



Community Relations Policy: Being Good Neighbors

Context

We recognize that some residents may have concerns or reservations about the presence of a children's home within their community. These concerns often arise from misconceptions, limited understanding of residential children's services, or, in some cases, prior negative experiences.

However, it is important to note that most children's homes operate to high standards. As of 31st March 2024, 81% of children's homes in England were rated as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted—an increase from 79% in 2023 (source: Ofsted).

Aim

The aim of this policy is to provide clear guidance for staff on how to be 'good neighbors'—maintaining positive community relationships while protecting and supporting the children in our care to thrive and live fulfilling lives.

Rationale

Lumiere Children's Homes Ltd and its staff are dedicated to ensuring that every child in our care is safeguarded, supported, and given the best possible opportunities to succeed. We are equally committed to fostering positive relationships with our local community.

We believe that teaching our children how to be respectful, considerate members of their community is a vital part of their development. To that end, staff must actively model and promote good neighborly behavior.

We value feedback and engagement from local residents and welcome their support and observations. Staff should approach concerns raised by neighbors with professionalism and a genuine willingness to listen. However, responses must always uphold our primary duty: the care and welfare of our children.

Being a good neighbor does not mean compromising on our responsibility, it means fulfilling it in a way that builds bridges, encourages understanding, and strengthens community cohesion.

Policy

1) Establish positive links with the local community.

We will ensure that staff:

- Know the local area (there is a location risk assessment that will be shared at point of staff induction and kept under regular review).
- Obtain information on local facilities. (Key workers explore the community for leisure and other social opportunities and peer groups)
- Work with the local Police and Safer Neighborhood teams for information sharing.
- Use local resources where possible, this includes the local community center, and



where possible, we will employ local candidates.

- Participate in local events.
- Will have robust and appropriate communication systems. This includes point of contact and complaints process.
- Consider becoming involved in neighborhood watch schemes.
- Teach and empower our children to be good citizens, to give back and assist in times of crisis.

2) Environmental awareness

Our staff will:

- Be mindful at all times of the presentation of the Home and grounds. Staff will ensure the home and grounds are free from rubbish and all garbage is appropriately disposed of. Bins will be kept contained until collection day and stored again appropriately. We will ensure that the garden is kept to a good standard. We will employ a window cleaning service to maintain these.
- Maintain good boundaries and fences.
- Ensure appropriate privacy by using window shades.
- Manage lighting internally and externally as appropriate.
- Ensure suitable supervision of children and young people at all times.
- Maintain appropriate noise levels. (Please read our noise management plan).
- Provision has been made for vehicles to alleviate inconvenience or compromise to residents by traffic or parking of vehicles on the street.

3) Staff responsibility

It is important that staff always reflect the home's ethos and maintain a positive role model.

To ensure this happens, staff will:

- Ensure that they are dressed appropriately and in line with our dress code policy.
- Ensure they demonstrate the highest level of professionalism.
- Act as competent parents by being consistent and offering appropriate structures and boundaries.
- Help our children to accept and respect themselves and others.
- Respond to complaints appropriately.



4) Presentation of children and young people.

To ensure this happens, staff will help children to:

- Be appropriately attired
- Be supported to present and employ acceptable behavior.
- Be respectful of others.
- Act as good members of the community.