



Statement of Purpose

Riverside House

Manager
Nicola Keegan
Riverside House
1 Bridgend
Newmilns
KA16 9BU

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Tel: 01560 323436
E-mail: nicola.keegan@sparkofgenius.com

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1. Contact Details

Registered Home Details

Riverside House
1 Bridgend
Newmilns
KA16 9BU

Registered Manager:

Nicola Keegan
Riverside House
1 Bridgend
Newmilns
KA16 9BU
Email: nicola.keegan@sparkofgenius.com
Tel No: 01560 323436

Responsible Individual:

Zak McIlhargey
Trojan House
Pegasus Avenue
Business Park
Paisley
PA1 2BH
Email: zak@sparkofgenius.com
Tel No 0141 5872710

Registered Provider

Spark of Genius
Trojan House
Pegasus Avenue
Business Park
Paisley
PA1 2BH
Tel No 0141 5872710

2. Caring for Children

a) Spark of Genius ~ Aims and Objectives

We aim to function as one coherent residential child care system; with consistent policies, practices, procedures and management across all of our homes. As part of this system, we will deliver care to the standards set out in the National Care Standards.

We can provide care for a group of up to six young people, on a medium or long term basis.

In all cases, our overall **Aim** is to provide care which:

- Helps a young person to make sense of past experiences and to develop coping strategies to deal with these.
- Provides young people with positive, stimulating and enjoyable experiences.
- Helps young people (and wherever possible their families/networks) to plan towards and achieve a positive and successful future.

Our **Objectives** are:

- To provide each individual young person with the highest quality of care and support achievable.
- To promote young people's self-confidence and self-esteem within a framework of equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice, recognising their individual potential and needs.
- To safeguard young people and promote their welfare, including positive health care and health education.
- To promote educational opportunities and achievement.
- To promote young people's contact with their families, unless this is clearly and explicitly determined not to be in their best interests.
- To promote young people's integration with the wider community/supportive networks.
- To assist with the preparation for all young people for an independent and fulfilling adult life.
- To work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary helping team to ensure that the best interests of the young people and their families are met.
- To advocate on behalf of young people to assist them in achieving their potential

We are able to offer a truly integrated and holistic approach to service delivery and we are fully committed to:

- Adapting new and emerging practice models and assessment frameworks.
- The implementation of best practice and learning from research, theory and developments in the field of residential child care and education.
- Safer recruitment practices.
- Specialist training and continual professional development of staff teams.

Spark of Genius offers fundamental core services:

- Residential Care
- Education
- Crisis Intervention
- Adult Support Services and Community Support

Each core service is fully integrated so that a young person is able to transition smoothly between services at different points and developmental stages in their lives. Our model of child care offers a unique opportunity in our ability to completely personalise a package of care and education to meet the unique needs of each child being looked after at Riverside. Where possible, we endeavor to prepare the young person for integration back to their family environment and community. Over the last ten years, as an organization, we have developed a comprehensive range of services for children who require specialist care and expertise which is unavailable within their local authority provision.

We aim to provide an optimal care setting for children in a group living environment and recognise that a key element of working with a diverse age range is to ensure robust safeguarding and in the meeting of different developmental needs.

We ensure this through:

- Expert assessment of need.
- Ensuring that all care plans and placements are appropriate for the care environment through careful placement matching on admission.
- Creating a culture of support within the peer group environment
- Ensuring that all practitioners are aware and respond appropriately to the needs of the different age groups and developmental stages (training is specific to the age ranges and range of needs within the house at any time).

We have developed a staffing structure which consists of three or four staff on shift throughout the day on a rotational basis and two wakened night staff to meet the child's needs when at maximum occupancy. We will increase staffing wherever required according to the needs and demands of the group.

b) Spark of Genius ~ Ethos and Philosophy

The Health and Social Care Standards identify five core principles which contribute to quality care practice in all residential settings, these are:

1. Dignity and Respect
2. Compassion
3. Be included
4. Responsive Care and Support
5. Wellbeing

Spark of Genius seeks to promote all of these principles at all times, by way of the following examples of good practice:

Dignity and Respect

Spark of Genius supports, promotes and complies with the European Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Staff have an active awareness of each young person's child's racial, cultural, religious and dietary needs, enabling the celebration of difference for all.

Spark of Genius uses techniques for managing young person's behaviour based principally on positive reinforcement and reward, avoiding punitive measures in reaction to negative behaviour(s), so that young people can learn from their mistakes and from the pro social modelling of staff and the adults around them.

Information about all young people will remain confidential; information about one young person will not therefore be disclosed to another, or to any inappropriate source without permission.

Compassion

All young people will receive sensitivity in practice, especially when dealing with personal issues.

Spark of Genius provides a living environment and operational culture which places the needs of the young people as paramount, above all others.

Care is taken to ensure that a homely environment is maintained, and the home does not develop an overtly institutional feel

Spark of Genius actively promotes family contact, as appropriate and as agreed in the Care Plan for each young person.

Responsive care and support

Spark of Genius provides a living environment and operational culture which encourages the development of self-confidence and allows young people appropriate opportunities to take some calculated risks within their learning journey.

At Spark of Genius, each young person is able to access and record in their own personal file.

Spark of Genius has developed an independent living skills programme, for young people to use in their learning journey towards independent living.

The provision of clear information about how to complain or to resolve minor issues is available, to all young people, at all times.

All young people have access to an independent advocacy service including the provision of a free-phone telephone service and text helpline to senior managers.

Be Included

Each young person is encouraged to personalise their own bedroom within reason.

New young people (following initial settling-in) will each be encouraged to personalise their own room.

Young people are actively encouraged to share and influence (age appropriately) the day-to-day routines and practices within the house through a variety of means, including attending residents meetings.

Young people are encouraged to exercise their own religious and cultural preferences.

Young people are actively encouraged to partake in a wide variety of leisure activities.

Each young person is given the opportunity to actively engage in, and influence the planning and delivery of services for them.

Wellbeing

Spark of Genius provides a safe physical environment.

Spark of Genius actively promotes social learning, so that all young people can learn to understand their rights and responsibilities within the home, within the community and towards others.

All young people are made aware of how they should expect staff to behave, and what they should do if this is not their experience.

All young people are provided with guidance and support, which informs them about how to influence decisions about their future.

All young people are provided with information about the independent advocacy service and of how they can pursue a complaint (both formal and informal).

A system of care planning and reviews (LAC system) is used throughout to ensure that service provision most appropriately meets health, education and social needs in order to maximise the future life chances for each young person.

c) Aims, Objectives and Ethos of Riverside House

Riverside House is a residential children's home managed by Spark of Genius; this is one of eighteen residential houses throughout England and Scotland. Spark of Genius offers residential care for no more than six young people, within small homes in semi-rural areas. Our houses are selected on the basis that we ourselves would be happy to live in them and they are of a very high quality and specification. We firmly believe that residential care should be viewed as a positive choice for those young people who have to live away from home.

Riverside House is a residential service for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties who need medium to long term specialist care. Education is provided at one of our learning centres located nearby and our young people travel to school and back every day. We also support our young people in attending mainstream or alternative education, training or work placements wherever possible.

We are able to provide an innovative range of services to meet the individual needs of children and young people and we strive to:

- Create a warm, family environment without the emotional intensity of the original family home. To achieve this each young person's opinions are central to the home's operation and we endeavour to democratically agree any changes. Young people are

regularly consulted during daily discussions (house meetings) in 1:1 key time, Quality Improvement visits and the Spark Parliament.

- De-institutionalise the home by creatively challenging the legislative requirements for children's homes (minimising signs and instructions, avoiding jargon and terminology, limiting 'official visitors' to the home and by applying a parental perspective to all aspects of care).
- Maintain close links with sporting and leisure clubs, community projects and encouraging each child to participate.
- Support each young person in maintaining cultural and religious affiliations through the many links we have created in the local community. Our diverse group of staff will encourage each young person to observe, celebrate and share their beliefs and heritage through educational projects, group discussions and creative arts.
- Offer a fair gender balance within the staff team in order to promote appropriate pro-social modelling and good role models of both sex.
- Support each young person in the development of adaptive coping strategies and self-care.
- Ensure that there is always a team of adults available who work in line with the philosophy and beliefs of Spark of Genius in order to achieve consistency of approach, supporting the development of resilience and internal focus of control.
- Consistently train all our staff in knowledge and skills to improve and support the development of resilience in young people.
- Ensure that Riverside provides an experience which is caring, structured, holds high expectations for children's behaviour and encourages participation and empowerment throughout the home.
- Adhere to robust pre-admission planning and initial assessment processes.
- Provide intensive, bespoke packages of support – this can be enhanced if a placement appears to be at risk.
- 24 hour supervision with wakened night staff
- On-call system to ensure 24 hour safeguarding support

We do this by:

- Empowering children to participate in the operational management of the home (house meetings and feedback during key work sessions).
- Spending time playing and sharing fun activities.
- Seeking opportunities to show children we care and they matter by being affectionate in as many appropriate ways as possible.
- Being consistent in our behaviour and our expectations.
- Providing comfort during difficult times.
- Modeling and promoting appropriate physical contact. This will be 'prescribed contact' which will entail hugs, handshakes and tactile gestures to convey warmth and sincerity; staff are trained to recognise what appropriate contact is and when to give it.
- Encouraging relatives and friends to visit the home to promote the development of external relationships.
- Endeavoring to create relationships with children's families (care plan permitting) so that we can facilitate, support, monitor, report and assess family contact.
- The home has a dedicated lounge for the purpose of family visits and reviews which allows for privacy without impinging on other residents.

We place great value on collaborative working and we have strong links with Social Work, Psychological Services, CAMHS, Health professionals and many other external agencies.

Working with the parents and carers of young people in our care can positively affect outcomes for the young people therefore we are committed to the promotion of home contact if this is appropriate. We agree contact arrangements with the case holding Social Worker and the arrangements for managing contact are clearly set out in the child's care plan. Our aim is to support the child, significant others and the placing authority with contact arrangements; and this can be done by providing transport, making space available within the home or by supervising contact if deemed necessary. Our staff team will write up and provide feedback of any observations noted during periods of contact and we will raise any issues which may have arisen, as well as offering advice on adapting and supporting contact arrangements which leads to enhanced and positive experiences for the young person.

Riverside House will not tolerate any form of discrimination, injustice or inequality. Staff are committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and to creating equality of opportunity for everyone, regardless of their gender, race, disadvantage, disability, culture, religious beliefs, age, sexuality or social class. Staff will receive training and support to raise awareness of discriminatory practice and the home has a robust 'Anti-Discrimination' policy which all staff will be familiar and confident with. Staff will attempt to build an in-depth understanding and knowledge of each young person so that their insights can be employed in subtle and thoughtful ways to ensure that the child is getting feedback which ensures that they feel valued.

d) Riverside House Service Outcomes

The outcomes we aim to achieve for our young people are:

- To feel safe and valued within a warm and nurturing environment.
- To be looked after by an appropriately skilled and caring staff team.
- To have continuity of care
- To actively learn according to their age and stage of development.
- To be encouraged to develop their own identity, enjoy new experiences and to develop a wider social network.
- To participate in local and wider community based leisure activities.
- To participate in a wide range of activities which promote self-esteem and confidence.
- To develop independent daily living skills such as cooking, personal care and safety.
- To sustain and develop new skills to improve their quality of life.
- To engage and develop new friendships.
- To eat healthily and enjoy a wide range of activities which promote good health and wellbeing.
- To have the opportunity to influence decisions which affect them.
- To participate in an active role in the planning and delivery of the service.
- To participate in educational sessions which support the 24 hour curriculum.

e) How the Service Meets these Outcomes

At all times, we aim to provide a safe and stimulating environment for all of the children and young people placed in our care. The service will focus on delivering realistic and achievable outcomes for children and young people and will follow the National Minimum Standards. The

Residential Manager and staff team will ensure that safeguarding activities are embedded in the service and health & safety legislation are adhered to.

The service is regularly inspected and monitored by:

- Monthly monitoring reports completed by residential manager
- Bi-monthly audits carried out by service manager or head of service. These visits are usually themed.
- Full and Interim Care Inspectorate inspections
- Regular Quality Improvement audits in relation to the quality of care and support provided, and of the environment
- Health and Safety inspections
- Food Hygiene inspections
- Regular, statutory service of equipment inspections

f) About Riverside House, Facilities and Recreational Activities

Riverside is a large Victorian house set in the village of Newmilns along the bank of the River Irvine, East Ayrshire. The house has a large garden to the rear of the house which can be used for a host of outdoor activities including sports, exercise and gardening.

The house is maintained to a high standard and has very recently seen major improvements to its interior. Within the house, there are very spacious communal areas and six large bedrooms.

On the main floor of the house:

- Large main lounge.
- Large lounge with kitchen facilities and dining table
- 4 bedrooms
- 2 bathrooms

Upstairs:

- 2 Bedrooms
- 2 bathrooms
- Large lounge/games room with television and pool table
- Fully equipped kitchen, available for young people to use
- Laundry

Downstairs:

- Main house kitchen
- Large recreational area
- Self contained flat which can be used as a private family space for contact

There are many opportunities for participation in a wide range of recreational and leisure activities in the geographical area surrounding Newmilns. There are numerous amenities close by including access to shopping, local parks, cafes/restaurants, swimming, dry ski slope, gym, bowling, cinema, libraries, horse riding and ice skating; these activities are all within a short travelling distance and staff will support young people in their chosen recreational activities. Riverside is within close driving distance of large town's Ayr and Kilmarnock, 45 minutes of Glasgow, and 1 hour from Edinburgh, providing our young people with a vast array of experiences and opportunities available.

We will also encourage our young people to visit places of interest, to go for nature walks in the local countryside, and to join clubs and groups according to their personal preferences and interests. The Riverside staff team will encourage all of our young people to try out new things and to experience new challenges with the multitude of opportunities in the surrounding area, learning across a 24 hour curriculum, broadening their own expectations and to successfully achieve.

g) About the Children who will live at Riverside House

Admission Criteria:

Age Range	10 to 18 years
Gender	Mixed Gender
Numbers	Up to six young people in the main house with an additional singleton placement which can be used for young people who are ready to live semi independently.
Range of Needs Able to Accommodate	Emotional and Behavioural Problems, Autistic Spectrum Disorder

h) Admission Procedures and Transition Planning

We accept placements for children and young people aged between 10 -18 years who will benefit from living within a residential group living environment. The risks and needs of these children are not at a level where an individual placement is required, and there are no critical issues which would illustrate unmanageable risks to other children/young people already in placement.

All admissions are undertaken following an in-depth assessment of needs and risks. Where any risks are identified, these are not seen as inhibitors for placement, but are considered on the basis of the ability to safely manage risk and to put appropriate support plans in place. However, of paramount importance is the safeguarding of children and young people in our care, and therefore we would not accept a child into placement who may pose an unmanageable risk to themselves or others.

Spark of Genius believes in developing child-centred, bespoke packages of care and education and therefore we ensure that we can meet the needs of the child being placed with us and also the needs of the young people already in placement.

We accept same day placements if it is felt appropriate and that a 'quick' transition will benefit the child; providing the objectives of the placement are aligned with the home's purpose, and where appropriate planning can take place. We will also ensure that this does not impact on the current group of young people.

Once a placement has been agreed the process of 'joining' the home is carefully managed in line with attachment informed practise as we fully recognise the importance of pre-placement planning to minimise any possible anxiety and trauma. The young person is very much involved in the planning of his/her transition alongside the local authority and this is carried out at their own pace, in line with their own individual needs.

This process will routinely involve visits to the house, having lunches/dinner, seeing their room, making choices about their own furnishings and décor and spending time with other children/young people and the staff team. This 'positive claiming' process helps the young person to feel that they 'belong' to the house and that their choices and views are firmly valued.

Whenever possible, a home visit will be arranged by the Residential Manager and/or key worker to visit the child/young person in their family home or previous placement, to prepare them for the transition. In addition, a 'Young People's Guide' will be forwarded to the young person; and contact will be established with the current carers which will enable any questions that the young person may have to be answered, to provide reassurance and for any concerns which they may have to be resolved.

We will work very closely with the referring Social Worker to gain all of the information required to enable a comprehensive, formal assessment of risk to be completed and to devise an initial 'Placement Plan' which will clearly outline the purpose and aims of the placement beforehand. A designated key worker will be carefully matched with the child; they will meet with professionals, previous carers and any other significant adults to obtain as much information as possible about the child in order to create an accurate assessment of current levels of understanding and functioning. A young person profile will be written which details daily routines, strategies for behaviour management, likes and dislikes and any potential risks and this will ensure consistency of approach by the staff team following admission.

A pre-admission planning meeting will always take place prior to admission. In exceptional circumstances, this will take place at the time of admission. A post admissions meeting will also be held within the following 3 working days.

Emergency Admissions

We understand that it is not always possible to plan placements when a crisis situation develops. The need to act quickly in order to meet the young person's need is paramount and therefore we are able to accommodate situations like this as quickly and as smoothly as possible if necessary. Emergency placements are available within Spark of Genius, however we would always like to be notified at the earliest opportunity so that we can manage the transition as effectively as possible whilst minimising any stress for the young person.

In addition to the aims, philosophy and remit of the home and focus of practitioners, transition and exit planning is discussed from the onset of the placement. Our role is to support all children and young people where possible to attain a positive transition to:

Prepare for Independence: All staff are aware of the requirements of pathway planning and this is an integrated part of staff training at Riverside. Staff will ensure good multi-agency working and attainment of a young person's goals in this area and this is integrated throughout our work in respect of vocational training, social and life skills work.

Return Home: Staff will work closely and sensitively in supporting children to return to their family and community and to provide outreach support services where required.

i) Care Planning and Outcomes Measurement

Each young person will have their own individual residential placement plan, which addresses their particular needs with regards to health, education, emotional and behavioural development, identity, religious and cultural beliefs, family and social relationships, social presentation, communication profile and self-care.

Identifying and improving the outcomes for each young person is a priority area and primary task within Riverside House.

We maintain this focus by utilising:

- Group discussion, case studies, case team meetings and consultation.
- The young person's views, wishes and aspirations.
- Individual placement aims, key tasks, objectives and timescales. These are updated as the child develops and their progress is evaluated.
- Educational attainment.
- Health checks and specialist assessments.
- Structured assessments to chart progress and highlight areas for development.

This data will be analysed on a regular basis by the house's management team and this will then inform updates to the placement plan, statutory reviews and practice. The child's progress within their care plan will be informally reviewed through internal auditing and also discussed formally at regularly arranged reviews and professionals meetings. This is an opportunity to look at the existing plans in place for a young person and the service which they are receiving. Following these reviews, the placement plan can be amended to take into account any changes in circumstances, concerns or issues.

Access to Records

Except for information/material held in the confidential section of their files, children will be actively encouraged to take an interest in records held on them; to be involved in the personalisation and writing of their files and to read and comment on them. Any information held on a child's file which has been written by a third party or does not have the permission of the author to share will not be shared with the child, and will be held confidentially. Before records or files are shown to children, consideration will be given to the likely effect of sharing the information. However, all information contained outside the confidential section is normally accessible. If in doubt or if there are concerns about the likely effect on the child, the manager will be consulted.

Should staff need to share information provided by previous carers or third parties they will:

- Read the records/reports beforehand;
- Speak to the authors if possible;
- Collate the records in chronological order;
- Give thought to what questions the young person may ask;
- And/or what other information may be required;
- A note should be placed on the Daily Records each time a child has access to records or his/her file.

j) Safeguarding Children and Young People

All staff will endeavour to build warm relationships to create emotional security in the belief that children are more inclined to seek understanding of past experiences from a secure position.

We will we do this by:

- Spending time playing and sharing in fun activities.
- Seeking opportunities to show children that we care and that they matter by being affectionate in as many appropriate ways as possible.
- Being consistent in our behaviour and our expectations.
- Providing comfort during difficult times.
- Modelling and promoting appropriate physical contact; this will be 'prescribed contact' which will entail hugs, handshakes and tactile gestures to convey warmth and sincerity.

The key worker will ensure that:

- The child is registered with local health services and attends all appointments.
- The child is supported in attending any prescribed therapeutic services.
- The social worker maintains regular contact and ensures statutory reviews are upheld.
- The care plan and individual risk assessment is kept up to date and adhered to.
- That an individual health plan is maintained which will chart medical history, monitor personal care and raise awareness of physical, emotional and sexual health issues.

All staff in the home will have access to training in the delivery of sexual health advice, the dispensing of medication and dealing with issues of substance misuse. We maintain close links with the local child protection committees which provides both training and support to staff and the home has a comprehensive 'Child Protection' policy which all staff will be familiar with. The reporting protocol is displayed in offices with clear guidance on the reporting of incidents being given to every child within the 'Welcome Handbook'. This is reinforced during group discussions, 1:1 key time and on notice boards. This encourages secure attachments and helps to build warm and nurturing relationships with staff. At Riverside House a register is maintained of all visitors and anyone who is unknown to the staff team is required to provide official identification.

We will ensure that we protect each young person from teasing or bullying by assessing the potential risks and by challenging **all** occurrences. Every incident and complaint will be recorded, investigated and reported to the placing authority. Support will be given to both the young person experiencing and displaying the bullying behaviour. The home has comprehensive 'Child Protection', 'Suggestions and Complaints' and 'Anti-Bullying' Policies which all staff are familiar with. Additionally, 'child friendly' versions are available.

All staff have access to training to cover these areas:

- Child Protection
- How to deal with a Child Protection disclosure
- Multi-agency commitment
- Internet Safety Policy – monitoring and support and awareness raising
- Promoting awareness of personal safety via discussion, learning resources, role modelling, guidance and encouragement
- Aim to reduce absences/missing young people
- Risk assessment compilation
- Safer recruitment checks
- Adequate staffing levels
- Staff training and development
- Monitoring of visitors and home contact supervision

Staff always listen to children and young people and take seriously any concern or allegation which is made. They are careful to avoid leading questions or promises of confidentiality. Any significant event will be reported to the Care Inspectorate via Eform. The manager will maintain contact with the Child Protection Officer (CPO), the child's social worker, and the police where necessary in relation to any allegation made against staff.

Managing Allegations

The Residential Manager is responsible for coordinating any Child Protection referrals, concerns and allegations. Spark of Genius has a comprehensive policy which is referred to by all staff and which contains the necessary guidance and instruction. Once a concern or allegation has been made or raised – the Residential Manager will inform the organisation's Child Protection Officer (CPO) and then will notify and co-operate with the local authority via the child's social worker. The Care Inspectorate will also be notified via Eform.

In consultation with all parties, decisions will need to be taken about the ongoing safety/placement arrangements of the Child(ren) and the alleged perpetrators e.g. it may be necessary to move/ or suspend staff or move/transfer children to another house or placement. The Care Inspectorate will be updated accordingly throughout the process.

Staff are trained within mandatory child protection training on how to respond to allegations made by children in their care and this includes how to respond verbally, how to record and the reporting structures they need to operate within. The placing authority of each child placed will be made aware of the need for such procedures and enter into an agreement with the Residential Manager as to how these will be used when the child is placed.

The Registered Manager will also complete a quarterly monitoring report in respect of the operation of the home. As part of these processes, young people, families and other professionals will be consulted regarding the quality of care being received by the children and young people who live there.

Sexual Exploitation of Young People

With regards to sexual exploitation, we are very proactive and will focus on early identification and intervention strategies in working with young people who may be deemed to be at risk. We are aware that all vulnerable young people, both male and female, are at risk of sexual exploitation, therefore we will raise awareness and protection of all of our young people will be our main aim. Any young person thought to be at risk of sexual exploitation will be assessed using the Spark of Genius in-house risk assessment tool, with appropriate measures put in place, in conjunction with local authorities, in order to safely manage the placement and progress the placement plan. We also have a sexual exploitation trainer within the team.

Threat of Online Sexual Exploitation of Young People

Spark of Genius are aware that there is a serious threat of the young people being exploited online and as such we are committed to implementing the framework set out by The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP). We do this by ensuring staff are armed with the knowledge to identify the young people who may be vulnerable to exploitation, and know what to do when they are identified. There is an organisational commitment to implementing the following: Working in partnership, staff training, IT policies, increasing the young people's knowledge, increasing the young people's resilience and maintaining a commitment to the principles set out by CEOP.

Threat of Radicalisation of Young People

Spark of Genius are aware of the serious threat of young people becoming radicalised and as such we are committed to implementing the Prevent Strategy set out by HM Government. We do this by ensuring staff are armed with the knowledge to identify the young people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. There is an organisational commitment to implementing the following: Working in partnership, staff training, IT policies, increasing the young people's knowledge, increasing the young people's resilience and maintaining a commitment to the principles set out within the Prevent Strategy.

Gang Activity

Spark of Genius are aware that when a young person goes missing they may become involved or associate with 'gangs'; and we will work with the young person to raise their awareness of the dangers of becoming involved in 'gang cultures'. We will support all young people who are already associated or a member of a gang, to protect them from the associated risks of gang activity. Spark of Genius recognise that friendships within groups are a normal part of growing up, and these groups must be distinguished from 'street gangs'.

We will:

- Make a return home a positive experience for the young person
- Take time to listen to young people
- Raise awareness of 'risky' behaviours
- Educate young people about 'healthy relationships'
- Find ways to work with the 'push-pull factor' for going missing by listening and talking to young people when they have been missing from placement.

- Support young people in making positive attachments and in building relationships within the house
- Support building self-esteem in young people
- Address any issues of bullying of young people
- We will work with a restorative justice approach
- Give young people a voice and to support them in feeling safe, to enable them to speak out
- Ensure that all the young person's medical needs are attended to
- Be aware of the difference between young people gathering together to socialise and gang membership.

k) Consultation with Young People, Families and External Agencies

Each young person will have a designated key worker who will be carefully selected due to their similar interests and proven ability in establishing a positive and strong relationship with their keychild. They will use attachment informed practice to make connections and create bonds of attachment with the young person.

They will be supportive, work closely with the social worker and family, familiarise themselves with the child's likes and dislikes, organise their medical and health appointments, be responsible for the upkeep of case files and schedule weekly one to one keytime sessions to ensure that the young person is content, making progress and achieving the goals within their care plan.

We have daily informal opportunities to meet as a group over meal times to enable everyone to talk about their day, resolve any issues which may be "around" and to discuss plans and events. This is complemented by formal opportunities such as weekly young person's meetings with an agenda, part of which is set to address things such as choosing menus, activities etc., and also to address any points which the young people may wish to add. The agenda is coordinated by the nominated house representative.

We carry out annual stakeholder surveys every April which includes electronic employee surveys, young people questionnaires and surveys sent to all parents/carers, external agencies and professionals. A response leaflet is created using a 'You Said, We Did, We Plan to...' format and this is shared with all participants.

There is a formal complaints and suggestions system that the young people and their families may use if they wish to address a particular concern or make a suggestion for improvement. This is usually addressed by the manager but can be referred to an external complaints person if the young person is not satisfied with the outcome. This will usually be a member of the senior management team. There is also a text line accessible to staff and young people - these messages will go to Zak McIlhargey, Managing Director, and Jackie Blair, Director.

l) Anti Bullying Procedures

Bullying at Riverside will not be tolerated; and within the house and organisation we have a clear 'Anti-Bullying' Policy. A copy of this is available for young people to access at any time and the ethos of the home is such that an open and honest culture is promoted. If bullying does occur, our focus is upon educating young people on what bullying behaviour is; how their behaviour was; or could be perceived as being bullying; and giving the young people different strategies to try and to address their presenting behaviour and responses to others. At times bullying behaviour can be resolved as a group through house meetings, though restorative

meetings may need to be arranged between the young people involved. At times consequences are given and, or, reparation work can be undertaken. Bullying is also addressed in weekly key time sessions and in collaborative working with education colleagues where applicable.

m) Promoting Cultural, Linguistic and Religious Needs

As part of the implementation of our 'Equality and Diversity' policy, young people resident at the home are encouraged and supported to pursue any religious practice of their choice. Information about local centres of worship including Mosques, Temples and Churches of different denominations will be provided by staff, and young people wishing to participate in their respective religious practice will be fully supported by staff to a place of worship.

Within the home, young people are given privacy and space to follow their religious beliefs e.g. private time to pray is made available as well as the provision of relevant literature about different faiths. The quiet room in the home can be used as an area for meditation and prayer as well used for recreation and other necessary meetings. Staff will ensure that food and cooking arrangements are sensitive to different cultures and belief

n) Anti-Discriminatory Practice

Staff will provide assurance to all young people in our care about our commitment to challenge and to remove any forms of individual, institutional or structured discrimination, whilst promoting an awareness of anti-discriminatory practice through ongoing training and support. Set out below are principles which we aim to adopt, communicate and implement in the house:

Principles:

- Within Spark of Genius, young people should not be discriminated against for any reason.
- Racist behaviour will not be tolerated and any such behaviour will be challenged and dealt with appropriately.
- Sexist attitudes will be challenged and discussed.
- No pornographic material will be allowed within the home, and no books or pictures deemed offensive to women or men will be displayed.
- No young person will be excluded from a home because they are disabled, unless the layout of the building precludes them from physical access.
- Staff will not discriminate in their treatment of young people on the grounds of their disability or any other reasons.
- Staff will promote an awareness and understanding of disability in young people in their care and therefore work towards ensuring the best positive outcomes for individuals and others.
- Stigmatisation of any young person and for any reason is totally unacceptable.

o) Children Missing from the House

We work very closely with the local police to utilise missing person protocols and policies. Our procedures clearly interface with children's individual placement plans to set clear expectations for each and every child in our care. Spark of Genius is aware that when a young person goes missing or runs away regularly from the home or school, this could be an indicator that the young person may be becoming involved in sexual exploitation or gang activities. Spark of Genius will work with the Local Authority and Police to address this immediately, sharing information to ensure that we find a way to encourage the young person to make alternative decisions.

Above all, we will:

- Maintain contact with the young person, where possible, via phone or text.
- Actively search for the young people where appropriate alongside the Police.
- Engage in a one-to-one discussion with the young person about their whereabouts, and let them know that we are concerned about them.
- Support the young person in building trust and making positive 'attachments'.
- Make time to listen and understand each young person's self-perception and seek to empower them in their lives (internal focus of control).
- Encourage young people to make safe choices and to minimise any potential risks.
- Promote the experience of success by setting attainable targets and celebrating achievements.
- Ensure each young person has a clear understanding of the need to maintain behavioural boundaries.
- Regularly review risk assessments and Care Plans.

Robust risk assessments are in place for all young people to minimise risk and good staffing ratios are observed. There is a clear procedure which is to be followed in the event of a child going missing. Staff are familiar with this procedure and a copy may be made available to parents/carers if they wish. When the child returns to the home, staff will notify the Police, the social worker, on call manager and any other significant adults.

p) Suggestions and Complaints

Riverside has a clear and detailed policy regarding suggestions and compliments, and all staff and young people are familiar with these processes. There are child friendly suggestions and complaints leaflets designed by our young people themselves and information on these processes is detailed in the Young Person's Guide. We have an 'open door' policy in which young people are given the opportunity to air grievances with management and staff, in group discussions, during 1:1 key time and through their social worker, advocates, regulators and any other professionals they feel comfortable discussing with. Young people also have access to a telephone at all times (independent advocates and helpline numbers are prominently displayed). There is also a free text helpline for young people to use if they wish to make contact with external management.

The Care Inspectorate visit Riverside once a year for regulatory inspection and young people, should they wish to do so, may contact them at any point. Riverside House also receive quarterly visits from external management to audit the operations and quality of the house as well as monthly management audits. These formal processes accompany regular internal auditing and monitoring by staff and management.

q) Emergency Procedures

Health and Safety issues are given the highest priority. Whilst all care is taken with regard to health and safety, unforeseen emergencies can occur. If this should happen, staff will remain calm and follow procedure. Staff are clear about how to contact emergency services and how to contact senior and emergency support staff out of hours. Any emergency situation will be notified to the Care Inspectorate.

The building is equipped with a fire alarm system, there are clearly identified escape routes and all firefighting equipment is checked in accordance with regulatory requirements.

In addition

- Fire instruction is given to all regular staff annually.

- Any sessional or agency staff are given fire instruction at the commencement of any shift.
- All children are given fire instruction quarterly.
- Any new child admitted is given fire instruction at admission.
- Visitors to the home are given fire instruction as appropriate to the length of the visit
- Fire drills are held quarterly at varying times of the day, across all shifts.

A fire drill is conducted within the first week whenever a new child has been admitted to test and assess their understanding of instruction, and response to an emergency evacuation. All young people have a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) outlining any additional support they may require in the event of an emergency. There will be illuminated, clearly signed fire exits and the signage within the house indicates the route to be followed. There is emergency lighting which is inspected and tested in accordance with regulatory guidelines. There are designated fire wardens within the house across all shifts who will coordinate any evacuation procedures.

If for any reason the building has to be evacuated, the young people will be moved immediately to the Caledonia School, Glengarnock and staff will have a set of keys and access to the code in the event of this being necessary.

3. Promoting Positive Behaviour

All of our work is underpinned by best practice and available guidance and as an organisation we feel it is imperative to maintain a progressive knowledge of informed behavioural management practice models. We have therefore adopted Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) as our behaviour management model. To support each young person in developing adaptive coping and self-management skills all staff are trained in this accredited training programme. The core of this training is to provide care workers with the skills and knowledge to support and teach young people positive responses and coping strategies to any difficult situations and environments.

This training teaches staff to:

- Prevent and/or de-escalate a potential crisis situation involving a young person
- Safely and therapeutically manage a crisis situation
- Be able to help children and young people improve their coping strategies
- Initial training over four days and then refresher training in line with policy and guidelines
- Competency checks will be carried out and assessed through practice observation and in debriefing/post crisis sessions following any incidents.

The main focus of this training is on teaching staff to de-escalate potentially volatile and violent situations using their relationship with the young person and the behaviour support techniques taught on the training. The framework highlights to staff the most important tool they have when working with young people is themselves and treating young people sensitively, consistently and in a caring way is one of the most important contributions we can make.

The framework puts huge emphasis on de-escalating situations in the early stages of crisis, however, in cases of extreme behaviour which may result in physical harm or serious damage to property, and when all efforts to exert control have been exhausted, adults are taught in the training to 'safely hold' a young person as a last resort to keep them safe. Physical restraint

will only be used if it forms part of the care plan and has been agreed by the placing authority and has been discussed with the young person on admission.

The Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP) will detail the best intervention strategies to employ in order to avoid physical intervention and to defuse any challenging behaviour; this is updated every three months as a minimum and always following any serious incident or change in circumstances. The RAMP will indicate whether a young person would need to be prevented from leaving the home, this would be based on clear risk assessment that they or others would be placed at significant risk. This will be agreed with the placing authority as part of the care plan for the child. This may include the local authority, placing authority, family members, transport and local police. If a young person leaves the home without permission then an individual reporting protocol is in place which reflects their individual risk assessment and care plan goals.

Our positive behaviour reinforcement reward systems are key in managing and promoting positive behaviour and are based on the sound understanding of the needs of our children, this is continually reinforced and good behaviour is always highlighted and praised. Every child has a bespoke plan developed based on their own areas of difficulties and strengths which we wish to continue to develop; any consequences and rewards are reviewed by the Residential Manager to ensure that they are age and stage appropriate.

Child Centred Practice

Experience in the residential child care sector has shown that simply containing vulnerable young people is relatively easy. The challenge is to provide a healing therapeutic environment which introduces a different belief system for these young people. These beliefs about themselves others and the world can transform the inner thinking of the young people and consequently impact positively on their behaviours.

This long term transformational change is effected through staff expertise in the use of the Every Second Counts (ESC) model. Staff teams are trained in ESC which places emphasis on the importance of building professional, positive and productive relationships with the young people we care for. Everyday interactions at the park, in the car or in the supermarket become opportunities for dynamic change in possibilities for a young person. The creation of a therapeutic environment where young people can learn to trust themselves and others effectively promotes long term change in the lives of these disrupted and vulnerable young people.

Every Second Counts is our own, in house training programme for residential workers. It is a two day training course, delivered by specific Every Second Counts trainers. The group of trainees is mixed in terms of experience.

The course aim is to provide those who work directly with young people with the necessary theory and practical advice required in order to provide safe, effective care in the first instance. While this initial introduction provides elements of theory within the content, the main theme of the course is to allow staff to discuss the role and share their experiences. There is an ideal opportunity for staff with a mix of experience to gain practical, everyday advice about their job and the challenges they face every day.

Course Content

The role of residential worker

The principles of the Health and Social Care Standards

The young people we support

Corporate parenting

Our professional responsibilities

Beliefs, values and attitudes

IPART theory

Attachment theory

Legislation

GIRFEC

Care planning

Safe care

Our professional approach

Building relationships

Residential worker toolkit

Many of our young people do not engage with adults they don't know, nor do they have much experience of using emotional language to reflect on their difficulties. However, Spark of Genius, in partnership with a number of different partner agencies, principally local authorities/county councils, social work, education, and health professionals have used and will continue to use talk based therapies for individual young people and all young people on admission are made aware that we have a psychology team and that they can at any time request individual support from the team. For those that want to explore thoughts and feelings more directly, Spark of Genius will either directly deliver or facilitate a range of direct and online approaches including CBT, counselling, solution oriented approaches, NLP, play, group and equine therapy.

Psychological Support

Many of the young people Spark of Genius look after have experienced rejection from previous carers or placements and have great difficulty in attaching, trusting and relating appropriately to others. Spark has a commitment to stand by these young people through their difficulties and work with them and others to transform their lives. Marie Holmes is our clinical psychologist.

Dr Holmes is registered with the Healthcare Professions Council (<http://www.hpc-uk.org/check/>) and maintains professional links to a number of clinical psychology colleagues, both in the NHS and private sector including Mr Tommy Mackay, a

specialist in Autism Spectrum Disorders in young people. She regularly trains psychologists, psychiatrists, nurses, therapists and counsellors on a wide range of psychology topics and teaches doctoral level clinical psychology trainees.

Depending on the needs of each individual young person, our psychological support can include any combination of the following components:

Psychological assessment

Care plan development

Court and other reports

Team around the child

Support for schools

Direct therapeutic work

Behaviour management

Skills training for staff

Liaison with CAMHS

Clinical oversight

Risk assessment

Team consultation

Family work

Outcomes monitoring

This service further enhances the support the Riverside staff team have to work confidently, effectively and consistently with the young people in our care.

4. Education

Education, in all of its forms, is one of the cornerstones of personal growth and development, therefore, all young people are actively encouraged to participate in educational opportunities appropriate to their need(s). Each accommodated young person will have a Placement Plan which outlines all plans for the young person's care and education.

Spark of Genius recognises that each young person is an individual, is unique and will respond differently to various stimuli. It is imperative that any learning issues are addressed, with plans agreed for resolution prior to the admission of any young person. Spark of Genius can offer an appropriate education package designed to meet the needs of each young person living in Spark of Genius within their independent learning centres.

Young people will always be supported during any educational transition at both school and college and we will also work with local authorities to secure an appropriate educational placement for the young person based on recommendations of any statements and risk assessments.

We aim to equip each young person with the ability to manage life events so that they can deal with adversities, recognise opportunities and ultimately shape their own future for the better. To achieve this we feel educational attainment is a key factor. Therefore we will:

- Ensure stability and continuity of care through supportive corporate parenting and the development of secure attachment patterns in order to raise self-esteem.
- Provide 1:1 professional teaching support to fill gaps in learning, and to coordinate integration into any other educational placements or mainstream schooling.
- There is no time limit on this process and it is accepted that for some young people a return to mainstream may not happen; we will work with the LA to ascertain if these young people would be better suited to our own schools. In these cases our specialist teaching staff from the school will provide a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure each young person reaches their full potential.
- Liaise daily with school and provide support by encouraging regular attendance, assisting with homework and promoting after school activities through a 24 hour curriculum.
- Ensure each young person has access to a computer and a quiet space in which to study. All bedrooms are equipped with desks and chairs, and the education centre is also available to learners out of school hours.

5. Health

At Riverside House, we understand the value of good health and wellbeing and support our young people intensively within this focus area. Keyworkers will ensure that all young people are registered with local medical services such as a GP, Dentist and Optician within 48 hours of arriving at the home and that check-up appointments are made as part of the admission process. We promote healthy lifestyle choices on a day to day basis through a well-balanced diet and ample opportunities for physical activity. We support young people to attend health appointments and record the outcomes of appointments, acting upon any which require a follow up. We access local external services when required including sexual health clinics, drug support services, CAMHS and hospitals. Medical consent forms are completed upon a young person's admission to the home. Young people are educated through key working sessions, young people's meetings and informal discussion regarding the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

All medication at Riverside House is securely stored within the staff office in a secure medical cabinet, in line with Royal Pharmaceutical Society guidelines. All young people have their own individual health files. The young people also have individual storage boxes for the storage of their medication. Nightly balance checks ensure that all medication is checked and accounted for.

6. Staffing Matters

Staff Team Structure

Registered Manager

Assistant Manager

2 Senior Practitioners

16 Residential Child Care workers

1 Cook

1 Cleaner

Staff Team Supervision, Training and Development

All Riverside House personnel are subject to a vigorous screening process prior to commencing employment in line with Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding processes. This includes verification from the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG), interview, a minimum of 3 references are required, however, we request references from all workplaces where an individual has worked in child care. We also require confirmation that they are not disqualified from working with children.

Staff must complete a comprehensive induction and a six month probation period. They are supervised on a monthly basis and appraised annually.

We have a robust annual training programme to prepare staff to work with children and young people aged 10 - 18yrs which includes:

- Child Protection and Dealing with Disclosure.
- Health & Safety, Fire Safety and First Aid.
- Food Hygiene
- TCI
- Anti - Bullying.
- Every Second Counts
- Child Development (a key focus to understand different needs).
- Risk Assessment and Risk Management.
- Policies and Procedures e.g. Whistleblowing.

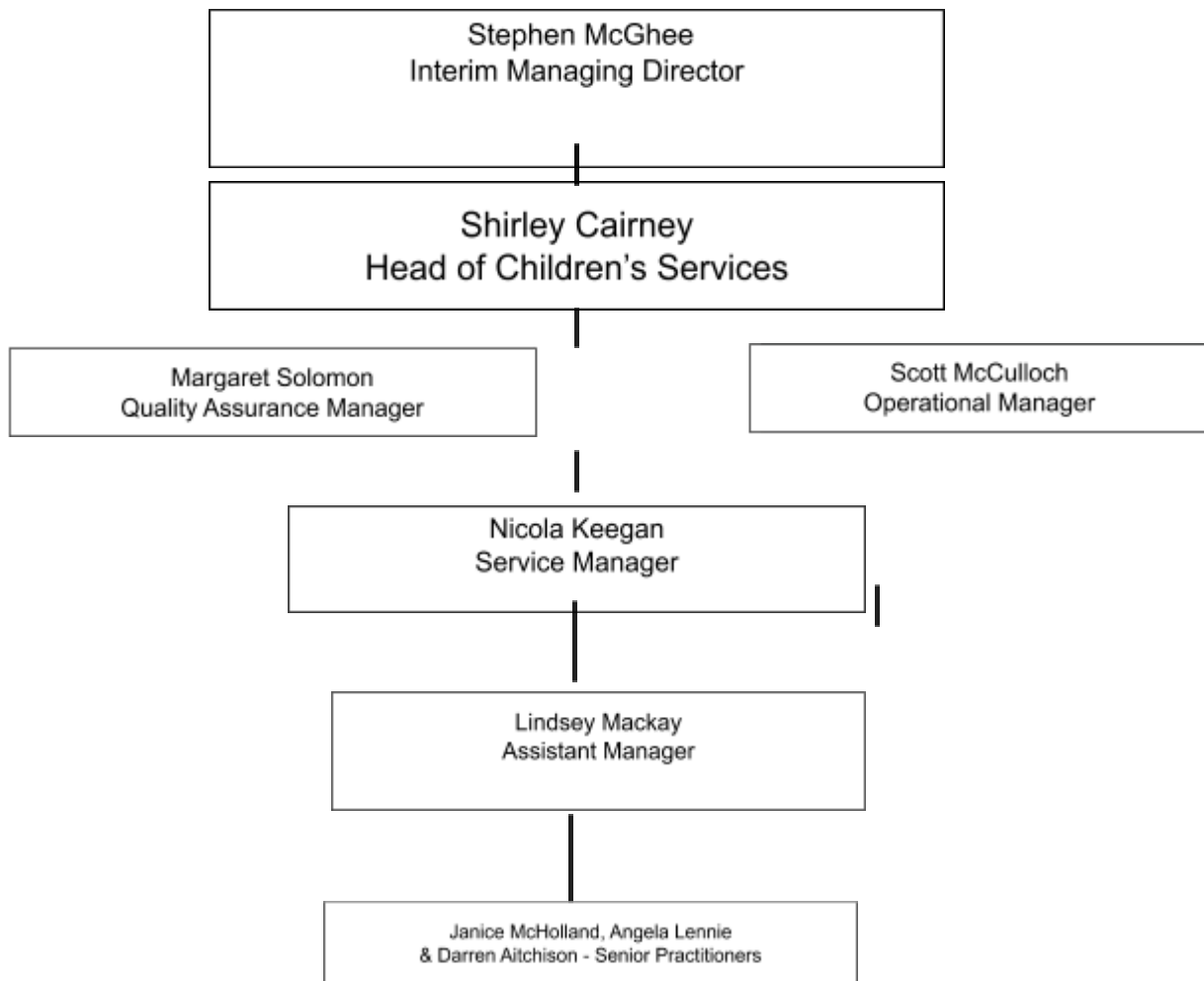
Staff also attend regular supervision and support with their line manager which covers any practice issues and identification of any necessary training required for personal development.

Each member of staff is required to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) within 6 months of commencing employment. Depending on previous qualifications, there may be a condition imposed by the SSSC to achieve either HNC or SVQ3 in social care, or both. Spark of Genius will support staff to achieve these qualifications.

[Appendix 1](#) [Organisational Structure of Riverside House](#)

[Appendix 2](#) [Qualifications and Experience of Management Team](#)

Appendix 1 Organisational Structure of Riverside House



Appendix 2 Qualifications and Experience of Management Team

Responsible Person

Operational Manager

Scott McCulloch

Scott has been with Spark of Genius since September 2008. He has many years experience working within Residential Child Care and has previously worked in a wide spectrum of settings, including independent living and secure accommodation. Scott was an external service manager for 6 years within Spark of Genius. After a restructure of the senior management team Scott is now our operational service manager.

Residential Service Manager

Nicola Keegan

Nicola has been with Spark of Genius since 2010 where she began her career as a residential child care worker. During this time Nicola has shown great commitment to developing her career within the organisation. Nicola held the post of residential manager at Riverside since August 2016. After a recent restructure of the senior management team Nicola was recently promoted to external service manager of another two Spark of Genius homes whilst remaining the registered manager of Riverside. During her first 2 years of management, Nicola and the team received a grade of "excellent" for 2 years running from the care inspectorate. Nicola shows great passion in the development of her team and Riverside as a service always striving for excellence in all areas. Nicola currently holds an SVQ4 in both care services leadership and management and care services children and young people. In addition to her role as residential manager Nicola is an experienced TCI trainer for the organisation where she is responsible for rolling out 4 day training courses, refreshers, testing and analysis of TCI and how it is used in all homes.

Assistant Manager

Lindsey MacKay

Lindsey has worked for Spark of Genius for 8 years. Lindsey began her career as a residential child care worker before stepping up to senior practitioner in 2014 then assistant manager in August 2016. Lindsey holds a BA Honours in Social Work.

Head of Childrens Services

Shirley Cairney, Head of Children's Services Is a qualified Social Worker who has been in the field of Residential Child Management for nearly 40 years. She has a depth of knowledge,

practice and dedication that has been gained in both local authorities and latterly with SoG. She has been instrumental in sector leading practice and also leads on CSE and CC training and strategy.