

# Statement of Purpose

**Breakaway  
2 Prior's Close  
St Laurence Way  
Slough  
SL1 2BQ**

**Anne Yates  
Registered Person  
September 2010**

## **1. Breakaway's Aims.**

Breakaway is part of Slough's Services for Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. The unit offers short breaks for children between 6 and 18 years of age with learning and/or physical disabilities. The Service supports families in caring for their child, enabling them to remain within the family home.

Breakaway's objectives:

- a) To give children with learning and/or physical disabilities the opportunity to mix positively with their peers.
- b) To offer them the chance to develop social and independence skills.
- c) To offer positive breaks for families to meet other family commitments/appointments.

Breakaway works in partnership with families, carers, schools and health colleagues to provide children with continuity in the care they receive from the different agencies.

Breakaway's aims

- a) Assessment of children and young people's needs
- b) To balance a service responsive to family requests with efficient use of resources (e.g. advance bookings)
- c) To ensure that children and young people achieve in the five outcomes set out in the Children Act 2004:
  - 'Being Healthy'
  - 'Staying Safe'
  - 'Enjoying and Achieving'
  - 'Making a Positive Contribution'
  - Achieving Economic Well-Being'

## **2. Facilities and Services**

Breakaway has the capacity to care for a maximum of seven children staying overnight in the unit at any one time, with appropriate staffing levels dependent on individual need. Wherever possible, Breakaway matches the needs, ages and interests of the children in the group.

Stays are very flexible and range from overnight stays of one night to weekends or longer periods, normally not exceeding seven continuous nights. The allocation of nights is dependent on the assessment of an individual's care needs. Tea visits and day care are also offered as part of the introduction to overnight stays.

In exceptional circumstances, Breakaway may be considered to be the most appropriate placement for a child or young person for a longer period than seven days. This would be subject to Senior Management approval and in consultation with Ofsted, as the independent inspection body, if it is deemed to be in the best interests of the child.

Children and young people receiving a service will be offered a variety of activities, including outings, meals out, mixing with their peers and trips to the cinema, museums and other places of interest. During school holidays longer trips are organised to zoos, theme parks and children's farms. Any other preferences will be discussed with the parent/carer and child before their visits take place.

### **3. Registered Provider**

The unit is provided by:-  
Slough Borough Council  
Education and Children's Services Directorate  
Town Hall  
Bath Road  
Slough  
SL1 3UQ

The Responsible Person is Sue Betts, Manager, Service for Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.

The Registered Person is Anne Yates, Assistant Manager, Service for Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.

### **4. Registered Provider Qualifications**

Sue Betts holds a Diploma in Social Work and a Post Graduate Diploma in Strategic Leadership.

Anne Yates holds the National Vocational Qualification Levels 3 and 4 in Care.

### **5. The Staff Team**

Breakaway has a care team of 14 experienced mixed gender staff from different cultural backgrounds who, between them, have a broad range of various child-care backgrounds. Their qualifications include: NVQ 2 and 3 in Care, NNEB Diploma, C and G level 1 learning Support Assistant, Introduction to pre-school practice, CACHE level 2 in play work, BA (QTS) Education and Science, Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology. All staff are required to undertake the NVQ 3 in Health and Social Care Children and Young People.

In addition to the care staff there is a full time cook and a part time administrative officer.

Where necessary Breakaway employs 'As and When' workers and in addition to meet service delivery use a bank of agency workers. This provides continuity of care to children and young people receiving a service. The As and When workers currently working within the unit have extensive experience and qualifications in NVQ2 and NVQ3, Counselling and Makaton.

### **6. Staff Training, Development and Supervision**

Breakaway places a high priority on, and is committed to, the supervision and training of staff. All staff receive a thorough and comprehensive induction to equip them to meet the requirements of the role. The induction process incorporates the Slough Borough Council's five day Corporate Induction.

Breakaway has a comprehensive staff development and supervision strategy which, together with the annual appraisal process and six monthly reviews, is intended to be positive, continuous and systematic.

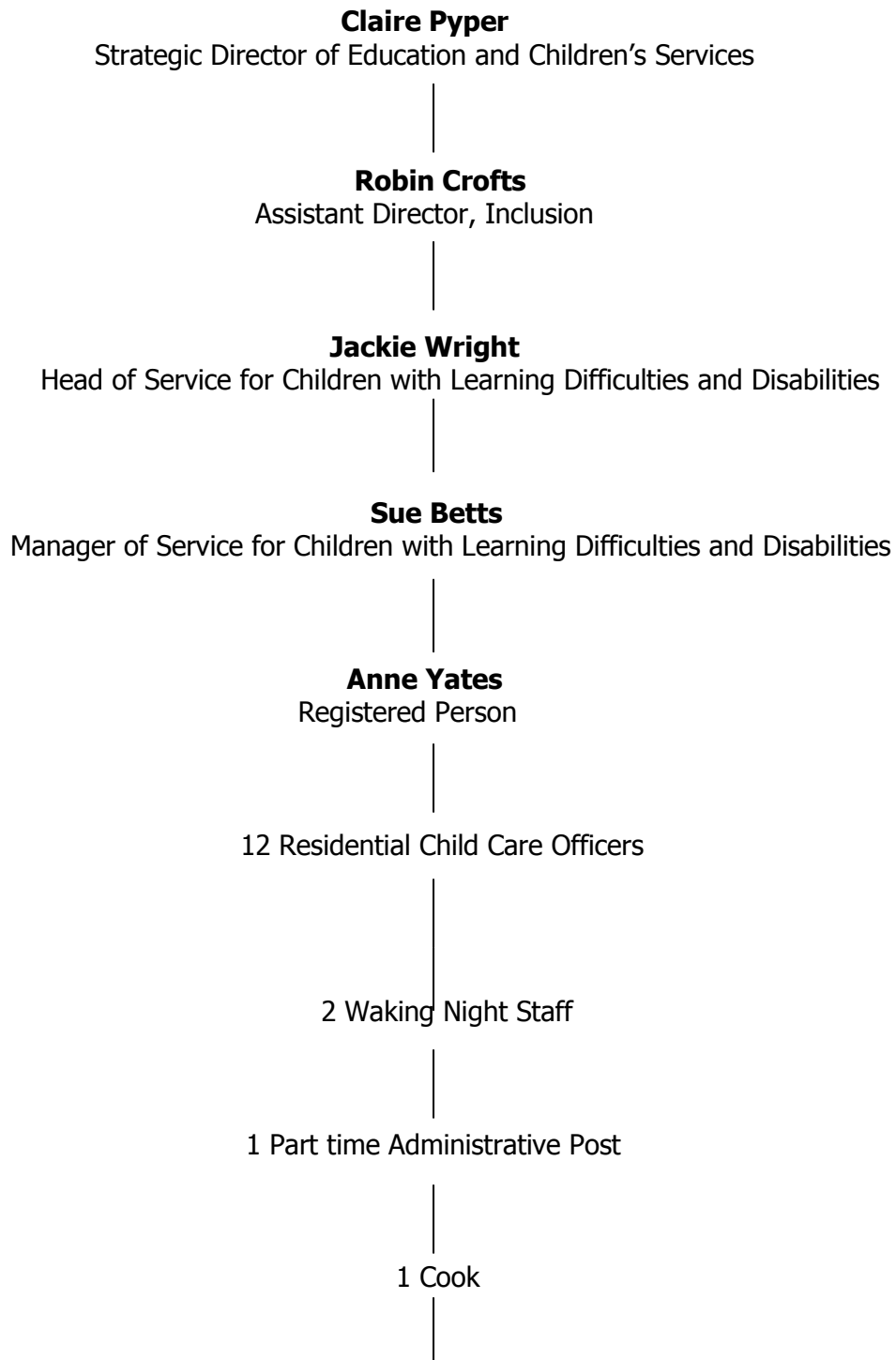
Staff support is individually designed, utilising and extending each employee's knowledge, skills and experience for the benefit of the children and young people in Breakaway's care and to ensure job satisfaction.

All staff receive formal, planned, professional, individual supervision with a member of the management team at monthly intervals. A written record is kept in the unit of these sessions.

A buddy system is in place for new members of staff who have regular meetings with their supervisor along with monthly supervision. Breakaway follows Slough Borough Council Probationary Policy and Procedures.

The training needs of individual staff are identified through supervision, annual appraisal and Personal Development Plans. All staff access Slough Borough Council's wide range of mandatory training. Specialised training is delivered to the team as appropriate to meet the needs of both the staff and the children and young people.

## 7. Breakaway Staffing Structure



## **8. Who is Breakaway for?**

Breakaway is a short-term care unit for children and young people with varying medical, learning and physical disabilities within the age range of 6-18 years of age.

## **9. Admission Procedure**

- A request for a short break at Breakaway is made via a social worker within the Service. The allocated social worker will make the request by completing a request form following approval from the Manager of Service or Assistant Manager.
- Once approval is received, the parents and child/young person are then invited to view the unit and discuss the child/young person's needs.

Once a decision is made by all parties that a short break service at Breakaway will be provided, the child/young person will be allocated a key worker from the Breakaway staff team.

The key worker will then make contact with the child's parents/carers and arrange for the child and parent/carer to meet with them either at Breakaway or their home, to complete the relevant paperwork. This includes:

1. This is Me
2. Consent forms
3. Medical disclaimer
4. Risk assessments
5. Consent to visit the child's/young person's place of education to ensure continuity of any behavioural or social skills programmes.

## **This is me**

"This is me" is a booklet that the key worker completes with both the parent/carer and child/young person. The booklet holds all of the information required about the individual to ensure that the Service meets his/her needs including:

- Daily routines
- Likes and dislikes
- Behaviour patterns
- Medication
- Health
- Spiritual/Faith needs
- Racial and cultural factors
- Individual goals

Once completed, the child/young person and parent/carer will also be given a copy of the plan and risk assessments to read and sign. The contents of the booklet will be reviewed with the parent/carer and child/young person as and when required and as part of the Looked after Children's or Child in Need review, any changes are recorded and followed.

The key worker will share the information with the staff team, to ensure all staff are aware of the child/young person's needs prior to his/her first visit. The key worker will then book tea visits for

the child/young person and parent/carer. The parent/carer will accompany the child until both the staff within the unit and the parent/carer are confident that the child/young person has settled into the unit and is comfortable staying without his/her parent/carer being present. Following this the length of stays will gradually increase progressing to day care followed by overnight stays at a pace that is suitable to both the child/young person and parent/carer.

Before the child/young person is booked into the unit for overnight stays, the key worker will confirm with the child/young person's social worker that the child/young person is now ready to progress to overnight stays and at this point the allocated social worker will ensure that the statutory paperwork LAC (Looked after Children) is completed if necessary but the majority of children/young people will be classified as Children in Need. If the child becomes looked after by the Local Authority then the allocated social worker will also inform the independent reviewing officer of the placement, so that the quality of care being provided can be independently reviewed.

Updating the information pertinent to Breakaway will be done as required, and on an annual basis if not required sooner. It is the key worker's responsibility to ensure that this is done with the family and child/young person and recorded onto Integrated Children's System (ICS). The information recorded on the ICS system is immediately accessible to the child/young person's allocated Social Worker providing the worker with a clear overview of the child/young person's stay.

## **10. Restrictions to admissions**

There are times and circumstances when Breakaway will not be able to offer short break care. These include:

- Children/young people who are currently psychiatrically assessed to be mentally ill.
- Children/young people with Attention Deficit and Hyperactive Disorder and no associated learning disability.
- Children/young people who become physically unwell with sickness, diarrhoea or a temperature immediately prior to a short break stay.
- Children/young people with an infectious illness, if they are still within the incubation period, or children who have been in close contact with an infectious illness.

## **11. The Philosophy of Breakaway Short Term Care Unit**

- The team believes that all children are children first and that our partnership should be based on respect for the individual, honesty and equality, regardless of race, culture, age, gender, sexual orientation and religion.
- Breakaway is committed to giving individual children/young people and their parents/carers a greater say in how they live their lives.
- Breakaway actively encourages individual children/young people with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities to realise their hopes and wishes for greater self-determination. Breakaway works in partnership with them to achieve this.

## **12. What happens if a child/young person needs to see a doctor?**

The child/young person will remain registered with their own GP and will see them if necessary. Parents/carers should check with their GP and tell them the child/young person will be visiting Breakaway for respite care.

If a child/young person is unwell, parents/carers will be informed immediately and told what action Breakaway has taken. This will be recorded in the child's/young person's file.

Staff are trained in emergency treatment by South Central Ambulance Service. Strict policies and procedures are in place and adhered to, to ensure that Breakaway promotes and protects the health of children/young people.

## **What do we do if a child/young person has an accident?**

Although every precaution is taken to prevent accidents occurring, children/young people occasionally sustain injuries due to falling over, bumping into furniture etc.

All accidents are reported to the senior person on duty and an accident/incident report is completed. Parents/carers are informed either by phone or in person when collecting their child/young person. A full report of the accident and cause will be written as soon as possible after the event and forwarded to the Borough's Health and Safety officer.

All staff are First Aid trained and may treat very minor injuries, such as grazes and scratches. If there is any doubt at all about the injury, the child/young person will be seen by a doctor or taken to the Accident and Emergency Department at Wexham Park Hospital in Slough.

## **13. Education**

During term time whilst staying at Breakaway children/young people continue to attend school. Breakaway staff currently transport children/young people to and from Arbour Vale School. Children and young people accessing education outside the Authority are transported by parents or by 'home to school' transport. Staff support children/young people to complete homework, if required.

Staff attend the educational reviews of the children/young people using the unit and work closely with education professionals, parent/carers and allocated social workers to meet the child's/young person's individual needs.

## **14. Recreational, cultural and sporting activities**

Breakaway encourages the children/young people to participate in recreational, sporting and cultural activities. These usually take place on a group basis. Sport and leisure activities include visits to the park, football, ten-pin bowling and visits to the cinema. Breakaway also has a garden with swings, one suitable for a wheel chair, sand pit, trampoline and bouncy castle.

Breakaway acknowledges cultural and religious festivals within the unit through discussions, meals, displays, books, prayer books, films and audio cassettes.



## **15. Consultation with children/young people**

Children/young people's meetings take place on a bi-monthly basis. The focus of these meetings is to discuss issues or concerns about the running of the unit in relation to activities provided, meals served and activities. The agenda covers the anti-bullying policy, fire procedure and any other issues the children/young people wish to discuss. We encourage the children/young people to share their views on new ideas/activities for the unit. This is then discussed at the staff team meeting, so that all staff are aware of the children's/young people's wishes and consideration given to any actions which need to be addressed.

Staff use communication tools such as Makaton and Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) as an aid to enabling the child/ young person to express his/her needs and wishes. The PECS system is made up of individual cards showing pictures of objects, toys, places, food and drink these are accessible to the child/young in different locations within the unit. In addition to the individual cards the child/young person also has access to a collection of the PECS cards in an individual folder that they can carry with them within and outside of Breakaway.

## **16. The arrangements made for the control, restraint and discipline of children/young people**

At Breakaway methods of control and discipline are all practised in accordance with Slough Borough Council's policies and procedures. Breakaway believes that clear boundaries and expectations promote order and establish routines. Occasionally, sanctions are used to promote good discipline, not as a punishment, when a child/young person oversteps set boundaries. The sanctions used are dependent on the circumstances surrounding the incident and upon the social development, age and level of misbehaviour of the child/young person concerned. Sanctions will be discussed with parents/carers and the child/young person when the 'This is Me' booklet is completed.

All care staff at Breakaway are all trained in positive handling of challenging behaviour using Team Teach techniques. Team Teach ensures that staff are experienced in the use of a wide range of diffusion and distraction techniques to avoid the need to restrain children/young people with challenging behaviour. If restraint is used, care is taken to ensure that the restraint is for the minimum time possible, that the child/young person is not humiliated in any way and that their safety is paramount. All incidents of restraint are recorded and externally scrutinised. Children/young people are never held on or taken to the floor. All holds are undertaken in standing or sitting positions. If there is a likelihood that the child/young person will end up on the floor, staff are instructed to release the hold.

Clear records are compiled. These are signed and commented upon by the child/young person (if they are able and wish to do so) and passed on to senior management and social workers. Any incident of restraint is also discussed fully with the child's/young person's parents/carers.

## **17. The arrangements made for child protection and to counter bullying**

All suspected or actual incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated immediately. Members of staff will give both the victim and the bully support. Breakaway has an anti-bullying policy which sets out Breakaway's response to incidents of bullying, taking a positive approach and formal response to any such concerns.

## **18. The procedure for dealing with any unauthorised absence of a child/young person from Breakaway**

Children/young people at Breakaway are closely supervised. There is an agreement regarding missing children/young people with Slough Police. This sets out actions to be taken by staff and police in the unlikely event of a child/young person going missing. Parents/carers, families and senior managers will be notified as a matter of urgency.

## **19. Electronic surveillance**

All bedrooms are fitted with door alarms used during the night. Waking night staff carry a pager which is activated when a child/young person's door is opened during the night.

No other electronic or mechanical means of surveillance of children/young people are used at Breakaway.

## **20. Fire precautions and emergency procedures**

All Breakaway staff have received training in fire safety, which covers the use of fire fighting equipment and emergency procedures. The home has fire alarms, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers throughout the building. The equipment is serviced and tested on a regular basis and any faulty equipment is reported immediately. There is a thorough recording system in place in the unit.

Breakaway operates a system whereby the fire brigade will be called even in the event of a false alarm.

Breakaway operates a no smoking policy within the building.

Fire alarm tests are held weekly and fire drills involving the children/young people monthly.

## **21. Will my child/young person be able to follow their religious beliefs?**

It is Breakaway's policy that every child/young person has the right to follow whatever religion they wish. Every effort is made to ensure children/young people are able to attend any services or meetings that form part of their religion. Children/young people will also be allowed the privacy or support necessary to undertake any devotions required whilst residing at Breakaway.

If a child's/young person's religion requires a particular diet or clothing, every effort will be made to ensure these needs are met, with advice being sought where necessary from those with the appropriate knowledge.

## **22. Can I contact my child/young person?**

Breakaway recognises that when a child/young person first stays at Breakaway this can cause worry for parents/carers, as this may be the first time that the child/young person has been away from home. Parents/carers are welcome to telephone the unit at any time to enquire about the

welfare of a child/young person. If a parent/carer wishes to visit a child/young person, we recommend telephoning first to ensure the child is not out on an activity.

### **23. What to do if you are unhappy with any aspect of the service**

Slough Borough Council has a policy to manage customer care. A parent/carer or child/young person who is dissatisfied with any aspect of the service should first consult the Manager to discuss the concerns. If the problem is not resolved the parent/carer should contact the Manager of Service for Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. The child's/young person's social worker will provide a copy of the customer care procedure before the child's/young person's first visit and this process can be followed if the issue has not been satisfactorily resolved. An independent investigation into the concern will then be carried out.

### **24. The arrangements for dealing with reviews of placement plans**

All children/young people receiving overnight care will have regular reviews of the placement and their care plan. For those children/young people who are looked after by the Local Authority, an independent reviewing officer chairs the reviews. Children/young people are encouraged to attend their reviews. However, if they do not wish to attend their parents/carers, key worker or an advocate can convey their views. Looked after Children reviews or Child in Need reviews are carried out 6 monthly for all children/young people who receive overnight care at Breakaway.

### **25. Bedrooms**

All children/young people staying at Breakaway will have their own room. Breakaway will endeavour to give them the same room when they stay. Breakaway helps the children/young people to personalise their room with posters, name plaques and a choice of bed linen.

Two of the bedrooms are fitted with overhead tracking to assist the children/young people with their mobility. All bedrooms are fitted with magnetic door openers. The waking night staff carry pagers which sound an alert should a door be opened at any time.

### **26. Breakaway do not provide any specialist therapeutic techniques**

Due to the unpredictable nature of the children/young people stays, Breakaway do not provide any specialist therapeutic techniques.

## **27. A description of the children's home policy in relation to anti-discriminatory practice and children's rights**

Slough Borough Council is working to promote a just society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination and prejudice. Breakaway values and celebrates the breadth and diversity of tradition, beliefs and culture of the children/young people and families using the service. Breakaway seeks to create, maintain and promote a unit in which each child/young person has equal entitlement to a high quality service and opportunities, regardless of disability, race, nationality, religion, age, gender and sexual orientation. Breakaway will actively challenge any discrimination encountered by the children/young people whilst at Breakaway.

**Date: September 2010**

**Sue Betts**

**Manager of Service for Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities**

**Review Date: September 2011.**