



Good Neighbour Policy

36 Moor Park, Northwood, HA6 2DJ

Background information

We understand that certain members of the local community may have concerns and reservations about integrating a children's home into their community. Misconceptions and a lack of understanding about the nature of such homes for looked-after children can contribute to these apprehensions. It's possible that some individuals may possess misinformation or have had negative past experiences. However, it's important to note that the majority of children's homes are rated as good or outstanding. As of 31st March 2023, 69% are rated as good and 10% were rated as Outstanding. This is an increase from 2022, when it was at 77%. overall. (This data was taken from the Ofsted website).

Aim

This policy aims to set out some good practice guidance for staff to ensure we are being 'good neighbours' whilst protecting and encouraging the children in our care to thrive and live their lives to their full potential.

Rational

At New Chapters Homes, our dedicated staff are devoted to safeguarding the welfare of the children under our care. In addition to advocating for their needs, we are fully committed to empowering them to become responsible and contributing members of the community.

We want to promote the safety, welfare, and social integration of children in our care. To achieve this, we appreciate and welcome the support and observations from members of the local community. It is essential that staff listen and respond to the concerns of neighbours in the spirit of being a good neighbour themselves. This should not be done in a way which takes away from the staff responsibility to their childcare task but should be done as part of that childcare task.

Policy

1) Establish positive links with the local community.

We are committed to fostering positive connections with the local community, ensuring our staff:

- Familiarise themselves with the local area, utilising a location risk assessment shared during staff induction.
- Gather information about local amenities through our designated activities coordinator.
- Collaborate with local law enforcement agencies to exchange relevant information.
- Utilise local resources whenever feasible, including the community center, and prioritise employing people living locally.
- Participate in community events to strengthen ties and engagement.
- Maintain effective communication systems, including clear points of contact and a streamlined complaints process.
- Consider involvement in neighborhood watch schemes to enhance community safety.
- Provide assistance during times of crisis to support community resilience.

2) Be aware of the building and grounds.

To ensure the upkeep of our building and grounds, our staff will:

- Maintain a tidy appearance by promptly picking up any rubbish and ensuring the garden is well-maintained.
- Engage a window cleaner to keep windows clean and presentable.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and fences to ensure privacy and security.
- Draw curtains as needed to maintain privacy and create a comfortable environment.
- Responsibly manage lighting, turning lights on or off as appropriate to conserve energy.

- Ensure adequate supervision of children to promote safety.
- Implement our noise management plan to minimise disturbances.
- Encourage staff to consider cycling or walking to the home whenever feasible.
- Park vehicles considerately, either on the home's drive or in designated areas within the local vicinity.

3) Care about how staff present themselves.

We prioritise how our staff present themselves, ensuring they consistently embody the ethos of our home and serve as positive role models. To uphold these standards, staff will:

- Adhere to our dress code policy, maintaining appropriate attire at all times.
- Demonstrate the utmost professionalism in their conduct and interactions.
- Exemplify competency as caregivers by providing consistent support and establishing appropriate structures and boundaries.
- Foster an environment where children learn to accept and respect themselves and others.
- Respond to complaints with sensitivity and professionalism, addressing concerns promptly and effectively.

4) Care for how young people present themselves

We are committed to guiding young people in presenting themselves positively. To achieve this, staff will assist children by:

- Ensuring they wear appropriate clothing suitable for various activities and occasions.
- Providing support and guidance to cultivate acceptable behaviour and social skills.
- Encouraging respect for others, fostering an environment of empathy and understanding.
- Instilling the values of being responsible and contributing members of the community through positive role modeling and guidance.

Complaints

As part of our commitment to maintaining a harmonious and supportive neighbourhood environment, we encourage open communication and transparency. Should there be any concerns or complaints regarding our Chapter One children's home, we welcome our neighbours to reach out to us directly. We have established an efficient and responsive system to address any issues promptly and effectively. Upon receipt of a concern or complaint, we will

acknowledge it within 24 hours and provide a resolution or update within 3 business days. Neighbours can contact us via our email address newchaptershomes@gmail.com, this will ensure written evidence is received, and can be documented for further development purposes. If neighbours feel their issue has not been adequately addressed, they may escalate it to the registered manager using the same email address within 5 business days, and we will ensure a response within 2 business days. All neighbours input is invaluable to us, and we are dedicated to fostering positive relationships within the community, this is particularly important for children to see.