



## HORIZON CARE:

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***“Putting children and young people first in everything we do”***





## BACKGROUND

Horizon Care Limited was founded in 2000. Our goal was to provide a safe and nurturing environment for some of the most disadvantaged and challenging children and young people in the care system.

Our first home, Oaklands, opened in the spring of 2001 and very quickly welcomed the first young person. From that point the company grew steadily into two clusters of small specialist homes in Lancashire and Staffordshire. Today, we also operate homes in Greater Manchester and Liverpool.

Since then we have worked with 67 different local authorities, looked after more than 140 young people and currently operate nine homes, including our first partnership home which opened in 2006 following a successful tender for a five-year contract.

In 2007 we acted on the Government's recommendation to improve practice in Residential Child Care by embracing Social Pedagogy. All staff completed a two-day basic training course and participated in two further practice days in the homes. With assistance from our young people we recruited two full time pedagogues who then helped us to progress this important initiative.

In 2010, our commitment to continuous development and improvement is underpinned by pedagogic principles and a shared sense of individual and collective responsibility.

We hope you will gain a sense of our genuine enthusiasm and dedication and an understanding of what we can offer from this brochure.

## OUR MISSION

For all young people to have equal access to opportunities: a good education with solid prospects at the end of it and stable relationships; a happy, healthy and sustainable future in which they can feel safe, be healthy, have fun and enjoy life, be good citizens and support themselves financially.





## AN INTRODUCTION TO HORIZON CARE

At Horizon Care we specialise in looking after young people aged 10–18 who are behaviourally challenging and emotionally vulnerable. We recognise the importance of choosing the right package of care and education for young people whose life chances have been adversely affected by circumstances.

We aim to provide a period of stability and the opportunity to reflect on difficulties and make future plans, based on a comprehensive assessment of social, emotional, behavioural, physical and educational needs.

We work extensively, but not exclusively, with young women at risk of exploitation. Our behaviour management programmes are prepared and monitored by our consultant psychologists. Individual educational programmes are delivered by our dedicated teachers who promote educational inclusion and personal achievement, and ensure all statutory requirements are met.

Horizon Care actively seeks to work in partnership with local authorities to develop new services to meet identified needs. We are active members of the *Independent Children's Home Association* (ICHA) and the *National Children's Bureau* (NCB), and we are practice partner to the *Social Care Institute of Excellence* (SCIE).

Currently, we have services in Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Liverpool and Staffordshire, ranging from dual occupancy to four-bedded homes and supported accommodation. Placements are usually accepted on a short-, medium- or long term-basis. It may be possible to facilitate requests for same-day emergency placements for up to 28 days with a staff ratio based on the level of need and a risk assessment.

Our directors, Philip McVay and Amanda Knowles, are highly motivated to develop and promote best practice. They are regularly involved in local, regional and national initiatives and are always pleased to discuss emerging local needs, to ensure this informs future practice and is reflected in service developments.



## OUR DIRECTORS

### PHILIP MCVAY – MD AND RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL

Phil, the Company founder and Managing Director, set up Horizon Care Ltd in August 2000, with the intention of offering quality care to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people with challenging behaviour.

Phil worked his first residential shift on 22 November 1996. “It was a baptism by fire but it taught me a lot: the need for firm, consistent boundaries from the start as well as the resilience you need to withstand challenging behaviour and the resourcefulness you need to change it. There is a real lack of understanding by most people of what this work actually entails.”

Phil wanted to start his own company to pursue his goal of ensuring that young people in care were afforded the same opportunities as other children.

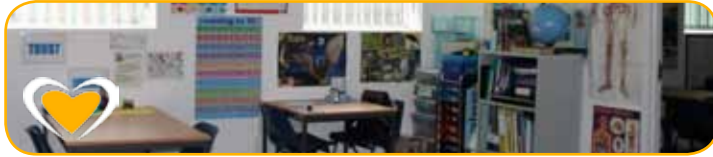
He was the Registered Manager for Horizon Care’s first Homehome, Oaklands, from April 2001 until January

2003. To this day he remains committed to offering a needs-led service, promoting the welfare of the child, maintaining continuity of placement and avoiding placement breakdown wherever possible.

Phil still loves nothing better than the times when he is in direct contact with the young people. “It’s the deep sense of satisfaction you get from seeing someone achieve, children with traumatic backgrounds doing normal things, and the shared experiences like taking our kids to Ireland on their first flight – they loved it and so did I.”

Phil’s hobbies and interests are mostly extreme sports, including skiing, snowboarding, moto-x and rally driving.





## OUR DIRECTORS

### AMANDA KNOWLES – CARE DIRECTOR

Amanda began her social work career in 1976. She has been employed in a number of voluntary and statutory settings and has managed her own business. She has fostered difficult-to-place teenagers, worked in various residential settings as a residential care worker, in fieldwork settings as children and families social worker, and with the NSPCC as a child protection officer.

Amanda gained her CQSW in 1989 and is a member of the Chartered Management Institute. She has held several managerial positions including Children's Resource Centre Manager with responsibility for residential homes, family centres, youth justice services, a community support team and an eight-bedded regional secure unit.

“Throughout my working life, I have worked outside of normal office hours. I realise the need for out-of-hours support in social work and have the flexibility necessary to provide it. I also recognise the need for visible

leadership, clear direction and good communication. I firmly believe in the value and effectiveness of the team work approach. I have always been committed to high-quality service delivery, and set high standards for myself and seek to develop these in others through mutual respect and supportive working relationships.

“My first contact with Horizon Care was as a referring social worker and I subsequently joined the company as the Care Director in November 2002. From the outset, I have shared the vision of providing well resourced, individualised care that offers real opportunity for young people disadvantaged by circumstance to realise their full potential and achieve the best possible outcomes.”



## **THE EDUCATION SERVICE**

Horizon Care provides its own education service (Horizon Care School Registration Numbers 860/6032 and 351/6015) to ensure that all young people placed with the agency, regardless of their previous educational experiences, not only attend school, but also realise the highest possible levels of educational attainment. The education programme is delivered by qualified teachers working in partnership with residential care workers.

### **KEY PRINCIPLES**

We believe the educational needs of looked-after children and children in need should be met within mainstream educational services and, except on rare occasions, complex personal difficulties faced by individual children should not be used to justify or explain low levels of educational attainment. Children and young people facing extreme levels of difficulty can and should be successfully educated within mainstream provisions in ways which not only meet their individual requirements but also reflect the specific context in which schools and other appropriate education services operate.

Horizon Care schools offer the following:

- Complete educational assessments and background education report. There will be a representative from the school at the initial planning meetings of a looked-after child coming to Horizon Care.

- Assumption of lead responsibility for planning, support and delivery of education programmes for children.
- Intensive preparation and research relating to each new school placement and completion of the inclusion plan.
- Arrangement interim support to ensure attendance by the young person at mainstream or other appropriate school or education institute.
- Direct handling of all matters relating to education such as admissions, individual plans, school induction programmes, curriculum management, examinations and assessment, homework etc.
- In the event of an unavoidable break in school attendance (eg temporary exclusion, permanent exclusion), a focus on facilitating the earliest possible re-admission and minimising the impact of such a break on the young person, residential staff and placement. This may involve organising some extra-curricular activities in consultation with residential staff, or other such arrangements as best support the placement.
- Assistance to local authorities in ensuring that the aims and objectives of individual care plans are met, both within the duration of their placement and as part of the process of moving children to other placements, including to their own family where appropriate.





## HOME/SCHOOL AGREEMENT

The school will treat the home as just that – a home with guardians as any mainstream school would treat home. However, where communication is rare between mainstream schools and homes, ours will be more thorough due to the nature of our children's difficulties.

Although there is no school uniform, it is expected that students do not wear jeans, except on 'activity days'. Smart casual dress is expected for both staff and students.

We do not allow children to smoke in school. Anyone acting as a teaching assistant is expected not to allow a student to smoke in their presence, and the student they are responsible for should always be in their view.

We do not accept that children need their mobile phones in school. The schools have phones and therefore mobile phones are not required and can cause unnecessary interruptions to teaching.

We have a home/school record book which is passed only between teaching staff and residential staff. Positive

records will be rewarded at home and a negative report can expect to lead to consequences being highlighted at home. This is also a helpful way of communicating any issues that the home or school is experiencing with an individual. The school operates a reward points system. Points can be earned and lost.

The homes provide a healthy lunch which is brought into school by the student, or staff, when necessary.

A timetable will be sent home so that the home is aware of when PE kit is needed and of any other incidentals that may be required on a certain day.

It is expected that our students bring a bag to school containing their own pencil case that they can get used to taking responsibility for their education. Students must respect school equipment and follow staff instructions. Bullying and inappropriate language are not allowed.

The school will usually cover the cost of most activity days but, on some occasions, the home will be asked to contribute towards expenses. Such requests are made by letter, as would normally happen in mainstream school.



## OUR HOMES

All our homes are family-sized, spacious, detached residential properties offering comfortable, relaxed and homely environments. Each young person has their own room, they are consulted on the décor and can arrange their room to their own taste (everything is negotiable!). Young people have a right to dignity and privacy in their own home and our staff respect this.

Each home has a core staff team who work rota'd 24-hour shifts, including sleeping-in, and there are two dedicated bedrooms for staff at each home.

Our homes are located in rural and urban locations. We work hard to maintain good relationships with neighbours and the local community. We encourage participation in and volunteering within the community.

Each young person has their own key worker who works with them on a regular basis to progress their Care Plan.

A psychological assessment is completed on admission by the clinician, who also provides direct therapeutic support to the young people and works with the staff team to develop, monitor and review behaviour management strategies.

Young people are encouraged to be proactive in the running of the home and to take part in the decision-making processes.

## HOMES IN LIVERPOOL

### GARSTON HOUSE

Garston House is a large six-bedroom house located in a residential area near to the centre of Liverpool. The house provides accommodation for up to four young people, each with a single room of their own.





## HOMES IN LANCASHIRE

### OAKLANDS

Oaklands is a five-bedroom detached house with good-sized gardens located in a residential area on the outskirts of Bacup in Lancashire. The house provides residential accommodation for up to two young people, each with a single room of their own.



### PARKLANDS

Parklands is a four-bedroom detached property set in its own grounds and located in a semi-rural position on the outskirts of Bacup in Lancashire. The house provides residential accommodation for up to two young people, each with a single room of their own.





## HOMES IN MANCHESTER

### CHASELEY HOUSE

Chaseley House is a five-bedroom detached house with a good-sized garden located in a residential area near the centre of Salford. The house provides residential accommodation for up to three young people, each with a single room of their own.



### RAILWAY COTTAGE

Railway Cottage is a five-bedroom detached house with a good-sized garden located in a residential area near to the centre of Salford. The house provides residential accommodation for up to three young people, each with a single room of their own.





## HOMES IN STAFFORDSHIRE

### FAIRVIEW

Fairview is a four-bedroom detached house with its own garden, in a quiet residential area within easy reach of Cannock town centre. Fairview is registered to accommodate two young people, each with a room of their own.



### FORD COTTAGE

Ford Cottage is a large detached house set in spacious gardens in a rural location about 4 miles from Stafford town centre. The house provides residential accommodation for up to three young people, each with a single room of their own.





## HOMES IN STAFFORDSHIRE

### THE ARCHES

The Arches is a large detached house with a good-sized garden located in residential area near the centre of Cannock Chase. The house provides residential accommodation for up to two young people, each with a single room of their own.



### WINDY ARBOUR

Windy Arbour House is a large detached property set in extensive grounds in a rural location overlooking the Churnet Valley. The house provides residential accommodation for up to three young people, each with a single room of their own.



## **CLINICAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

The clinical services that Horizon Care provides are delivered by **Clinical Psychology Associates (CPA)** which is one of the UK's leading providers of psychological services. They have a proven track record of delivering exceptionally high-quality services to the residential sector.

Therapeutic input is underpinned by genuine expertise in assessment, formulation, intervention and outcome measurement. CPA provides rapid access to a comprehensive range of clinical services for the entire spectrum of psychological difficulties that young people may experience:

- The psychological consequences of abuse and neglect
- Attachment problems
- Challenging behaviour
- Low self-esteem
- Self-harm
- Anger control problems
- Social skills deficits
- Substance misuse
- Interpersonal problems
- Sleep disruption
- Adjustment problems
- Identity disturbance
- Eating disorders
- Sexualised behaviour
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Learning disabilities

Clinical support includes therapeutic work with young people, family work (if requested), consultancy with the staff teams, risk assessment, crisis management, professional reports and behavioural management plans, and a comprehensive training programme for staff.

The training programme is a series of workshops designed to allow the staff to understand the psychological reasons for a young person's behaviour and implement suitable interventions. Through this training and consultancy, CPA helps staff to address their perceptions of difficult behaviours, develop confidence, improve awareness and promote consistency. The approach focuses not only on behavioural change but also on successful behavioural management.

All the clinical services are grounded entirely in evidence-based approaches such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and functional analysis, and are fully consistent with existing legislative frameworks, national clinical guidelines and occupational standards, such as those established by the Department of Health, CQC, NICE and Ofsted. All the services are delivered by a team of specialist Clinical Psychologists. They receive regular clinical supervision and undertake continued professional development, and their practice is regulated by the [British Psychological Society](#).



## MOBILE CRISIS INTERVENTION AND ASSESSMENT UNIT

We offer same-day, registered, crisis intervention and assessment placements at our mobile unit with either a 1:1 or 2:1 staff ratio, depending on level of need and risk assessment.

This placement option includes full social, educational and psychological assessment reports.

We use a range of accommodation and locations for this purpose. Selection is based on specific requirements and the initial risk assessment.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Horizon Care on

**Office: 01543 570304**

**Mobile: 07967 004052**





## HEAD OFFICE

Our homes and services are ably supported by our head office in Cannock which covers all aspects of administration, HR and finance, and deals with all referrals and IPAs.

Head office responsibilities include purchase and setup of homes and their ongoing running and maintenance; all areas of business finance; and staff-related matters such as recruitment and retention, training and development, and payroll. Head office also provides central storage of all company records.

If you have any questions, please get in touch. If you have a referral to discuss, this will be treated as a priority.

## CLEARCARE

Horizon Care uses an electronic, recording, reporting and secure filing system ([www.clearcaresolutions.co.uk](http://www.clearcaresolutions.co.uk)). The system is transparent, tamper proof and accessible. Young people's daily records can be viewed remotely by their allocated social workers and other authorised professionals. ClearCare supports placement monitoring, measures outcomes and helps social workers keep up to date with significant events and progress between statutory visits and reviews.



Horizon Care Limited, incorporated in England and Wales under Company Number: 4049112

Registered Office: Venture House, Prospect Business Park, Longford Road, Cannock, WS11 0LG



## OUR BUDDY SCHEME

Our buddy scheme complements the work of the staff team by providing a level of peer support from younger people selected by Horizon Care as companions to accompany our young people on constructive, age-appropriate activities. Our buddies provide positive role models and offer an opportunity for the young people to have fun with someone of a similar age in locally available activities.

Buddies decide together what they would like to do and where they would like to go. It could be low-key, like meeting for a coffee, or more study oriented, such as a trip to the library or attending an evening class. It could also be a fun activity, like going to a music gig, a trip to the cinema or ice skating.

Benefits of the scheme include:

- Addressing the isolation to which some young people in care are particularly vulnerable
- Raising a young person's confidence and self-esteem
- Giving a sense of companionship and knowing someone is there if you need them

- Helping with difficulties such as bullying
- Promoting self-care (young people may be able to speak out more easily if they have support)
- If the buddies themselves have been in care, a sharing of the experiences of being looked after
- Provision of positive role models and promotion of social skills, skills in self-awareness, problem-solving and safety
- Provision of an opportunity for feedback that assists Horizon Care in service improvement

Sometimes buddies are young people who have been looked after themselves (perhaps someone who has moved on from Horizon Care and is living independently and doing well). Other buddies are young people who have not been in care but have an interest in contributing to the scheme.

To find out more about the scheme (we are always interested in potential new buddies too!) please contact our head office.

## **SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AT HORIZON CARE**

Horizon Care was one of the first providers of residential child care to embrace Government recommendations to improve practice in residential child care through implementing Social Pedagogy.

In line with existing ethos and practice at Horizon Care, all staff undertook initial two-day training in Social Pedagogy, followed by two further days of training in practice, and fully qualified pedagogues were appointed to support and advance these developments.

Social Pedagogy differentiates itself from other approaches to social work through its focus on the 'everyday' ('Alltagsorientierung') of the service user and the holistic view of all aspects of the life experiences ('Lebensweltorientierung'). It is a profession that, together with the family and school, educates the individual to successfully participate in society.

The foundation of the practice of Social Pedagogy lies in its values: the orientation towards unconditional positive regard for the individual and an understanding of the individual's life experiences. Social Pedagogues see their work as an encounter between equal human beings and social pedagogic practice is successful on the basis of co-operation between equal partners. Social Pedagogy mediates between the individual and society, aiming to achieve the highest level of autonomy possible.

It seeks to compensate individual and structural disadvantages in socialisation for people of all ages, in all aspects of their lives, by supporting and enabling the individual and inducing change in the individual's environment.

The Social Pedagogy qualification focuses on the development of a pedagogic relationship between the service user and the social pedagogue by acquiring a large variety of methods for direct work with the service user (derived from psychology, sociology and medicine) and also develops management skills.

A Social Pedagogical environment also supports the independent living skills of young people. Beginning with the day of the admission the team as a whole reflects on the abilities of the young person in their everyday activities and develops strategies to achieve a more successful everyday life (for example, by cooking with the young person).

By participating in this training the staff have learned new ways of understanding and responding to the needs of children and young people, and using the approach has enabled staff to help them understand the consequences of their own behaviour and decisions, to reflect on these and make adjustments to them in the future.

Overall, Horizon Care believes the application of social pedagogical ideas in residential care has the potential to improve the practice by combining existing excellence with a well structured theoretical framework.



## ASSESSMENTS

**We are not risk averse; we actively manage risk in order to address specific issues while aiming to afford the young person the same opportunities that are available to their peers.**

**We aim to understand, manage and change the difficult, complex and challenging behaviours of the young people who come into our care by meeting each individual's needs within a nurturing environment. The philosophy of the organisation is based on the principles of normality, social inclusion, rights and responsibilities, choice, and unconditional positive regard.**

Key Workers work in collaboration with teachers and the consultant clinician to provide a comprehensive assessment for each young person and to structure care and education plans to meet each individual's needs. The work is undertaken at the pace of the young person, and allows them to grow in order to heighten their strengths and concentrate on improvement in areas of specific difficulty. We support them in addressing their vulnerabilities and attempt to turn these around and create a resistance to the pulls of their challenging behaviours.

Risk is viewed as dynamic: we constantly review our assessments and amend them to reflect the young person's changing needs as they develop, progress and achieve in our care.

## **CASE STUDY**

### **BACKGROUND**

Jody is a 15-year-old female diagnosed as having mild to moderate learning difficulties. In the past she has been placed in secure accommodation for her own safety following several episodes of repeated behaviour in the community that have led to her being sexually exploited. After an initial assessment period she was referred to Horizon Care for placement in the community to prepare for a return home to her mother. It was hoped that she could also develop some skills to assist her to live independently in the future.

Jody's mother also has learning difficulties, to the extent that she was unable to keep her daughter safe. Jody has nine siblings. All of them have some form of learning disability and all apart from two (who are living at home with their mother) are in the care of the local authority.

Jody's father and mother were in an abusive relationship which led to the systematic abuse of Jody and her siblings. There have been various allegations of sexual abuse from the children against members of their family. Jody's mother has no contact with Jody's father due to the breakdown of their relationship. However, Jody has supervised contact with her father once every six weeks.

On admission Jody's behaviour was very sexualised to the point that she would go in search of a partner to relieve her sexual tension, putting herself at further risk of exploitation and harm.

### **ASSESSMENT**

Horizon Care's assessment of Jody included the observations of care staff and contributions from our clinical psychologist, our educationalist and local sexual health services.

### **ACTION**

The findings from the assessment were used to inform a comprehensive behaviour management plan which included reactive strategies for the challenging behaviours displayed by Jody and complex risk assessments to reduce the risk of harm.

Under the direction of the clinician, a variety of therapeutic techniques were used including Behaviour Therapy, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Anxiety Management. The clinician monitored Jody's daily behaviours and records, working closely with the staff team, advising them of any change needed to the daily routine and enabling the prediction of possible incidents. Further to this, monthly consultation days allowed all the professionals concerned to review the progress Jody was making in the placement and to determine the contributing factors to this.

Work with Jody began with exploring her understanding of sex. The information gathered determined that her experience of sex had been as an 'act' rather than as a relationship and therefore her expectations of sexual relationships were limited. It was recognised that we needed to raise her self-esteem in order to heighten her awareness of the difference between a sexual act and a sexual relationship.



## **CASE STUDY (CONTINUED)**

Anger management and risk management were also part of the work carried out with Jody as part of enabling her to stay safe, before finally engaging her in semi-independent living skills.

## **OUTCOMES**

### **Stay safe, enjoy life and achieve**

With assistance from staff Jody gained the confidence to engage in education, eventually enrolling at college. Jody also works with the local Connexions agency, helping her into further education, training and employment. The staff encouraged her to enrol as an Air Cadet to assist with her integration into the community and to give her the opportunity to experience social interaction with young people of a similar age group in a safe setting.

### **Stay healthy and make a positive contribution to society**

Jody continued to attend sessions with the clinician and sexual health worker to further improve her personal understanding and self-esteem. Meanwhile staff worked with her regarding personal health and hygiene and skills for independence including laundry, cooking, cleaning, shopping.

### **... and finally**

Through contact Jody and her mother were encouraged to slowly re-develop their relationship and learn how to put their past experiences into context. Although this work is still ongoing Jody managed to achieve her planned return home and has continued to engage with services such as Connexions and to attend Air Cadets, which will further assist with her contribution to the community.





# future horizons

Future Horizons provides supported housing for care leavers. Our properties provide accommodation for up to two young people with a level of support that is determined by individual need.

Future Horizons works in association with Horizon Care Limited and Brighter Futures and will source and purchase suitable properties in response to specific placement agreements within the North East, North West, East Midlands and West Midlands regions, and will consider referrals for other areas.

The service is designed to support transitions, recognise and value the importance of relationships, and meet the changing needs of individuals in response to the Every Child Matters agenda and national and local commissioning initiatives.

A young person who takes up the service will have the opportunity to remain in the property as a tenant. To secure a tenancy the young person will need to demonstrate a proven ability to meet our criteria as set out in the contract. Rent for properties without support will be based on the value of the property.

The estimated cost of our standard shared housing and support package in an area where house prices do not exceed the national average is very reasonable. Single occupancy packages can be provided. Fees available on request.

The accommodation provided includes rent, maintenance, utilities, safety checks, buildings insurance and TV licence. All properties meet fire safety standards and are fitted with intruder alarms. Curtains, carpets, fridge/freezer, cooker and a full package of furniture including bed, wardrobe, chest of drawers, sofa and dining furniture is included.

The support provided offers young people the opportunity to receive individual support when setting up home for the first time. Each young person has their own support worker who will make regular weekly visits to help them with the emotional demands of living independently, such as coping with isolation and forging relationships with other people including neighbours.

It also provides:

- Help to engage in and maintain education, training or employment
- Help with managing money and budgeting
- Help with benefit claims
- Help with developing domestic and social skills
- Advice on home safety and security
- Advice on citizenship
- Advocacy and sign-posting to other services

Support workers will engage with the multi-disciplinary team to ensure consistency and continuity of the services provided in line with the requirement of Every Child Matters.

**For further information or to make an enquiry, please contact:**

**Philip McVay**

**phone: 07967 004052**

**email: [philip@futurehorizons.org.uk](mailto:philip@futurehorizons.org.uk)**

**Amanda Knowles**

**phone: 07968 133805**

**email: [amanda@futurehorizons.org.uk](mailto:amanda@futurehorizons.org.uk)**