

Deputation Submitted by Ms Smeeth

New Haven Children's Home
(193 London Road, Waterlooville)

Deputation to Havant Development Management Committee (18/3/21)

Speaking in support of the application,

Jackie Smeeth, Business Process Development Manager at the Highlands Group, who is responsible for helping to set up and will also be overseeing the running of the proposed Children's Home will say:

"New Haven will accommodate up to 4 children, between the ages of 10 and 18 years, who have experienced physical and/or emotional abuse or neglect and those with a Learning Disability. Our primary aim and focus is to create a safe nurturing environment in which the children feel at home, where they feel supported to re-discover and, if necessary, re-invent themselves safely and without prejudice, and we strive very hard to achieve this. This all occurs in a shared living setting which builds on social understanding and respect.

The staff will be recruited on the basis of their skills, but also their energy, emotional resilience, empathy and integrity. We have a rigorous recruitment process which seeks to maintain a diverse, highly skilled, empathetic and self-aware team who are individually emotionally resilient and can offer good role modelling to the children.

All staff receive 2 weeks induction, regular training and supervision and are required to either have, or be working towards, a Level 3 Diploma in Residential Childcare.

Managers are required to have a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Residential Childcare

New Haven's first child will determine the other children placed as we work with compatibility. In depth assessment of the needs of individual young people, as well as considering the matching of the group placed at New Haven, will help determine which young people transition into the home. New Haven will take medium to long term placements only. We will not take emergency placements.

The children will be encouraged to make a positive contribution to the local community and develop their skills through education, clubs, sports, music, recreation, and social interaction. Young people are supported to access the community, as well as promoting independence when appropriate.

All children placed under the care of the local authority and those accommodated are in best practice placed in appropriate placements with access to support of the services within the local area. All placement providers, including New Haven (as private providers), are linked into a wider network of services to provide appropriate support and achieve identified outcomes for the children within their care.

Children's Homes are heavily regulated by Ofsted and are required to operate under the Children's Homes Regulations.

We will work within the regulations to provide an outstanding service for the children who will be placed with us. We want them to have ownership of their home and be able to understand their emotions and feelings with the support of their staff team so they can achieve their aspirations and be the best they can be, and feel safe and secure, and be given the same opportunities to succeed that we all have a right to have. We like to recognise and reward positive behaviour and we also seek to promote and develop a community based on mutual respect.

We have engaged with the local community and have held a virtual meeting with neighbours in order to answer their questions.

Going forward, we will strive to be good neighbours and seek to resolve any issues through the most appropriate means, including discussion and education.

We will provide an important facility for children who deserve to be looked after and experience a settled home environment.

We very much look forward to becoming an accepted part of the community."