community for the young person.
- To enable young people to move into the community with confidence.

2 Facilities and services provided.

The Boulders Ltd Children's Home, "Park Road" provides the following:

Within Park Road:

- High staff to young person ratio.
- Large single bedrooms.
- Living facilities for high needs/close supervision.
- Comprehensive assessment work where required.
- Strong, effective relationship building and key work skills.
- Comprehensive record keeping.

Within the Resource:

- Outreach/aftercare facilities.
- Work experience programmes.
- Independent visitors.
- Activity and adventure excursions.

Within the local area:

- Membership to a private sports club.
- Access to a wide range of leisure facilities (cinema, ice skating, bowling, swimming etc).
- Immediate countryside for relaxation and enjoyment.
- Close proximity to the town centre

3 Registered Provider.

The Registered Provider is:

The Boulters Ltd
Holly Rise
Conyer Road
Teynham
Kent Telephone: 01795 522355
ME9 9ES Mobile: 07956 400765

The Responsible Individual is:

Mr A C Boulter,
Company Director,
The Boulters Ltd
Holly Rise
Conyer Road
Teynham
Kent Telephone: 01795 522355
ME9 9ES Mobile: 07956 400765

The Registered Manager is:

Mrs Maggie Honess.
She holds the Certificate in Welfare Studies
NVQ 4 in Care
Registered Managers Award

She is based at:

Park Road
32 Park Road
Sittingbourne
Kent Telephone: 01795 436303
ME10 1DR Mobile: 077932 90903

The Ofsted Registration Number for Park Road is HO60000633

Ofsted:

National Business Unit
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

Telephone: 08456 404040
Fax: 08456 404049

4 Qualifications and experience of Registered Provider and Registered Manager

Registered provider:

The Registered Provider for Park Road is The Boulters Ltd.

The Responsible Individual for Park Road is the Director of The Boulters Ltd, Mr A C Boulter. Mr Boulter is a retired Detective Sergeant with the Kent Police Constabulary and has 25 years experience. He has held responsibility within this employment as the Manager of the SIU for abused children for two years and is Joint Investigation Trained (social services and police interviewing on child protection issues). Mr Boulter is also an expert in teaching about drug abuse.

Mr Boulter has raised four children of his own and has been a registered foster carer with Medway Unitary Authority since 1993.

Mr Boulter has successfully managed The Boulters Ltd Supervised Lodgings Scheme since 1996. He has developed the resource, on the basis of recommendation and referral, from semi-independent accommodation for young offenders to a holistic service for young people aged between thirteen and twenty one with a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Registered Manager:

The Registered Manager of Park Road is Mrs Maggie Honess. Maggie has many years experience working with adults and children with behavioural problems and learning disabilities. Prior to being promoted to Manager, Maggie was the Deputy Manager at Park Rd. She has her own children and also ran a youth club for twelve years prior to working residentially.

Maggie is qualified to NVQ Level 4 in care and holds the Registered Managers Award. She also holds a Certificate in Welfare Studies.

5 The staff team; numbers, gender, qualifications, experience

The Staff Team comprises:

Position	Name of Staff	Relevant Experience and Qualifications.
Manager	Mrs Maggie Honess	Has worked with young people and with adults with learning disabilities. Considerable knowledge of the care system especially 13-17 year olds. Conducted recruitment, supervision, appraisals, meetings. Conducted risk assessments, care planning statutory reviews and various other relevant tasks. Holds NVQ 4 in care and the Registered Managers Award, as well as a Certificate in Welfare Studies . Has numerous relevant Training Certificates and knowledge. Has her own children. Was Deputy Manager prior to her promotion to Manager.
Deputy Manager	Mrs Tracey Saxon	Tracey has worked with young people for many years, eight of these as a childminder, some of whom were children with a learning disability. She also worked as a Learning Support Assistant in school. She also has two children of her own. She has started her NVQ level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People.
RSW	Ms Maxine Hall	Maxine has many years experience across the care sector. She has worked with young children, adults with mental health problems. She achieved the certificate in Childcare and Education.
RSW	Ms Joanne Hamblyn	Joanne has several years experience working with adults with challenging behaviours and those with mental health issues. She has children of her own.
RSW	Ms Kelly Walker	Kelly has no formal experience working with young people but has raised her own family. She is due to start her NVQ3 shortly.
RSW	Mr John Friend	John has always worked with young people and has managed staff teams. He is very experienced in working with young people presenting with significant emotional and behavioural problems. He holds the C&G325.3 Advanced Managers for Care, Diploma in Welfare Studies and Certificate in Welfare Studies. He has attended numerous other training courses.
RSW	Mr Mark Hemp	Mark has worked in various roles with young offenders for several years. He holds the Certificate in Counselling Skills to level 2. He has his own children.

6 Arrangements for supervision, training and development of staff

All staff working at Park Road undertakes a comprehensive induction package that runs for the duration of their probationary period. This covers health and safety aspects of working in the Home, policies and procedures, administration and recording, philosophy and residential social work practice.

In addition to this package, and running in tandem, new staff receive one to one formal supervision on a two weekly basis for the duration of their probationary period and three and five month probationary reviews. Following this staff will receive formal supervision no less than monthly. Formal supervision follows the format designated in the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes.

Formal supervision is supported by informal supervision as and when required by the Registered Manager and the Director of Operations. Further support is provided by team meetings, again, no less than monthly.

For staff working at Park Road there is an integral seven-tier core training programme in order to ensure basic competence and safety in the workplace. The training areas are:

- Child Protection
- First Aid
- Food Hygiene
- Control and Restraint
- Fire Safety
- Health and Safety
- Administration of Medicines

In addition to these training courses staff at Park Road will undertake NVQ Level 3 training in Caring for Children and Young People. For the Manager and other staff identified as needing a higher level of challenge the company supports staff undertaking NVQ Level 4 training in management and the Registered Manager Award.

Alongside this training there is in-house training provision to cover essentials of basic residential care practice. Topics covered follow the training requirements laid down in the Minimum Standards for Children's Homes.

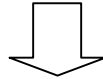
Staff at Park Road are appraised annually, between February and April. Following appraisal a Personal Development and Training Contract is drawn up to ensure the need of young people placed at the children's home are being met by the staff team and that the staff team, individually and collectively, have the knowledge and skills to provide safety, security and development for each young person placed.

Training within this dimension of the staff training programme might include certain aspects of presenting behaviour such as self-harm or drug awareness or may cover underpinning needs such as legislation training or report writing.

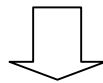
7 **Organisational structure of the Home**

**The Directors of
The Boulter's Moving to Independence**
And Responsible Individual
Tony Boulter

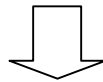
Director of Operations
Barry Young



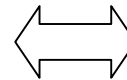
Registered Manager
Maggie Honess



Deputy Manager
Tracey Saxon



RSW Staff
John Friend
Mark Hemp
Joanne Hamblyn
Maxine Hall
Kelly Walker



Bank Staff
Linda Court
Dave Irwin
John Gatto
Andrea Vaughan
Jo Hall
Carl Bennett

8 Details of children to be accommodated; age, gender, number, disability or other special need

Park Road is permitted to accommodate up to four young people aged between thirteen and seventeen on admission. Young people have to leave the children's home when they reach eighteen years of age. Due to the layout of the building any combination of gender mix can be accommodated.

Park Road offers placements to young people with medium to long term developmental needs (nine months plus) although admission on emergency placement is permitted and will be considered dependent upon the needs of the young person being referred and the stability and needs of the resident group.

Due to the layout of the bedroom accommodation the building lends itself to young people with high supervision needs. This group might include highly vulnerable young people, predatory young people or young people unable to keep themselves safe. Park Road has a history of working with young people:

- With a history of disrupted attachments and challenging behaviour.
- With a record of offending behaviour and drug and alcohol problems.
- Who need flexible support packages of individual care.

Park Road's main client group has tended to focus on young people with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties, young people who have broken down numerous previous placements in foster care or children's homes and where local authorities have run out of options. Due to the high staff ratio and low maximum number of young people accommodated, Park Road has also undertaken specialist pieces of work.

This work has included preparatory work for young people moving into independence, containment, assessment for specialist placement and direct and support work with young people with a history of serious offences e.g. violent crime, fire setting, Schedule 1 offences.

Park Road most recently has developed experience in working with young people with mild learning disability. These young people are accepted for placement on the basis that they are not further disadvantaged by being placed at Park Road. Park Road has experience also in working with young people as an alternative to Secure Unit placement or as a first placement following Secure Unit placement.

The building is on three levels with an open plan layout downstairs. Thus, negotiating the stairs permitting, there is the facility for special needs placements to be realistically considered.

Park Road is not suitable for young people:

- Who are aged less than thirteen years.
- Who have acute mental health problems.
- Who have heroin addiction.

9 Admission criteria including emergency admissions

The process for admission to Park Road is as follows:

- Social worker/placement officer phones to enquire about vacancies.
- Discussion follows regarding the appropriateness of referral with regard to the needs of the referral and the demands of the current resident group.
- Social worker/placement officer agrees to complete referral form and supporting information (history, recent Review reports) for the children's home if the referral is appropriate.
- On receipt of the referral form and other paperwork further discussion will take place with the placing authority should new information regarding the placement be identified. A preliminary visit will be organised. A children's guide will be sent out to the potential admission.
- The possibility of a new admission to Park Road will be taken to the residents meeting and discussion, without breaking confidentiality, will take place.
- An initial visit will take place and further discussions will take place between Park Road, the current resident group, the placing authority and with the young person being referred.
- Assuming everything is satisfactory a Placement Meeting will be called to confirm funding for the placement and to determine further introductions and timescales. This may involve overnight stays or a swift move depending upon the needs of the young person and the stability of the current group.
- To avoid building false hope and expectation no further visits to Park Road will take place after the initial visit unless confirmation of funding has been received.
- A bedroom will be prepared with posters, decor etc that reflect the interests of the new young person e.g. football team quilt and posters, posters of pop stars. The favourite meal of the new person will be prepared for the day they arrive. All current residents will make time to welcome the new person.
- The young person will meet their key worker and be given an induction to Park Road. The children's guide will be explained further to the young person. A copy of the house rules will be explained and then given.
- A Review will be held within the first month of placement (72 hours if an emergency placement), then within the next three months. Commitment to visit will be agreed with the social worker and other people significant to the young person's welfare.
- Reviews of placement will then follow no less than six monthly.

Park Road is permitted to take emergency admissions. As far as is practical, as much preparatory work identified above will be put in place for the emergency admission to ensure the best possible start to the placement.

Recent history has shown that most of the admissions to Park Road have been emergency admissions or admissions at short notice. Staff have therefore developed strategies to best meet the settling-in needs of the young person in these circumstances. Measures to meet these needs include:

- Informing current residents, individually, at an early stage, once the placement has been confirmed, so that maximum time for their preparation can be utilised.
- Providing time and space for current residents to talk about how a new resident might affect their placement and Park Road's atmosphere and environment.
- Providing a group activity "off site" for current residents so that any building up of negative energies can be dissipated.
- Meeting the new admission on neutral ground. Where possible and where advised, staff may attempt to meet the child and social worker at some point outside of Park Rd and come to Park Road together.
- Providing the new resident with an opportunity to move into the house whilst it is empty so that there is a little time and space to settle in.

- On arrival, the new admission is given the opportunity to unpack with a member of staff or, where preferable, the staff member will pop back to check the young person is managing their move and explain the rules and conduct an induction.
- Making the new admission feel welcome. Where possible staff will attempt to utilise their knowledge of the emergency admission and include this in the first few hours of placement e.g. by cooking the new resident's favourite meal, having a quilt in the new person's favourite colours, putting a poster up of their favourite pop group/football team/film star.
- Once the other young people return staff will attempt to engage all residents in a low key group exercise e.g. card games, video together, so that everyone can become comfortable with each other without embarrassment or intrusive questioning.
- Where it is deemed appropriate, mentoring from another young person in the house can be put in place to lessen the difficulties arising from an emergency move.
- Individual time will be provided during the first few days to assess how the new resident is managing their feeling of leaving their past placement, coping with their new placement, settling in with the other residents, acclimatising to the new geographical area, managing their feelings towards previous carers etc. This work will lead to identifying a key worker for the young person.

10 Positive outcomes as a result of size

Park Road has been consciously developed as a small four bedroom children's home in order to offer the young people who come to live here the maximum opportunity to live within a environment as close to family life as is feasible.

Many of the disadvantages of living within the care system and within a children's home have been minimised through the provision of:

- Small resident group.
- High staff ratio.
- High levels of attention for young people.
- Spacious living facilities.
- Large bedrooms.
- Luxury facilities e.g. full Sky package.
- Homely atmosphere.
- Informal, relaxed approach.
- Individually tailored care plans and placement plans.
- Opportunity to undertake a wide range of activities often.

11 Philosophy and ethos of the Home

The philosophy and ethos of Park Road is taken directly from the life experiences of The Director and Responsible Individual, Tony Boulter. It was his experience as a young person entering the Police Force as a cadet that the way to manage one's life successfully and combine the concepts of achievement, success, teamwork and enjoyment was to "work hard, play hard".

Further it is his belief that it is never too late to be able to turn yourself around and achieve anything you wish to with the right level of commitment, dedication, perseverance, planning and support. Thus, the second tenet of The Boulter's philosophy and ethos is "never to give up on your goals".

Within Park Road this philosophy is carried through in practice by offering the young people in the Home the opportunity to experience and be challenged by a wide range of leisure activities and excursions that promote social skills, team spirit and personal development. These include:

- On site the young person can undertake activities such as swimming, archery, quad biking, and air rifle shooting.
- Off site Park Road belongs to a private sports and leisure facility where there is a gym, a sports hall, squash courts, jacuzzi, sauna and a pool table.
- Within the local area young people can go to walking, cycling, duck feeding, the cinema, bowling, golf driving range, ice-skating, snooker club and dry skiing.
- Excursions run from the resource include mountain walking (Snowden and Ben Nevis), kayaking, canoeing, rock climbing, mountain biking, problem solving, orienteering, adventure parks (Chessington, Alton Towers), camping, paintball, and shark fishing, canal/barge trips.

Whilst the young person's energies are being channelled constructively, the day care side of Park Road offers young people to develop the discipline and routines necessary to integrate into society and the community successfully. The young person develops a confidence in their ability to achieve and, in many cases, this spills over into areas of personal development and into key work, care planning and emotional growth.

Doing nothing is not an option that is available for the young person. Dependent upon age and ability education or employment is available locally. Should this not be a realistic option Park Road runs development programmes that the young person can link with. Park Road has developed strong links with specialist education providers also if this is an identified need for the young person.

These programmes are designed to provide structure and routine and to develop confidence and concentration as well as foster achievement. Again this achievement is built upon to assist the young person back into mainstream school, further education or employment.

It is hoped that, having spent time at Park Road, the young person will have learned the value of respect for themselves and for others. They will have been challenged and stretched developmentally and emotionally to reflect upon their past and develop positive alternative strategies to replace existing negative responses to stress and adversity.

12 Protection and promotion of health

Staff at Park Road are committed to providing high quality primary health care in the areas of:

- Emotional health by implementing detailed Care and Placement Plans, by undertaking further assessment work, by spending time talking with the young person and developing coping strategies with the young person.
- Physical well being. On arrival, should it not be realistic to maintain current arrangements for the young person, the young person will be registered with the local General Practitioner in Sittingbourne, at one of the local Dentistry practices and with a local Optician. Current health needs will be identified and maintained, for example diets and routines.
- Identifying/maintaining specialist health needs e.g. mental health issues, prescribed medication, liaising, making appointments and attending specialist clinic appointments.

Staff take an active role in promoting all aspects of healthy living. Staff are proactive in ensuring the young person eats healthily and regularly, develops and maintains a good level of hygiene develops appropriate waking and sleeping routines and takes regular exercise.

Staff also address the issues of smoking, substance abuse, alcohol abuse, equal opportunity and the effects of bullying regularly through key work sessions and the House Meetings.

The Boulters Ltd is committed to following the guidance contained within Every Child Matters and the new initiatives enshrined within this document.

13 Promotion of education

Park Road positively promotes the inclusion of “looked after” young people in the wider community and the need for the young person to develop appropriate social learning and attachments. Wherever possible it is seen as crucial that young people placed at Park Road should link in with local mainstream schools. Wherever possible the young person will be maintained within their current school.

Notwithstanding, there are some young people who, if pushed too early, and if not given the right level of encouragement and support, will fail in this endeavour. In order to provide informal support, staff at Park Road regularly undertake activities in the evenings and at weekends that will assist in confidence and skills development.

The optimum time for integration will be assessed on the basis of the young person’s ability to feel realistically confident about attending school, be able to concentrate for given periods of time, be able to address work sheets, be punctual and respectful, be able to function within a group and be able to act appropriately for their environment.

The organisation now also has its own education unit, staffed by qualified teachers and LSAs. This is currently able to offer six placements, with the development of a second building increasing places to fifteen when complete.

Park Road is also able to provide a wide range of creative alternatives to mainstream school both within The Boulders resource and within the local area. Dependent upon the needs of the young person a combination of any or all of the following can be utilised in a full or part-time capacity:

- Special School.
- Retreat Unit.
- 15+ Projects
- Home tuition.
- One-to-one time at Park Road with key worker or other identified staff.
- Work experience programmes that link in with colleges and businesses in the community.

Park Road is beginning to build up a network of local education provision and is becoming skilled in negotiating integrated packages of support to enable young people to successfully make the transition back into some form of learning environment. This has involved staff from the Home going into schools and acting as classroom assistants until such time as the young person makes relationships of their own with school staff and other students.

Staff at Park Road will acknowledge and reward all successes achieved at school. Staff will support the young person and the school by attending all meetings and briefings.

The home will endeavour to assist the young person to find a suitable college placement and to maintain this successfully.

14 Promotion of recreational, sporting and cultural activities

Participation in recreational and sporting activities by the young person is an essential tenet in the philosophy and ethos of Park Road. Participation in activities is seen as a way to channel negative energies, learn new skills, develop a level of fitness, develop social skills, teamwork and confidence and achieve positively.

In the early stages of the young person's stay activities will be based around what they like to do and in what they have been successful. Any special interests will be catered for, especially if these have been a feature in their lives prior to admission.

As the placement develops the young person will be encouraged to undertake new, different and challenging pursuits in order to extend their skills and experiences and to give them confidence to try new things in all aspects of their life. This, in time, may extend to community resources such as youth clubs and sports centres.

As the young person begins to move towards leaving Park Road, activities start to become tailored to their future placement or future income. It is seen as important that the young person might begin to enjoy activities that are realistic for them to develop and continue into their future.

Religious and cultural activities will be identified normally through the care planning process. All religious and cultural activities important to the young person and their family will be vigorously researched and thoroughly supported by the staff team.

- Staff will be proactive in assisting to maintain modes of dress, ceremony, diet and custom.
- Staff will provide transport, where practicable, to places of worship and meeting places.
- All efforts will be made to ensure important aspects of culture and religious heritage are not lost.
- Staff will also provide access to sources of information that will encourage the young person's cultural and religious understanding and beliefs. This will include developing a small library within the Home of information on local facilities.
- Staff will assist the young person to obtain language support where and when required.

Staff will not tolerate discrimination against young people on the grounds of race, religion and culture under any circumstances. Any incidence of this type of behaviour will be challenged individually and through House Meetings. Where discrimination by staff is wilful the matter will be treated via the disciplinary process.

:

15 Arrangements for consulting children about the running of the Home

Park Road is managed and run, as far as is practically possible, as a family home with a family environment. Within this philosophy young people are consulted about every aspect of their daily life.

Discussion with the young person happens informally all of the time. This tends to take place round the dinner table, whilst driving, whilst waiting for busses, trains appointments etc. More formal discussion takes place through key work sessions (at least weekly), House Meetings (weekly) and Placement Planning and Review Meetings (as required but within statutory minimums).

Young people placed at Park Road also have the opportunity to consult in confidence with Independent Visitors, one male and one female, and have their thoughts and ideas conveyed through this route to the manager and staff team.

Experience has shown that this exercise is a valuable opportunity to prevent Park Road becoming institutionalised. It is the young people who live in Park Road and it is they who, to a large extent, are able to identify problems associated with day-to-day living.

Young people are encouraged to participate in all aspects relating to the running of the Home from selection and recruitment of potential staff right through to House Rules, preparation of the Children's Guide on to what they want to eat for the week and what activities they are interested in pursuing.

Once again, enabling young people to contribute (where in the past they may have felt powerless or unheard) and see their thoughts and suggestions put into place, enhances the young person's developing confidence and trust in themselves and others. Through empowering the young person to contribute and participate, other areas of work with the young person can be facilitated.

16 Control, restraint and discipline

Staff at Park Road believe that control is best exercised through the development and maintenance of strong inter-personal relationships with the young people living in the Home. These relationships are built upon sensitivity towards the young person based on knowledge of them, the developing of trust and sharing experiences together.

Staff believe that rules are much easier for young people to manage when they have had the opportunity to contribute to them and are able to review them on a regular basis. i.e. if the young person has been able to invest in staff and the Home. Staff also believe that boundaries are much easier for them to maintain if they are applied in a fair, understandable and consistent manner across the team and there is opportunity to discuss the implementation of rules. These practices form the basis of mutual respect.

Where discipline is breached within the house, staff will consider whether the act was wilful (deliberate) or not wilful (accidental or an aspect of the young person's problem). If the act was not wilful it will be addressed in the first instance as an educative process, the young person being spoken to and advised on another course of action. If the action is repeated this may then become a wilful action.

Where actions are wilful young people can expect to be sanctioned in some way. Wherever possible staff prefer to discuss the issue with the young person and negotiate a fair and acceptable solution. In any event all sanctions will be recorded in line with statutory requirements.

Measures to manage these kinds of wilful behaviour will be thought through by the staff and be creative, realistic and fitting to the actions of the young person. Always staff will ensure they have not personalised a situation or have acted unnecessarily punitively (harshly or double sanctions for one misdemeanour). Staff are mindful of the prohibited sanctions that seek to hurt, abuse, humiliate or use power over young people.

Where possible young people are managed on a sliding scale of measures that are both understandable, age appropriate to the young person and time limited, i.e. two young people committing the same mis-demeanour may well be sanctioned differently based on their understanding of what they have inappropriately. Solutions may range from an apology or withdrawing from the situation for a given time through to, verbal reprimands, loss of privileges, reparation or restitution, curtailment of leisure activities, additional house chores, increased supervision or grounding. In certain situations where behaviour is repeated and calculated to wilfully damage the placement of other young people, the ultimate sanction may be removal from Park Road.

Staff are aware of non-permissible sanctions outlined in The Children's Homes Regulations 2001, Section 17(5) and have signed statements to pledge compliance with this instruction. Staff will not use:

- Any form of corporal punishment.
- Any punishment relating to the consumption or deprivation of food or drink.
- Any restriction on contact arrangements in person or by phone.
- Any requirement to wear distinctive or inappropriate clothes.
- The withholding of medication or medical or dental treatment.
- The intentional deprivation of sleep.
- The imposition of financial penalties other than a reasonable sum.
- Any intimate physical examination.
- The withholding of any required aids and equipment.
- Any measure that involves young people otherwise not involved except for the imposition of the measure.

Staff at Park Road are trained in restraint techniques (Non Aggressive Physical and Psychological Intervention) and will restrain young people should the situation require this intervention. This strategy will only be used as a last resort, once all diversionary and diffusion techniques have failed. Such situations would be if a young person were placing themselves or others at an unacceptably high level of risk or if the building was being seriously damaged.

Staff are trained to follow the guidance for risk assessment given in Behaviour: a framework for staff in children's homes and will only use minimum reasonable force required to pacify a serious incident and will release the hold at the earliest opportunity. Staff remain mindful always of the psychological effect restraint may have on young people and their care in terms of power issues and past histories.

In all circumstances restraint will be recorded in a format required in the Children's Homes Regulations 2001. All parties with a legitimate interest in the welfare of the young person will be informed of the restraint and all people involved in the situation will be offered a de-brief opportunity. The young person will also be advised of their right to complain and to whom they can complain.

17 Arrangements for child protection and to counter bullying

All young people looked after at Park Road will be respected and protected from harm.

Young people will not be made to feel responsible for reporting allegations of abuse by an adult or young person in Park Road, within their family or externally.

Park Road has a comprehensive child protection policy and procedure within the Policy and Procedure manual. The Policy has been drawn from the guidance issued by the local authority, Kent County Council. The Policy covers issues including:

- Definitions of abuse.
- Identifying signs and symptoms of abuse.
- Keeping the young person safe.
- Who to contact and when.
- Recording.
- Whistleblowing

Also contained within the Policies and Procedures manual is a policy on countering bullying. This policy identifies:

- The types of bullying.
- Signs and symptoms of bullying.
- Managing bullying by staff.
- Managing bullying by other adults
- Recording.

It is part of the induction package for staff working at Park Road that they should read and familiarise themselves with all policies and procedures. Discussion around policies and procedures is held regularly in supervisions and Team Meetings and the whole document is reviewed annually.

Issues such as child protection matters and bullying are discussed with the young people at regular intervals in key work sessions and House Meetings.

18 Procedures for unauthorised absences

Staff at Park Road are pro-active in assisting young people to find solutions to difficulties they are experiencing other than absenting themselves. Staff are concerned that vulnerable young people are making themselves more vulnerable through these actions and thus adding to their difficulties. Young people are offered key work sessions specifically about absconding in an attempt to channel their anxieties into behaviours that are potentially less dangerous.

Notwithstanding this approach, for some young people, absconding is the only way that they are able to manage their overwhelming problems initially. For these young people, staff attempt to minimise the risks associated with this behaviour by presenting the young person with options. In turn, the options will be linked to a risk assessment of the young person at the time of absconding and with regard to their personal history. Such options may include:

- Running with the young person.
- Providing transport or travel warrants.
- Providing money for return transport.
- Providing the means by which the young person can contact Park Road when they wish to return.
- Collecting the young person from their destination or from the nearest Police Station.
- Meeting with the young person outside of the Home to encourage their return.

In terms of staff managing unauthorised absences the following procedure is in place:

- As part of the admissions process a Missing Persons Form will have been completed along with a recent photograph of the young person. These will be placed on the young person's file ready for such an eventuality.
- A placement plan will have identified the risk management strategy for known behaviour such as absconding. Within this plan the time scale within which the young person must be reported missing will be identified. Known addresses where the young person runs to will also be identified along with contact numbers for all parties with a legitimate interest in the welfare of the young person.
- The attitude and mood of the young person along with their dress for the day will have been recorded on the young person's Daily Record Sheet.
- When it is known the young person is absent without permission an immediate search of the premises and surrounding area will be undertaken. Other young people in the Home will be questioned as to the missing young person's whereabouts and local friends in the area will be contacted.
- Staff will consult the prepared documents and follow the agreed plan as to whom to contact and when. This will include The Police and those with parental responsibility (Social Services and parent(s)) and the manager on call at Park Road.

On the young person's return they will not be sanctioned for absenting themselves. Instead:

- Staff will ensure the young person is safe and comfortable and they will be offered hot food and drinks, a bath etc.
- A debrief with staff will be offered and a key work session will be set up sensitively.
- All parties identified will be contacted regarding the young person's return.
- The Police and social worker will be contacted with a view to visiting the young person.
- All information will be recorded on an Incident Form and faxed to the local authority with care for the young person (and Ofsted if a Schedule 5 event) within 24 hours.

19 Electronic or mechanical means of surveillance within the Home

Young people placed at Park Road are extremely vulnerable and require a high level of support and supervision. On occasions the young people need protecting from themselves (e.g. self harm, acting out their past abuses on others, predatory behaviour, fire setting, damaging property, Schedule 1 offences) as well as protecting from others.

To this end Park Road has an alarm system that enables staff to monitor movement throughout the Home. This system works by sensors attached to connecting doors (bedrooms and corridors) being triggered when doors are opened. The system is controlled through one of the staff sleep-in rooms. The system can also be used in conjunction with a pager and run silently to allow greater discretion in monitoring and allow greater flexibility whilst working with the residents.

Park Road monitoring system is an additional method of supervision as part of an agreed care plan and is not used as a replacement for staff supervision.

Thus far, no young person has felt this monitoring to be intrusive as it is used only as and when risk assessments identify there is a need for additional supervision. All young people have the opportunity to explore their feelings around this monitoring through regular key work sessions, House Meetings and through access to the manager, their social worker, The Director and independent visitors to the Home.

All young people coming to live at Park Road and all placing authorities are made aware of this additional facility both at the time of referral and at the Placement Meeting stage of admission.

20 Fire and emergency procedures

Park Road is exempt from the fire regulations that often serve to institutionalise larger children's homes. This permits Park Road to retain the family home environment it seeks to create. The exception to this is the installation equipment to meet fire safety requirements: a sprinkler system that has been installed at the time Park Road extended from three to four beds, extinguishers at the fire exits and emergency lighting and smoke detectors.

It is the policy of Park Road that, in the case of a fire being discovered everyone should leave the building immediately, without panic, and gather at the designated fire assembly point which is at the front of the house by the mini-roundabout. Staff and young people are instructed not to attempt to fight the fire but to leave the building and contact the Fire Brigade.

Staff will alert everyone in the house. One member of staff will tour the building, rounding up anyone in the house, closing all doors on the way out and escorting everyone to the fire assembly point. The second member of staff will, if possible, collect the Visitors Book, Log Book and Register, telephone the Fire Brigade and meet the group at the fire assembly point. From the Fire assembly point the manager/Director will be contacted.

Everyone will remain at the fire assembly point until it has been advised that it is safe to return to the building by the Fire Brigade.

Staff are required to be vigilant in their responsibilities regarding fire safety and regular weekly fire extinguishers, fire blankets, smoke detectors and emergency lighting checks and monthly house evacuations are carried out by the member of staff charged with the responsibility to oversee fire safety in the Home. A fire notice is in place at the entrance to the kitchen giving clear instructions what to do in the event of a fire.

These checks are recorded, as per requirements, in the Health and Safety File and in the Fire Book. Any faults identified are reported promptly and repaired as a matter of urgency. Poor responses received from the young people in carrying through evacuations are picked up and discussed in key work sessions and House Meetings.

Staff are trained in fire safety techniques annually and talk to young people at induction, key work and House Meetings about the need to respond quickly and safely to fire alarms. Young people are spoken to about fire safety issues such as smoking only in the designated smoking area, what to do in the case of a fire being discovered and where to assemble in the event of a fire.

Annual maintenance checks are made to fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, smoke alarms and electrical equipment. Annual visits by external professionals are carried out to assess and advise whether current fire precautions are satisfactory and what needs to be undertaken to upgrade the systems.

Annual checks are carried out on all electrical and gas equipment in the Home. Any faulty equipment is discarded and replaced.

Staff at Park Road acknowledge and value diversity. They are committed to promoting each young person's religious needs.

Early identification of a young person's religious needs at the Placement Meeting stage will enable the identified key worker to research appropriate support for the young person in the community if the young person desires and will ensure sensitivity from the staff team towards the young person around issues such as dietary needs, special days and space to worship.

It is possible that for some young people living within the care system they have lost touch with their religious heritage. Staff at Park Road believe that all young people should have the opportunity to rekindle their faith if they so desire without fear of prejudice from others. Staff will be vigorous in their determination to promote the young person's rights in this regard and use Holy Days and Saints Days to positively promote the young person's faith to other residents in the Home.

Staff will be available to young people to take them to places of worship and to special sites of religious interest.

22 Contact arrangements

Staff at Park Road are committed to the principles enshrined within The Children Act 1989. In this regard staff have a duty to actively promote and sustain contact unless it is not reasonably practicable or consistent with the welfare of the young person to do so.

For the majority of young people staff are likely to advocate it is in the young person's best interests to sustain or to rekindle links with their natural families. Staff will therefore promote contact issues as an essential element in the planning process.

Staff welcome contact visits at Park Road on the basis that all parties are able to conduct themselves in a manner that is not disruptive to the young person or others at the Home. Visitors will be offered the opportunity to share meals and refreshment and be shown to a quiet space to chat in privacy. Staff will assist young people visiting their parent(s) in any way deemed in their best interests and agreed as part of the care plan.

Before visitors are given entry to Park Road staff have a duty to establish the credentials of the visitor. All visitors will be asked to sign the Visitors Book. Staff reserve the right to refuse entry to visitors to Park Road and ask visitors to leave the Home should they believe the visitor's behaviour is unacceptable or presents risk to the young people.

Young people are encouraged to undertake contact by phone and letter if visiting is infrequent or not possible. Park Road has facility for young people to use a telephone in complete privacy. Additionally there is a public pay phone a short distance away.

All contacts are recorded on the young person's file. Any variation in contact arrangements will be made in full consultation with the local authority. It is the responsibility of staff to monitor contact in the best interests of the young person to ensure the experience remains positive.

Young people are encouraged to make friends locally as well as retain friendships from previous placements. Again, behaviour permitting, these friends will be welcome to visit in consultation with staff. Staff will phone the friend's parents to determine they too are happy for the visit to take place.

Decisions permitting the young person to visit their friend's houses will be agreed by the placing authority after prescribed checks have been carried out and consents obtained.

Under no circumstances will contact be cancelled as a result of the young person's behaviour unless the behaviour presents a risk to the young person or others.

23 Complaints

Staff at Park Road actively encourage young people to explore their feelings constructively. Young people are also encouraged to become more assertive and value themselves more highly. Within this context young people are made aware of their right to complain should they feel they have been treated unfairly or disrespectfully.

As required by Ofsted, Park Road has a written Complaints Policy and Procedure that is available to the young person to consult alongside information in The Children's Handbook.

Wherever possible complaints are discussed on an informal level with the Registered Manager in the hope that they can be resolved as quickly as possible with the minimum of anxiety to the young person.

Many complaints are, upon discussion, an expression of dissatisfaction and can be easily explored and remedied to the young person's satisfaction. For those complaints that cannot be remedied by informal discussion, the young person will be given the opportunity to follow the process through to formal investigation and resolution.

All young people will:

- Be heard by the staff team.
- Reassured by the staff team that they will not be punished for making a complaint.
- Will have their complaint acted upon.
- Be given support throughout.
- Be kept informed throughout.
- Will be given names and telephone numbers of organisations who can help them independently if they are dissatisfied e.g. Ofsted, Independent Visitor, their local authority Complaints Officer, Voice for the Child in Care, NSPCC.

Unless the complaint is against the Registered Manager it is the manager who will conduct any investigation. The manager will inform the young person's social worker and any other parties with a legitimate interest in the welfare of the young person and decisions may be made to involve other professionals such as Child Protection Teams.

Where the complaint has been made against a member of staff, the member of staff will be cautioned against personalising the complaint and, where necessary, will have their performance scrutinised and appraised. Complaints against staff can lead to the Disciplinary Procedure being invoked.

Due to the emotions evoked by complaints, the right for young people to complain and the responses from staff are issues that will be regularly reviewed at Team Meetings.

All complaints, whether made verbally or in writing are recorded on Complaints Forms and kept on the young person's case file as a formal record, available to the young person, their social worker and Ofsted.

24 Reviews of placement plans

Staff at Park Road follow stringently the Statutory Review process laid down in The Children Act 1989 and are pro-active in advocating on behalf of young people should the planning process be

delayed. Staff at Park Road are aware of the issues of drift in residential care and are keen to promote the development of young people in their care through careful and thoughtful planning.

At all times the wishes and feelings of the young person will be advocated and language used that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the young person.

Every young person coming to live at Park Road will arrive with a Placement Plan, drawn up at the time it has been decided the young person is coming to the Home. Following arrival a Statutory Review will take place within one month and subsequently within the following three months. After this initial period Reviews will be conducted no less regularly than six monthly. In the case of emergency admissions, the first Review will take place within seventy-two hours after the young person is placed.

Wherever possible young people are encouraged to participate at all stages in the planning and review process. From the daily record, through to six weekly reports and on to Review planning and Review reports, young people are asked for their views and to contribute to the compilation of reports.

Park Road operate an open access to files policy (except for the closed section of the file) where young people can look back on current and previous plans with their key worker as well as contribute to the records.

25. Type of accommodation, including sleeping arrangements

Park Road is a semi-detached town house near to the centre of Sittingbourne. It is close to the local amenities with the doctors, dentist and opticians near by. Sittingbourne has a large library as well as a swimming pool, sports centre and many recreational activity places of interest.

Downstairs consists of a spacious living room, a large kitchen and dining room with a downstairs toilet. The office is also on the ground floor. The first floor has two large bedrooms which are designated for two young people and a bathroom /shower and toilet. The top floor has a further two bedrooms both with en-suite bathrooms.

The house is maintained to a high standard of decoration throughout. There is an incoming phone in the hallway with payphone facilities for the young people.

The kitchen diner area has developed into the focal point of the house with staff and young people gathering to cook, chat, play cards and generally socialise. The living room is a space that is generally used for play station recreation or for the group to settle and watch favourite programmes and films in the evening.

Park Road has recently changed from three to four bedroom accommodation with the permission of The Commission for Social Care Inspection. In order to accommodate the forth child a sprinkler system has been installed. In the interests of safety this has been extended throughout the house.

Staff view their work with young people placed at Park Road as being on a continuum of good practice, the staff team always striving to improve services to young people resident in the Home and always looking for new ways and innovative approaches to motivate them. Integral in the work undertaken with the young people is an understanding within the team that, without a safe and secure staff team, high quality direct work with young people will not flourish.

At this point in the development at Park Road, the staff team are focussing on providing high quality primary care for the young people resident and the development of strong, trusting relationships. Within the philosophy of Park Road, relationships will be warm, friendly and informal with staff authority built upon mutual respect, as experienced within a family environment.

The starting point to achieve this to aim is to recruit mature, experienced individuals who are child centred in their approach, staff who can interpret behaviour from the young person and endure without personalising their outbursts. The team has undergone changes over the past year in order to meet this brief. The team will be supported through in-house residential skills training and external courses including core training and NVQ training.

Therefore staff are currently concentrating on four significant aspects of theory to underpin their practice:

- Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
- Bowlby's theories concerning secure and insecure attachment.
- The creation of a therapeutic, emotionally containing environment.
- Psychodynamic principles of child care within key work roles.

27 Anti-discriminatory practice and children's rights

Staff at Park Road recognise and acknowledge that all young people have both general needs as a young person growing up and specific needs as an individual with a unique personal history.

The Boulders Ltd, as an organisation, is opposed to discrimination against young people in any form that may prevent that young person from reaching their full potential. To this end the staff team are instructed to work relentlessly to prevent discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or social origin, language, culture, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, political or other opinion, birth or status.

Staff are committed to maximising the young person's potential. Any discrimination by young people or adults, no matter how subtle, will be challenged. Should staff witness any discrimination towards any young person by another member of staff they will be expected and encouraged to whistle blow. Staff are encouraged to promote the rights of young people who may wish to make complaints by assisting them in whatever way the young person wishes, including framing the complaint with the young person and passing on that complaint to the appropriate body.

All young people placed at Park Road have the right:

- To be heard.
- To be treated with dignity and worth.
- To have appropriate education and leisure.
- To be protected from harm.

Staff at Park Road will actively promote and advocate for care plans to be drawn up and carried through to meet each young person's educational, religious, cultural, linguistic and dietary needs.

In all cases decisions will be made that promote the best interests of each individual young person over and above any interests of the company.