

**The Independent Children's Homes Association  
(ICHA)**

**Review of Children's Homes in Jersey and the Response  
by the Government of Jersey**

**May 2021**



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## **Foreword:**

### **Assistant Minister for Children and Education, Deputy Scott Wickenden**

I would like to thank the Independent Children's Homes Association (ICHA) for their review of children's homes, in Jersey, which I very much welcome. They have provided an insightful critique of our current services, independent of those responsible for day-to-day management and leadership.

We have been on a journey since the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry. While we are making progress, as stated by the independent reviewers and the Jersey Care Commission in their Overview Report, we evidently need to improve and with more pace and a greater sense of urgency. I recognise that Residential Child Care Officers and Registered Managers are doing their best to support children in care. In particular, I commend their unwavering dedication and support during the global pandemic, where they regularly put themselves in harm's way to care for children who could not be with their birth families.

It is incumbent on the Government of Jersey and senior managers to provide the conditions for them to lead children's homes that are therapeutic informed and well supported. Alongside, we need to deliver our commitment in the Government Plan to establish a two or three-bed therapeutic children's home.

The review is helpful in supporting us to identify our priorities and forward work plan. In particular, I am most grateful to hear that children and young people, living in the Island's homes, often speak positively about their personal experiences of residential care. The short break homes in Jersey provide an excellent service to children with complex needs and are valued by their families. And staff care about children and young people and they are committed to providing the best possible services.

The Government is committed to Putting Children First with continuous improvement and improving outcomes. I look forward to seeing the recommendations implemented without delay and significantly improved outcomes for children and young people using our children's homes in Jersey.

We recognise that there is room for improvement. Both this report and the Care Commission's report will inform our Care Homes Improvement Programme. Over the coming weeks, we will develop the programme plan together with children, staff and partners. This will address staffing issues identified in the review and create new opportunities for training and engagement with staff.

We will work to address the development of the secure children's home as a matter of urgency. The Government has appointed a full-time project manager to lead the development of this work, reporting to a Multi-Agency Management Board.

The work is being developed with consideration of the £7 million redevelopment funding and the new Therapeutic Children's Home.

The Care Homes Improvement Programme is an exciting opportunity for us to invest in our homes and our staff to build on our strengths. This will enable us to better safeguard and care for the children and young people living in our homes.

**Deputy Scott Wickenden**  
**Assistant Minister for Children and Education**

## **Foreword by Lead Reviewer**

**Elizabeth Cooper, Deputy CEO, Independent Children's Home Association**

Children's Social Care Services, in Jersey, are on a journey to deliver outstanding practice and outcomes, developing services and seeking to create new ways of working. Following the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry into the abuse of children, the prioritisation and investment required to protect children is much better understood. They have a new permanent Director of Safeguarding and Care, a new senior leadership team, and a comprehensive plan to enable confident, restorative, rights and relationship-based practice. They are seeking to build a stable and skilled workforce and to deliver the right services at the right time, together with partners.

The development of residential children's homes, short breaks and supported accommodation is a critical part of the service improvement plan. The Government of Jersey invited the Independent Children's Homes Association (ICHA) to review the Island's residential children's homes during August and September 2020. ICHA was chosen as independent experts, with no direct involvement in the delivery of care or support to children and young people in Jersey. All eight children's homes and two short-break homes were visited, and young people, parents, staff and partner agencies were given the opportunity to share their views.

I am eternally grateful to those children and young people who have talked about their experiences and their desire for change throughout the review and those views are reflected in this report.

Staff and associated professionals have also been open in sharing their hopes for the future and discussing some of the exciting changes already beginning to take place.

Some contributions will not necessarily be reflected in this report. This is not because their input was considered irrelevant, but because other issues were more pressing. Nonetheless, their views helped shaped my thinking and reach the final recommendations.

The findings and recommendations arising from this review have come about through my observation, based upon current learning, and my own experience. Some recommendations may contradict current Jersey legislation, but it is for the Island to decide whether the recommendations warrant a further review of current laws and regulations. Nonetheless, the recommendations are made in the belief that adopting them will bring benefit to the children who are currently or will be, looked after in Jersey.

**Elizabeth Cooper**

**Deputy CEO, Independent Children's Home Association**

**About the Lead Reviewer**

*Elizabeth Cooper has a Masters in Business Administration. She led an organisation with six homes for many years, consistently securing Ofsted ratings of 'outstanding'. Before moving into children's residential care Elizabeth was a health services regulatory inspector of adult and children's services, a Health and Social Care lecturer and prior to that, a senior nurse.*

## **Executive Summary**

### **Findings**

The review highlighted five main strengths and five key issues to address:

#### **Main Strengths:**

1. Children and young people living in the Island's homes often speak positively about their personal experiences of residential care
2. The short break homes in Jersey provide an excellent service to children with complex needs and are valued by their families
3. Staff care about children and young people and they are committed to providing the best possible services
4. The physical conditions of the homes are generally conducive to family life.
5. There is a commitment to transforming residential care in Jersey

#### **Key Issues to Address:**

1. The purpose of children's homes, secure children's homes and supported accommodation is not articulated clearly enough and understood in practice
2. The available resources are not sufficient, incoherent, and inefficiently deployed
3. Roles and responsibilities and lines of accountability lack clarity
4. Staff do not always feel valued and need more learning and development opportunities
5. There are gaps in the services

### **Recommendations**

The review makes recommendations across three areas to strengthen children's homes in Jersey: service delivery, personnel and service development.

#### **Recommendations - Service Development**

1. In order to better meet the aims of the Children's Plan, a system that enables the Island's services to unify under one research-based assessment and planning

programme is recommended. Any programme should be Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) led and provide a rich database of interventions and outcomes for staff to refer to. Any system would need to meet the assessment needs of Health, Education and Social Services to ensure seamless collaborative working. Having one system across the services that facilitates early identification of need should improve the Island's future planning ensuring finances are allocated optimally. The Transformational, Collaborative Outcomes Management (TCOM) is one that could meet Jersey's needs and it is recommended that this is explored further.

2. Therapeutic services should be provided across all children's homes, short break services and supported accommodation to help children and support staff interventions and understanding.
3. The secure children's home should be repurposed as a therapeutic resource centre, providing both residential and outreach, multi-agency support services together with partner agencies including the Youth Service, the Virtual School and CAMHS. The implementation will require a period of planning and extensive refurbishment, and a further recruitment drive.
4. A small bespoke therapeutic home should be established to provide intensive work with young people at risk of being secured on welfare grounds. It is likely that it may be used intermittently and should therefore be staffed by specialist workers from the 'Resource Centre'. Consideration should be given to redeveloping one part of the secure children's home to provide this service.
5. Fieldview should be re-registered as a home that provides nurture and support to those young people who are not able or ready to move into supported accommodation. This would include those returning from more structured children's homes off-Island, and who require a period of assessment and readjustment before transitioning elsewhere.
6. Agreement should be reached with the landlord of one of the supported accommodation homes to enable the provision to continue to operate. The



property requires extensive upgrading. The service should be supported to develop into a speciality home, providing structured supported accommodation.

7. A dedicated Home Care team should be developed for the Complex Needs Services. It is envisaged that it should operate out of Eden House once the property has been developed in-line with its current plans. The service should include nursing input allowing for promotion and further development of the staff at Oakwell.
8. Explicit step-down criteria should be agreed for the current Short Break homes to safeguard sufficiency.
9. Consideration should be given to the development or commissioning of a dedicated complex needs children's home.
10. Consideration should be given to the development of Tier 4 CAMHS Inpatient provision.
11. One of the children's homes should be scheduled for closure, respecting the needs and best interests of any children currently living in the home.

### **Recommendations - Service Delivery**

12. Statements of Purpose must be used as part of the assessment and planning process involved in making a placement at a children's home.
13. The criteria for accessing specific services must be explicit. Registered Manager's risk assessments and compatibility assessments must be taken into account in all placement agreements and they must be afforded the power of veto in relation to inappropriate referrals. The Government of Jersey, as a responsible provider, has a duty to ensure that provision can adequately meet the needs of any accepted referral.

14. It is important that homes develop their own identity, shaped by the children living there.

15. Age restrictions on Homes Certificates of Registration should be reviewed to enable younger children to be admitted to homes if it is assessed to be in their best interests.

### **Recommendations - Personnel**

16. The rolls of Residential Child Care Officers, level 3 and above should be recognised as 'Essential Employee' and afforded 'Licensed' status to enable an off-island recruitment drive for qualified Residential Child Care Officers

17. There should be one Registered Manager for each registered home or service.

18. Residential Child Care Officers terms and conditions should be reviewed, and new rotas introduced in the Supported Accommodation and Children's Homes.

19. Regular meetings between the Senior Management Team, Registered Managers and Care Staff should be developed to ensure:

- the service vision is articulated
- service development plans are explained, and updates provided
- staff are afforded the opportunity share insights/challenge appropriately

20. Pay, terms and conditions should be reviewed for Managers and Service Leads.

21. A new role of Quality Assurance / Training Officer specific to the residential and short break services should be established. Its purpose would be to ensure that:

- staff remain up to date with all mandatory training,
- courses specific to the needs of Jersey's children are developed and delivered

- all training and development are in line with current research and best practice
- they complete ongoing assessment and audit of the practical application and impact of the training provided in the homes
- a quality assurance tool is developed specific to the needs of the different homes and short break facilities within the residential services
- a quality assurance audit is conducted against specific KPIs at least bi-annually that informs further training and development needs.

22. Supervision and Appraisal should be carried out for all staff in line with policy.

23. Advocate's alleged claims of rights of entry to the homes and powers to access records should be clarified. Further to this, an accurate understanding of their rights and responsibilities should be shared and understood by all home staff.

### **Recommendations – Secure Children's Home**

24. There is a strong likelihood that staff specialist skills may deteriorate as the unit often lies empty for extended periods and staff are redeployed. Consideration should be given to how staff retain their knowledge base and how they would then be available to respond to infrequent admissions.

25. The rationale for risk-assessed searches on admission should be fully documented for each child.

26. An in-depth ligature risk assessment of the home should be conducted, and all identified risks removed.

27. Bedroom doors should be replaced by strong secure doors with viewing panes that look more homely, and the environment decorated to be more child appropriate.

28. What happens after a secure placement should be discussed at the first, and all subsequent multi-agency meetings. Ad hoc threshold reviews should take place as children's plans change, to enable more appropriate and planned step-downs to alternative children's accommodation or returns home.
29. A clear pathway plan from admission through to post discharge must be established. This should include education and intensive therapeutic intervention to ensure that stays on the unit are beneficial and life changing, as opposed to a form of punishment and containment.
30. If the home is to continue to operate as a secure children's home, then agreement should be reached regarding its purpose and function. If a child is assessed as meeting the threshold, then they should be accommodated in-line with the operating rules of the home. The sufficiency and skills of the home's staff should be recognised as appropriate to maintain their welfare and safety whether different sexes or statuses are accommodated.
31. Compatibility Assessments should include the ability of the Registered Manager to decline an admission on compatibility grounds. This is an important consideration in future planning for service provision as if this is to be met, there will need to be an alternative option available.
32. In England, the Social Care Inspection Framework (SCIF) is used by Ofsted to inspect Children's Homes, but with different assurance frameworks for secure and open settings and it recommended this type of approach is followed in terms of policies, procedures and inspection.
33. The Registered Manager should be able review the procedures, however this should follow a policy approval process and standardised format rather than being carried out unilaterally. This review process should also involve the voice of the child.

## Introduction

### Independent Regulation and Inspection of Children's Homes

Children's Social Care Services, in Jersey, are on an improvement journey following the:

- widely publicised Independent Jersey Care Inquiry that reported in July 2017
- first Ofsted-led inspection, in Jersey, which took place in June 2018
- two-year follow-up report by the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry Panel in 2019
- follow-up Ofsted inspection in August 2019.

The independent regulation and inspection of residential care for children and young people in Jersey was a key recommendation of the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry. In January 2019, the Jersey Care Commission's Care Standards came into force. There are fifteen Standards, which set out what a child or young person should expect when using a care home service.

On the 6 December 2019, the Jersey Care Commission granted the Government of Jersey's application to legally register their children's homes. This meant that the homes were required to meet criteria set out under The Regulations and The Standards. Registered Managers became legally responsible for the care in the homes and compliance with Standards.

An independent person was appointed as required under Regulation 30 of The Regulations, who visits all children's homes at least monthly to assess "*whether children are effectively safeguarded*" Standard 31(4)(a) and whether "*the conduct of the home promotes the children's wellbeing*" Standard 31(4)(b). The independent person is required to interview in private children, their parents, relatives, and staff and to inspect the home and the home's records.

The Care Commission were given the authority to judge the homes against the Standards and to make legally enforceable requirements for change wherever it was judged to be necessary.

In 2020, the Jersey Care Commission commenced the inspection of the Government's children's homes and begun publishing the reports on their website. Covid-19 interrupted the Commission's scheduled programme of inspections for 2020. However, all children's homes were inspected between June and November 2020.

Reports were not on the website at the time of the review, but publication of the reports of inspection findings will provide Islanders with independent assurance about the quality, safety and effectiveness of residential care for children and young people.

Both inspection and monitoring visits aim to raise the standards in registered children's homes and as they progress, their effect should become more apparent.

### **The Review of Children's Homes in Jersey**

In November 2019, the Government appointed a permanent Director of Safeguarding and Care, responsible for leading the development of Children's Social Care Services, in Jersey, including Children's Homes, Secure Children's Homes, Short Breaks and Supported Accommodation.

The Director decided that the current provision of children's homes would benefit from an expert and dedicated view, independent of the officers accountable and responsible for the day-to-day strategic leadership and operational management of children's homes in Jersey. The Director wanted to establish a thorough understanding of the strengths of the services and the areas for improvement to inform the strategic development priorities for the Children's Social Care Service.

The Independent Children's Homes Association (ICHA) were appointed in July 2020 to undertake the review. ICHA is a membership organisation representing c.200 voluntary and private sector children's homes providers, over 1100 homes and

c.4000 beds for children and young people. The collective experience of their members experience in operating children's homes is unparalleled. With 80% of its members' children's homes achieving 'outstanding' or 'good' ratings by Ofsted and only 1% 'inadequate' the quality of its members provision is very high.

A key reason for commissioning ICHA, was to access individuals within the organisation and membership with proven experience in the delivery of outstanding services as assessed by Ofsted:

- The lead reviewer, Elizabeth Cooper, has a Masters in Business Administration, and led an organisation with six homes for many years, consistently securing Ofsted ratings of 'outstanding'. Before moving into children's residential care, Elizabeth was a health services regulatory inspector of adult and children's services, a lecturer in Health and Social Care and prior to that, was a senior nurse.
- The secure children's home reviewer, Liz Ambler, has a background as a registered nurse and has worked in health and social care for 25 years in a range of settings, running services in the UK and internationally. Most recently Liz was Chief Operating Officer for Nugent, a charity in the North West of England supporting some of the most vulnerable people in society. As part of this role, Liz was responsible for England's only charity run secure children's home.

## **The Terms of Reference for the Review**

### **Purpose**

The Independent Children's Home Association (ICHA) has been invited to review the provision of children's residential care services by the Government of Jersey.

### **Team**

The review will be completed by Elizabeth Cooper, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Independent Children's Home Association (ICHA), with assistance and contributions from:

- Liz Ambler, Chief Operating Officer for Nugent
- Peter Sandiford: Chief Executive Officer of ICHA
- Others as required.

### **Timescale**

The review will commence on 3 August 2020 and will be completed by 30 September 2020.

### **Scope**

1) A full review of the residential childcare facilities. To include, but not be restricted to:

- A review of the management and oversight of the homes
- A review of the staffing within the homes
- A review of the childcare provided by the homes and associated services
- A review of documentation relating to all of the above
- A review of the audit processes in place
- Exploration of off-island placements



2) A Review of the child's journey through the residential care system. To include but not be restricted to:

- The child's journey into care
- The child's journey through care
- Transitions into adulthood

3) An exploration of the governing and oversight bodies, and legislation in operation, that support and monitor the above.

4) A final report to be presented to interested parties (to be identified) at the conclusion of the review to include but not be limited to:

- A narrative of findings
- A rationale for findings
- Options for change or otherwise.

## **Approach and Scope**

The Terms of Reference were deliberately high-level and broad to give all stakeholders, including children and young people, an opportunity to speak freely about their experiences of care homes in Jersey and their aspirations for the future. At the core of the review, was the experiences and opinions of children and young people. The reviewer heard directly from children and young people and their advocates, including Children's Rights Officers and the Children's Commissioner. This was gathered through individual and (as appropriate) group meetings with children and young people living in care settings, and recent care leavers.

The reviewer visited each of the Government's registered children's homes, short breaks homes, supported accommodation homes and the secure children's homes. She interviewed parents and home staff and observed the general running of the homes.

A partnership roundtable was convened to focus on the strengths and development priorities for the secure children's home. The output from this, together with the focused review of the secure children's homes (see Appendix 4), informed the report.

Key stakeholders met with the reviewer, including the Children's Minister, the Children's Commissioner, the Lead Inspector, from the Care Commission, the Independent Person, the Director General for CYPES, and representatives from partner agencies – for example, CAMHS, Education and Probation. The full list of contributors is at Appendix 1.

Documents and the case management records of children and young people were reviewed following informed consent, to inform the findings and recommendations. This included the Jersey Care Standards, care plans, children look after reviews, children's feedback forms, the and minutes of meetings.

The strategic leadership team, the service leads and the registered managers met with the reviewer on a number of occasions to give their views, to hear the evolving insights and to help shape the recommendations based on the emerging strengths and areas for improvement.

The headline findings were presented by the lead reviewer to the Director General for CYPES, the Director of Safeguarding and Care and the Head of Service for Stability, Permanence and Support. This was subsequently considered by the strategic leadership team, the service leads and the registered children's homes managers.

The Government's response to the recommendations were then considered within the context of:

- The Government Plan
- The CYPES Business Plan
- *Our Plan 2020-23*, the improvement plan for children's social care services.
- Covid Business Continuity Planning, ensuring residential services particularly have been able to provide a high standard of care in the face of increasing demand and significant pressure on the workforce
- A change in the Minister for Children
- The Overview Report of Children's Care Home Services 2020 from the Care Commission published in April 2021.

## Findings

### **Strength 1: Children and young people often speak positively about their personal experience of care.**

Children often spoke highly of the homes and the staff. One young person put it simply, but powerfully, *“It feels like my home.”*

The views of the young people using the care home services overall reflected high levels of satisfaction with the care received. Some of the children and young people described the staff as supportive and advised that they felt listened to by staff. Some young people reported that the staff treat them with respect.

Three children’s homes are situated in residential settings, and as such, they are indistinguishable as children’s homes. Two young people spoke about how important this anonymity was as opposed to having lived previously in homes well known to the general public.

*“I’m happy to bring friends back now and they can stay over”*

*“I was embarrassed to bring anyone back to my previous home, I didn’t want anyone to know I lived in a children’s home,”*

### **Strength 2: The short break homes in Jersey provide an excellent service to children with complex needs and are valued by their families.**

The two Short Break Homes are the most effective, providing clear, targeted services. They are exemplary, providing excellent services to children with complex needs. Their vision is strong and well communicated. All levels of staff understand what they are there to do, and their managers are adequately protected and supported to ensure that they can get on and do it. While the nature of this service is different from others within the sector, it demonstrates that with the right vision,

support, and resources, all the services in Jersey can achieve similar standards. This was echoed by one parent's feedback:

*"The island and the children living herein, would benefit from other similar provisions with a similar management style and staffing approach. I would therefore like to advocate for an increased capacity whereby this degree of satisfaction can extend to a lot more children and their families, who would benefit from this."*

Parents reflected how much these services mean to them and their children:

*"During lockdown we didn't have the service and it was the end of my world"*

*"On a respite day, I can open all my doors again and have my hand cream out" (her child eats it)*

*"They're really safe here and do nice stuff"*

*"The home is a godsend"*

*"The facility is fantastic and staff are supportive"*

*"The home is unique, and made so by the dedicated staff who all get to know our children as individuals and as we all said on Wednesday, we just wish our sons and daughters could stay with you and not have to move on at 18".*

The Managers and Service Lead have successfully fought to protect their purpose and identity. A few inappropriate, long term placements were previously made by the Government of Jersey thereby denying those children who needed their short breaks, a service. The team refused to accept this and through representation and clear argument, have ensured that their provision will not be compromised in the future.

### **Strength 3: Staff care about children and young people and they are committed to the service.**

Throughout the review, most staff were found to be caring and passionate about their jobs. They had genuine affection for and knowledge about their children and most were eager to develop their skills. Many have been employed in the Children's Services for many years and bring a lot of knowledge to their positions. They have been part of inquiries and investigations into their practice and have seen seismic changes.

#### **Strength 4: The physical conditions of the homes are conducive to family life.**

The Government of Jersey has moved from delivering large children's homes to small two and three bed homes, which are more conducive to family life and relationship-based practice. All of the homes have good garden spaces, and they are all well used, and the homes are well maintained.

#### **Strength 5: There is a commitment to transforming residential care in Jersey**

The Government of Jersey is committed to improving residential care services. The commissioning of this review, independent of those responsible for leading the service, is testament to their commitment to understand what is working and to identify the priority areas for attention. The new permanent Director of Safeguarding and Care is passionate about improving outcomes for children and young people and it is evident that he wants to develop a comprehensive development plan for residential services based on best practice and the latest research evidence of what works.

The residential services are part of the new Government Department, Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES). The Director General is the named person, ultimately responsible for the Government's residential care services. He is passionate about promoting children's rights, driving up standards in social care and ensuring all services within CYPES work together in an integrated, multi-disciplinary way through a strengths and relationship-based practice model.

Jersey's Children and Young People's Plan pledges that by 2023, it will "*provide all children in care with access to a safe, loving, secure home environment*". The Government has committed additional finances to develop residential services, including:

- £1.2 million year-on-year for a new two-three bed therapeutic children's home; and
- £7 million to redesign the secure unit originally built in 2006 to house children and young people under the youth justice system and those requiring secure welfare placements. Since then, the number of children and young people detained has declined and given rise to the need to redesign the facility so that it can deliver a secure children's home provision.

The Government has also committed to £1.76 million annual funding to invest in early help services and there is new funding to develop intensive fostering services. Both of these initiatives will reduce the number of children and young people needing to live in residential care.

A new permanent Head of Service was appointed at the start of 2020 responsible for leading and transforming residential services. She has extensive experience in fostering, adoption and therapeutic parenting. She is committed to using this experience to enable children's homes to provide stability, a sense of belonging and psychological permanence for children and young people in the same way that kinship care, long-term fostering and adoption does. Getting to know the residential services as well, has been significantly hampered by the social distancing and virtual working.

Jersey's two Supported Accommodation Homes provide support for young adults from 18 to 25. This wide age range is innovative and highly commendable, and, in this respect, its intended provision is far ahead of many mainland services. In this way, Jersey can support its young people for far longer with an aim to better life experiences post care. The service has its own dedicated standards that, once embedded, should help develop them exponentially.

One of the Supported Accommodation Homes was operated by an independent provider who withdrew at short notice. The Government of Jersey were able to step in quickly and take responsibility for the services and have continued to run the home. The Government has made a sensible decision to deliver the service in-house

on a permanent basis to ensure the stability of provision and to transform the services moving forward.

The introduction of a Children's Rights service and the part-government funded Jersey Cares, has been a positive step in the further development of the voice of the child and in raising the children's profile. It also has an important role to play in safeguarding, being an extra set of eyes on the statutory sector. Children have welcomed and value these organisations, and some have formed good relationship with their workers: *"Staff that have helped me in the past still help me-like my Children's Rights Officer"* and *"Once I knew my Children's Rights Officer was care-experienced, it really helped me trust her"*.

The Jersey Care Commission recognise that children's homes, in Jersey, are at the start of their improvement journey having only been first registered in December 2019. Commission staff have provided advice and guidance to Registered Managers regularly. While they have tried to balance their regulation and inspection functions with the need to provide support to managers and staff as they get used to the Care Standards and the Regulations, they did not use their authority appropriately and allowed the care of children to be compromised .



## Key Issues to Address

**Issue 1: The purpose of children's homes, secure children's homes and supported accommodation is not articulated clearly enough and understood in practice.**

Jersey is a very small island. Its population is approximately 107,000 with a child population (0-19) of approximately 23,000. Of these, around 11,000 fall in the 10-19 age group, which applies to most children in residential care.<sup>1</sup> Despite this relatively small cohort of children, Jersey operates four children's homes, one secure unit, two supported accommodation homes and two short break homes for children with complex needs. This equates to a potential provision of 24 permanent beds, 9 short stay and 4 secure beds. In addition to this, several children are placed off-Island on in the UK. While this is a massive reduction in placements on previous years, the purpose of those homes providing these placements remains unclear.

There is a lack of clarity regarding the purpose of the children's homes, supported accommodation or secure children's home and without this, staff do not work to common goals and children's needs are not consistently met.

Registered Managers are responsible for more than one home with different Statements of Purpose. This means their time and attention is divided. The review recommends appointing one manager to one home to develop those specialisms and define their purpose.

Under Standard 1 of the Care Standards, each home is required to provide a Statement of Purpose. The Statement is intended to provide an indication of the capabilities of each home and whether they can or cannot meet the needs of a referred child, and as part of the referral process should be made available to and taken into consideration by, "*Any person involved in arranging care for children/young people.*"

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<sup>1</sup> Jersey Resident Population 2019 estimate. [www.gov.je/statistics2019](http://www.gov.je/statistics2019)

The Government of Jersey is committed to keeping local children and young people on Island when they come into care. This creates an inherent problem as it results in children being placed into homes where there are vacancies, sometimes regardless of the Home's Statement of Purpose and ability to directly meet their needs. As a result, consideration has been given throughout this report to the configuration of the services and whether they should be changed to offer alternate interventions, and the extent to which bolder decisions can be taken. This problem is perhaps inevitable in a situation where the purchaser and provider are the same as there is no alternative, on-island provision. Nonetheless, the results are that some children are put in unsuitable placements and staff consequently struggle to meet their needs.

### **Children's Homes**

There are four children's homes, which can provide up to 11 permanent places according to their certificates of registration.

There is a general 'magnolia blandness' to all of the children's homes. They need personalising. Pictures of children are not prominently displayed and pictures of children having fun with staff were not seen by the reviewer anywhere, although the Registered Manager at one home did state that they had been recently removed at a child's request. It is critically important that each home has their own identity, created in the image of the children and young people who live in the homes at any one time. This will help children to feel a sense of belonging and ownership. There should be visible shared memories that encourage reflection and take children and staff back to times when they felt good.

One home had three children living there, one of whom the Registered Manager had felt was a poor mix with others living there but had been expected to accept the child. The house had to be adapted to accommodate them, and as a result, staff had to sleep in one of the lounges, compromising the use of a communal space by young people.

One home is too small and it is in an inappropriate location, in the carpark of a neighbouring primary school. It is registered to accept up to three young people

between the ages of 12-18, although the Statement of Purpose states that it only accepts up to two children. Despite these discrepancies, the house is cramped and provides insufficient space for two young people and their staff. The review recommends that the home should be scheduled for closure as soon as more suitable accommodation can be acquired.

Two of the homes are more homely environments. Unfortunately, one of them is situated on a site that includes other social care and education support services. It is easily identifiable as a children's home. Nonetheless, one of the children spoke highly of it stating "It is home".

The children who live at one of the homes have a wide age range and are mixed gender. Neither child becomes involved in the other's challenging behaviours and staff can tailor their care specifically to their individual needs. At another home, the children are of a similar age, the same sex and are being drawn into each other's behaviours.

The registration for all the homes are for children between 12 and 18. There are also 12 children aged 12 and over in foster care. There is a shortage of foster carers for this age group however, which is currently being addressed through the development of the intensive fostering scheme. Research shows that some children struggle with fostering so consideration should be given to permanently varying the age range to allow for younger children to live permanently in a children's home if their assessments indicate that this is the most appropriate care setting to meet their needs.

### **Supported Accommodation Homes**

Jersey's two Supported Accommodation Homes provide support for young adults from 18 to 25. Their certificates reflect that one home can accommodate up to six young adults and the other seven, between the ages of 18-21 although the age range has recently been reviewed up to 25 for both homes.

Both homes have the same stated purpose, which is *"to support and prepare young people who cannot live in their own homes ..... And to provide a "needs led"*

*service, which treats all young people as individuals .The objective is to work with young people to empower and support them to move onto independence, when they have the confidence and skills to do so.”*

At the current time, they are not fulfilling this purpose. Although the Statements of Purpose allow admission of 17-year-olds who are ready to live independently, the criteria for assessment of this is unclear. In addition, young people who require care are also living at the properties in direct contravention of the Statement of Purpose. This is affecting other young people’s futures. One young person reported that staff did not help prepare them for independent living or do key working with them *“because they were always working with (one of the young people who needed care)”*

Homes cannot function effectively and to the benefit of the young people if they have to work outside of their Statement of Purpose. The managers, service leads and Care Commission must protect the integrity of the services, and CYPES as the registered provider, ensure that homes only accept children whose care needs they can meet.

The Registered Managers’ report that they have little ability to veto these inappropriate placements and protect the integrity and purpose of the service. Proposals for the future use of these homes are made later in the report.

### **The Role of Jersey Care Commission**

The Jersey Care Commission’s stated purpose is to *“Provide the people of Jersey with independent assurance about the quality, safety and effectiveness of their health and social care services”*. To this end, they register and inspect the Island’s homes, register the Managers, and hold the Providers and Home Managers to account when Standards are not met, or Regulations breached.

Due to the pressure not to place children in off-Island provision, current requirements are for the Government of Jersey to apply to the Care Commission for a variation in registration, when they have children that they want to place, but who do not fall

within the registration of the home. The Care Commission, often with misgivings, invariably agree to the variations.

The Jersey Care Commission was found to be restricted in its ability to enforce regulations and standards and bring about change. As they are regulating a system where provider and purchaser are the same and where the Government of Jersey has a monopoly on services, enforcing regulations that limit their ability to make placements is almost impossible. Consequently, the Care Commission has found itself reluctantly agreeing to variations that allow children to be placed outside of the home's registration.

The Care Commission has challenges in enforcing the Government of Jersey's compliance with the Regulations and Standards and may as a result not be able to provide the necessary assurances to the public.

The Care Commission's lack of ability to change the inappropriate use of homes is illustrated by serving a Notice of Intention to take Enforcement Action on the Government of Jersey on 13 August 2020. This was due to an inappropriate placement being made in a supported accommodation home. As there is, however, no alternative to this placement, at the time of writing this report, nothing has been resolved.

If recommendations made later in this report are accepted there should be greater sufficiency of provision and flexibility in services to address these current challenges. This will relieve pressure on the service, particularly Registered Managers who find themselves in a difficult and uncomfortable bind, and on the Care Commission.

### **The Secure Children's Home**

The current provision for detained children was built in 2006. It was designed as a secure unit in which to house children and young people under the youth justice system and those requiring secure welfare placements. Since then, the number of children and young people detained has declined. It is used infrequently, and

although the Registered Manager had never run this type of facility before, he has developed his knowledge around it exponentially.

At the beginning of the review, there were, unusually, three young people living there, and staff had been brought in from across the service to work in the home. Not only did this deplete the staff teams in other homes, this meant that the team were neither specialised nor cohesive, and arguably unlikely to be able to meet the specific needs of the children and young people. While a small core staff group had been there for some months due to a long remand placement, it was apparent that not all of the staff wanted to work in this environment.

According to their Statement of Purpose, *“The secure children’s home aims to provide a safe, nurturing and supportive environment. Enabling young people, the opportunity to engage with staff and other professionals who are able to provide guidance, assistance and support. The home also actively encourages and supports family contact which is in the best interests of any Young Person resident.”* No mention is made that its fundamental aim is to provide a locked, secure environment for young people who have either committed a crime or have welfare secure needs. The environment and a review of the service provided are detailed in the separate report. This also details the concerns raised by other professionals about how the home should be run, which led to tension within the team and a serious undermining of the Registered Manager’s authority.

A roundtable was held on 28 August to discuss the future of the secure children’s home although no firm agreements were reached. The subject of the future of the home is discussed in greater detail later in this report.

**Issue 2: The available resources are not sufficient, incoherent, and inefficiently deployed.**

The Jersey Care Inquiry and Ofsted have identified the lack of a stable workforce as one of the greatest challenges for the Government of Jersey to overcome to improve outcomes for children at risk of abuse and in care.

The Government is committed to reducing staff turnover and to developing the workforce. The Children and Young People's Plan 2019-23 states:

*“We will work together to recruit and retain a child-centred, stable, highly professional workforce”*

At the time of the review, there are insufficient care staff to meet the needs of Jersey's children and young people. In part, this is due to the decreasing numbers of children looked after in the children's homes during 2019 and vacancies were not recruited to. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic the numbers of children increased, leaving the service short. While the Covid-19 situation presented significant challenges in terms of staffing, it is evident that some of the homes had been experiencing staff shortages prior to the pandemic.

The review recommends that the recruitment of skilled and suitably qualified permanent staff needs to be a priority. It is also recommended that the Government of Jersey reclassifies Home Managers and Residential Child Care Officers at grades 3 and 4, as Essential Employees<sup>2</sup> to attract staff with experience of working in children's homes in other jurisdictions.

During the review period, there was a recruitment drive, but the appointments will neither meet the shortfalls nor be available to work for several weeks.

A number of young, enthusiastic and dynamic staff remain on the bank as opposed to seeking permanent posts as they do not find them attractive enough. Further to

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.je/LifeEvents/MovingToJersey/LivingInJersey/Pages/AccommodationRestrictions.aspx>

this, some have reported that the culture and ethos of some of the more long-standing staff has been off-putting. While there is a healthy number of bank staff, they too are insufficient to plug the gaps, and a local initiative to provide private care has already seen a number of those staff applying to work there. The Government must develop a strategy to recruit, develop, reward and retain residential staff to ensure future provision is sufficient and of the highest standards.

The residential care staff are not used optimally, often in a reactive manner, sometimes regardless of their skill set. Care Staff at times follow a child, which may not be in the child's best interests. For example, when children moved into the secure children's home, their staff team moved with them, despite their lack of success in engaging and moving the child forwards in their prior home. This reflects the lack of clarity in the purpose and function of homes but equally, the lack of thought behind the deployment of staff. While consistency of worker is important, children need more specialist and therapeutic support in a secure children's homes.

The regular movement of staff, poor availability of the Manager and lack of specialism prevents the foundation of solid teams and sense of family within each home. While homes could demonstrate a core of staff, their ability to bond and develop together means that they cannot be considered teams.

This leads to children often encountering new staff and those staff regularly having to adapt to new environments and needs. This is particularly problematic in services such as Supported Accommodation. This service is chronically understaffed and Residential Child Care Officers (RCCOs) have found themselves lone working with up to 6 children who they may or may not know. One young person commented: *"I come home sometimes and I don't know the staff. Some of them don't even introduce themselves."* This is neither therapeutic nor supportive for any child, let alone one admitted into care due to past trauma.

This is in direct contrast to the Short Break Homes where staff remain in one place, they have dedicated Managers and have therefore, over time, developed into cohesive, effective teams. Short breaks have retained their staff, developed their skills, and now have highly specialised workers who want to remain within these



services. This should be an explicit priority aim for every children's home on the Island.

To begin to address these issues, each home must have a full-time Registered Manager. This is addressed in more detail later in the report.

Further to this, care staff at a grade 4 should be encouraged to apply for manager posts and further training offered wherever indicated.

The current rota pattern in the supported accommodation, secure and children's homes means that there is a heavy footfall with up to three staff changes per day, every day of the week, that is 21 times a week that staff change. Just imagine the impact that must have on a child that needs stability, consistency and clear boundaries. Neither does it reflect a normal family life in any way. At the current time, shifts change at 15.00. This means that young people's days and activities must fit into these shift patterns. One young person said *"Its not normal is it? Its not like a family."*

The review strongly recommends that a restructuring of the staff and a change in shift patterns in the Children's Homes and Supported Accommodation is introduced to better meet the needs of the young people, rather than meeting the needs of staff. While there will be some staff who neither want to change their work patterns, or due to family circumstances cannot change, the operating model must be based on the needs of the children. Furthermore, development in other parts of the service should ensure that alternatives are available.

An example of the proposed rotas is available at Appendix 4.

### **Jersey Cares and The Children's Rights Officers**

The introduction of a Children's Rights service and the part-government funded Jersey Cares, has been a positive step in the further development of the voice of the child and in raising the children's profile. Children have welcomed and value these organisations and some have formed good relationships with their workers: *"Staff*

*that have helped me in the past still help me like X (CRO) and Once I knew my CRO was care-experienced it really helped me trust her*". Home staff recognise the need for both organisations but report that they struggle to engage with them, resulting in a lack of joint working, which would be beneficial to the young people. Managers and RCCOs raised concerns that they have difficulty implementing structures, boundaries and meaningful consequences as they are worried that their actions will be seen as overbearing and in violation of the children's rights.

The review has concerns that the relationship between homes and these services is in danger of becoming adversarial, and the authority of the advocates is affecting how home staff believe they can work with their children and young people. Care staff spoke about workers from both services claiming right of entry to their homes and having the authority to look at any records. The reviewer has been unable to verify these claims but if this is the reality, it would suggest that the organisations are acting more in line with regulators than advocates and there is an unhealthy blurring of rights and responsibilities. It would be expected that access to homes is by invitation and appointment, and that any concerns about a child's safety that might precipitate this action, are dealt with through the appropriate channels. Access to records should only be given when a child has granted it in pursuance of a complaint or a concern. This should be explored further and clarified by the service commissioners.

All professionals in this situation need to have clearly defined and mutually understood roles and responsibilities to increase everyone's effectiveness in helping the children and young people. Without this, there is a danger that the excellent work carried out by the advocate services will be lost, and their aim to promote the voice of every child will overwhelm the needs of traumatised ones.

## **Social Work Services**

The Children's Plan pledges to *"Expand, join up and target our early help offer to ensure that children and young people get the support they need when they need it, to prevent risk and issues from escalating."* Initiatives have been put in place towards achieving this pledge, but shortfalls remain.

There are vacancies across the children's services, but one of the biggest problems appears to be retention of social workers. Their turnover is high and as they have pivotal roles in the lives and welfare of the children on this Island, this contributes to poor outcomes. One young person told me that they had only seen their social worker once all year. They went on to say that "*I had lots of other social workers ringing me wanting to talk to me, but I told them all to 'f\*\*\* off' as I'm sick of telling my story*". One parent told the reviewer "*Having a social worker is so stressful. They come and go so quickly. Stuff gets missed with all the changes*".

These were recurring stories that left the children, young people and families feeling undervalued, unimportant, and angry.

One social worker told me that this was an isolating Island and as a new social worker, their morale and desire to stay was wavering. Those who remain in post largely have families and support networks on the Island and consideration should be given to addressing this social support to potentially increase retention.

### **Early Help and Edge of Care**

All parties approached during the review agreed that social work resources need to be targeted towards preventing admission to the homes. Early Help aims to address issues at source and their impact is reported to be growing. Edge of Care are now classed as Family Support Workers although their Team Leader considers this to be a misdirection, as their skills lie in direct, planned work with young people to prevent admission to statutory services. There are differing views as to the sufficiency of the team, but their role in planned prevention should be maintained and recommendations are made later in the report for formalising this approach.

### **Youth Services**

A valuable resource is the Island's Youth Service. Children praised them: "*My Youth worker X connects with me*", "*I would recommend the Youth Service. They take an*

*interest, they contact you. They're there for you. They drop anything to be there if you're in danger."*

The Youth Services provide among other things youth clubs, early interventions, group sessions, targeted work, and community work sometimes with the Edge of Care Team or the Police. They employ young people who are care experienced and some spoken to during the review aspired to positions within their teams. They have recently employed a part time, care experienced worker to develop work within the children's homes and this should be an invaluable resource.

Their Head of Service talked about the lack of engagement from the Childrens Homes and Supported Accommodation. They spoke about running Prince's Trust Programmes and staff saying the child wouldn't get out of bed, and not bringing children to youth clubs. This is a missed opportunity as the service should be an integral part of the planning for Jersey's children who are looked after. Again, integrating their services better is covered later in this review.

### **The Secure Children's Home**

Placements at the secure children's home are infrequent. As a result, there is a very small number of permanent staff and opening it depletes all other homes. This is a chaotic use of resources and one that cannot benefit the children and young people who are sent there, nor those who lose their staff for it to open. The service is neither efficient nor effective.

One of Jersey's ambitions should be to not secure its children. The level of crime is relatively low and although some young people do present with behaviour that gives concern on welfare grounds, the Services should be confident in their ability to support and work positively with these young people outside of a secure environment.

While some children will possibly require remand facilities in the future, this should be developed along with a Youth Justice system, or off-Island. However, the overall

aim should be to stop children from seriously offending and to keep vulnerable children safer.

It has been recognised in the Children's Plan that resources need to be focussed on preventing young people being admitted to statutory services and to this end, the review recommends that the secure children's home should be closed as a Secure Home and repurposed to provide facilities whose purpose is to work with Jersey's traumatised children and those in crisis, in more beneficial ways.

It is recommended that the secure children's home is converted into a Resource Centre that provides short break services, education, emergency beds, community outreach and family and child therapeutic support.

The service would be led by the Edge of Care Team and the residential element staffed by specialist carers. The aim would be for planned admissions to the unit to facilitate resolution and reunification with families through respite and targeted therapeutic interventions. It is envisaged that the Youth Service and CAMHS would have a presence and the Resource Centre would be a resource for families and young people to access help and support.

While the overall aim is to prevent admission to the residential homes, this facility would ensure that any placements that must be made, are based upon robust assessments and the exhaustion of alternative interventions.

In addition, there would be four emergency beds. The lack of emergency provision has led to several inappropriate placements, some witnessed during the review. Any admission would be for a time limited assessment period during which multi agency decisions could be made regarding future plans in a safe, structured environment. Over time, the Resource Centre should reduce admissions to the residential services and provide alternative interventions for vulnerable children and families.

### **Intensive Support Homes**

It is inevitable that some children will not be identified quickly enough and may become involved in behaviours that may currently lead to a Welfare Secure Order. It is proposed that a small unit with specialised staff is developed to work exclusively with these children. The staff team would be available to the Resource Centre when the home is not in operation, as their expertise should be used to work with other, similarly vulnerable children and prevent their eventual admission.

## **In Summary**

The Government of Jersey needs to establish more coherent, integrated services that are deployed more effectively and efficiently to better meet the needs of the most vulnerable children. For most children, the service aspiration should be to secure them as low down the continuum of need as possible. But some children and young people on the edge of care, and in care, should benefit from support services explicitly designed and delivered to meet their needs. There is no doubt that the entry to care thresholds need to be raised in Jersey, but this can only be done through the provision of intensive family support services at times and places children and families need.

Entry to care thresholds need to be owned by partner agencies, not just social care. The availability and deployment of resources along the continuum of need should be more explicit to professionals and children and families. The Government of Jersey has a stated aim of right help, right time. Alongside, it is incumbent on the Government to be explicit about what that means in reality for service users – what help, when and where.

### **Issue 3: Roles and responsibilities and lines of accountability lack clarity.**

*“The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it.”*

— Theodore Roosevelt

#### **Registered Managers**

The residential service has six registered managers. The Short Break homes each have their own Registered Manager. One acting Manager and two other substantive posts are held by home grown, experienced staff. All Managers either have or are studying towards an appropriate management qualification.

Two of the Managers in the generic care homes are from the UK. They both had experience of Jersey prior to taking up post, but their experiences of the care system off-Island and on, are very different. While they have undoubtedly been brought in to improve standards based on previous experience, their ability to do so has been hampered by excessive hours, a lack of deferred authority and having to adjust to new regulations and operating procedures.

It is evident that Registered Managers tend to be too often managers in name only. While they undoubtedly meet their Conditions of Registration as stipulated in Standards 2 and 3, they are prevented from fulfilling their duties, by the practices and processes in place in the service as a whole.

Managers who have more than one home do not have sufficient time to fulfil their duties for each home. Staff regularly spoke of not seeing their Registered Manager and one child did not know who the Registered Manager for their home was. To address this, there should be one Registered Manager per home.

It is a Manager’s duty to set and maintain the standards of care in their homes and this includes ensuring that the home is properly staffed by “suitably qualified, skilled,

competent and experienced people”<sup>3</sup>. Their ability to do this is undermined when staff are not permanent and are regularly drafted in from other settings. This current period in the service’s development is a vital time for forming teams, establishing the ethos and character of a service, and learning about how to interpret and implement the new Regulations and Standards.

The review found that some Managers from all levels are neither personally accountable nor held to account for their actions or inactions. Again, the Short Breaks homes operate autonomously and effectively. Their Managers challenge decisions and fight for the protection of their services. While Managers within the other services are also vocal, their roles are so diluted and outside influences so strong, that their voices are invariably lost and ineffectual. To compound this, these Manager’s roles are neither valued nor protected. There is an expectation that Managers will cope, regardless of what is asked of them, and consequently there is a high level of stress amongst these managers, whilst personally recognising and addressing that stress is sometimes seen as a weakness.

Managers must, however, accept some responsibility for this situation. They have a duty to ensure their mental and physical health is maintained in order to continue to fulfil registration requirements and should be assertive in demanding their rights to appropriate time off, as well as for their staff. They should equally be strongly advocating for the children’s rights to permanent, stable teams. This will be aided by assertiveness training which should be made available.

Regulation 8 (1) (c) and Standard 2.3<sup>4</sup> require that the manager ensures that the placement of children in their home is appropriate and safe. This requires them to take into account the other young people in placement and whether the home has the capability of meeting their needs. A Manager must be able to evidence their decision making and demonstrate appropriate assessments of risk. The Island’s current sufficiency has meant that the pressure on beds has been high, and

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<sup>3</sup> Regulation 17(4)(a) The Regulations of Care (Standards and Requirements) (Jersey)

<sup>4</sup> Jersey care Commission Standards for Children’s and Young People’s Residential Care 2019



inappropriate placements have been made, often without the full agreement of the Manager and therefore, not in the best interests of the child.

There is an inherent pressure within an Island setting. Beds are needed, Managers know the placements are wrong and say so, but most express a feeling of inevitability that their opinion may be heard but will be overridden. In some cases, variations are also granted by the Care Commission despite their own misgivings. This is dangerous and disrespectful on the part of the Government of Jersey, complicit on behalf of the Care Commission, and the learned helplessness of some of the managers permeates through the teams.

The difficulties inherent in regulating a closed system should not be underestimated. Whilst both the Children's Commissioner and Care Commission have roles and legal powers and duties, they are operating within a limited and self-limiting system. The purchaser is also the provider. On the mainland, we know that this works and can be very effective. However, their capacity to increase sufficiency by using neighbouring or more distant independent providers ensures that regulatory powers have more effect. Mainland children's services do not look for variations or ignore registration categories as they have a greater capacity to source alternative provisions. In Jersey, there is a policy expectation to keep children on their home island which puts a strain on the local resources.

While it is recognised that it is generally best for children and young people to be enabled to maintain close contact with family and friends, some children require specialist help due to their levels of trauma. The provision of this is not always possible on such a small Island. This review considers whether more informed challenge, based upon trauma focussed assessment, will help ensure that the right placement is offered to children, first time.

In order to address this, some difficult decisions may be required to ensure that services can meet current need appropriately, and this may include a planned but temporary use of off island provision until the local services are effectively developed.

The Registered Manager role is not sufficiently respected by some staff. It needs to be made attractive to ensure other staff aspire to the position and recognise the importance of the role. At the current time, Registered Managers report that they are expected to work overtime and plug gaps in their services. Apart from the effect that this will have on their mental health and wellbeing, they end up being paid at lower overtime rate than some of the staff they manage and lead. Managers are paid as a Residential Child Care Officers, level 2, on overtime as they are supposedly filling this role. If a Manager is on duty, then they retain the status of a registered person, and are responsible for any decisions or adverse events that may happen on that shift.

Residential Child Care Officers, level 4, were clear that they are unlikely to take a Manager's post as it would likely result in a drop in pay. This combined with an increase in responsibility makes the post very unattractive to anyone from within the service.

Discussions with the Managers and the available pay grades confirmed this. It also showed little differential between Managers and Service Leads. Terms and conditions of Managers and Service Leads should be reviewed to address this.

### **Service Leads**

There are two service leads. One is responsible for the Short Break Homes while the other covers all remaining homes. Only the Short Breaks post is substantive although the other lead has been in post for two years. This does nothing for morale, especially at a time when they are constantly fire-fighting due to shortages and inappropriate placements. This is an example, however of the lack of value that appears to be put on some parts of the service and which is acutely felt by its staff.

### **Senior Leadership**

The past turnover of senior leadership and the perceived lack of accountability of preceding management has left a culture of mistrust amongst the workforce and a prevailing attitude of 'let's wait and see how long they last'.

During the review, it was apparent that many staff did not know who had responsibility for what, and indeed, who many of the new senior managers were. Care home staff repeatedly complained about their lack of visibility and accessibility. Covid restrictions have undoubtedly affected this but the perception will rapidly become fact without taking steps to address the situation.

While the review has been able to identify that significant changes and developments are planned and are indeed happening across the services, staff in residential children's homes feel detached and unaware of them. Their reality too often is a continuation of the same conditions and frustrations. Failing to effectively communicate plans to all levels potentially results in a lack of feeling valued, poor levels of engagement and inevitably a loss of ownership and belonging. Too many of the staff in the homes reflected all these emotions in differing degrees. It is essential that the plans for the growth and development of the services are consistently shared and communicated to all staff to ensure that they understand, are engaged and that all levels take responsibility for the necessary improvements.

There are a lot of ideas for the development of the services and some of them have been put into action. The overall direction and vision is not yet sufficiently clear. Nobody within the services was able to clearly articulate any complete vision for residential services. Services develop around a clear vision and give people a clarity of expectation and direction. Agreement should be reached and communicated as a priority. Planning should also incorporate regular meetings with all grades of staff to review progress, update them and encourage them to share their insights throughout the process.

Outstanding homes have *“Leaders who are hands-on, who unite their staff behind a shared purpose, and who are transparent and open in their expectations and pursuit of excellence”* Key finding of Ofsted report on Outstanding Children's Homes <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outstanding-childrens-homes>

#### **Issue 4: Staff do not always feel valued and need more learning and development opportunities**

*“The parent-child connection is the most powerful mental health intervention known to mankind”* Bessel van der Kolk

There was a feeling among many of the staff that they were not valued. Staff at all levels spoke about the stress they experience through their work – for example, being regularly assaulted and threatened and working so much that they become exhausted. It is also evident that there is a level of trauma in the service, based on the personal impact of the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry and its aftermath. From discussions, it would appear that skilful and routine debriefing does not take place in all homes which is vital both to learn from mistakes but also to help staff and young people deal with any trauma that may have been brought up through incidents.

These issues have been compounded for some by a perception that senior managers responsible for residential appear distant and detached from the operational realities. It is evident that the service have plans to improve staff engagement, which has been hampered by social distancing, virtual working and 24 hour working patterns of care home staff. However, there is an attitude of ‘we’ve seen that before and it didn’t work then’ among a significant minority.

A small number of staff spoke about unsubstantiated allegations that had been poorly managed by previous senior managers. They spoke about the trauma and mistrust this has left them feeling, and at least one has chosen to leave the service as a result. Those who disclosed this information consistently related that the full outcomes and findings of the investigations were never relayed to them and they were left with no apologies or right of appeal. This should be learned from and used to inform future, improved practice.

Staff in children’s homes are purportedly acting in loco parentis. The children they care for have generally experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s), the effects of which lead to long term health inequalities and poor life outcomes. To help children heal, staff must understand how to parent children well. They must be

responsive to need, be challenging, loving, consistent, respectful and above all, be the adult that Jersey's vulnerable children need, to help them understand how they too can function well when they reach adulthood. <sup>6</sup>

Care in the children's homes, supported accommodation and secure children's home is currently not good enough. This is not through neglect or a lack of caring on the part of the staff, but through a combination of inadequate training, poor understanding of the children's fundamental needs and how to meet them, and, for some staff, a lack of recognition of what good looks like.

Jersey's Children's Services have undoubtedly made great advances. Closing their last large homes was a landmark moment but its passing is mourned by a number of the staff. Children have a different view though commenting: *"Brig-y-don was absolutely shocking. It was s\*\*\*. We did what we wanted. Staff didn't calm you down or help,"* and *"I hated it. It was too big. I didn't like it when new kids came in."* The most positive comment from a child was that *"We were allowed to run wild."* This disconnect between staff's perception and the child's lived reality suggests a lack of understanding of the needs of children in their care.

Some staff show a lack of curiosity about their children's lives. During the review, children were seen going out with little or no engagement with staff. Staff knew little about their plans and made no concerted attempts to persuade the children to stay with them. Staff appeared to accept that as teenagers, children had the right to go out as desired, and staff could do nothing about it. Staff's lack of knowledge about or engagement with the children leaves children vulnerable and left assuming that adults are not interested.

Some children are, in essence, carrying on with their previous lives, but at different addresses.

Where staff felt a connection with a child, there was evidence of nurturing, but this was not consistent across the teams. One child told me that staff do hug her, yet a

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<sup>6</sup> *"The Body Keeps Score. Mind, brain and body in the transformation of trauma"* 2015 Bessel Van Der Kolk. Penguin Psychology.

recent care leaver had “*never felt loved*” and said that physical contact “*rarely happened*”. Some staff expressed alarm at the concept of physical affection or indeed, love for the children in their care and expressed the concern about how to demonstrate this safely without fear of allegations. This concern was expressed from Manager level down to bank staff.

The review identified a lack of good, applied parenting skills. It found that there is a fear of using touch, nurturing practices and love within safe, consistent, moral structures, and while staff praise and regard their young people, they exercise no authority to equally apply boundaries and consequences. Fun and shared experiences are also limited, so children choose to be with friends and family even when this compounds their trauma.

While care in the short break services is more responsive, some staff there have also expressed concerns about safely showing affection. Nonetheless, these children are in the homes for relatively short periods of time and then return to their families. In the other settings, children and young people may live with staff for many years. Withholding physical and emotional affection from a child is known to be massively damaging to children.

Children in healthy, supportive families have rules, structure and boundaries. They are an essential element in learning self-regulation, and knowing cause and effect engenders feelings of security and permanence. This is largely missing in the residential and supported care homes. Consequently, traumatised children who need help, love, and guidance, are often running the homes.

*“Staff training needs to be better. Staff who were qualified years ago did pointless training. Staff coming through are better qualified but they’re not in charge. There’s a number of staff there that shouldn’t be. They didn’t care then, and they’ve had no training since.”* **Recent Care leaver**

From conversations with the staff and looking at records, there was little demonstration of an understanding of the effects of trauma, how to work

therapeutically to overcome these, and the effects of staff actions/inactions on outcomes for the young people.

Due to the pandemic, staff training has been online. Staff spoke about not learning as much, being able to skim through the content and answer multiple choice questions as often as needed until they got them right. This suggests that the level and quality of learning has not been good enough. Alongside, there is not yet effective oversight in place to assess the impact and effectiveness of learning on staff behaviour and outcomes for children.

Staff were, however, full of praise about therapeutic training previously provided by Headsight, which was not completed due to the pandemic. Together with Maybo they form the Trauma Action Group whose role is to increase staff's understanding of the causes of trauma and how to effectively work with traumatised children and young people. The planned training on therapeutic interventions is starting to be reintroduced and this should be prioritised across the services.

In order to ensure that training remains appropriate to the needs of the service and to individual homes, a Training Officer should be appointed. This could logically form part of a Quality Assurance role. They should be responsible for ensuring that:

- staff remain up to date with all mandatory training,
- courses specific to the needs of Jersey's children are developed and delivered
- all training and development is in line with current research and best practice
- they complete ongoing assessment and audit of the practical application and impact of the training provided in the homes
- a quality assurance tool is developed specific to the needs of the different homes within the residential services
- a quality assurance audit is conducted against specific KPIs at least bi-annually that informs further training and development needs

At the time of the review, home staff were under-resourced, stressed and exhausted. Some managers expressed that they had 'had enough' and indicated that if this situation continues, they will consider leaving the services. Morale is very low, and in this situation, people focus on the negatives and struggle to reflect in any meaningful manner on their actions and future needs of their children. Until this situation is stabilised, it is unlikely that any meaningful learning will take place that can affect change.

The majority of staff spoken to in the Supported Accommodation Homes, the Children's Homes and the Secure Children's Homes stated that they did not receive regular supervision and or an annual appraisal. Supervision is an important tool to support staff, address developmental needs and concerns and provide feedback on their performance. It also provides staff with a safe environment to discuss any issues that may be impacting on their work.

Most staff spoken to saw no value to appraisals, feeling that everything should be covered in supervision or through general feedback. This is an important part of staff development and is vital when aiming to develop a focussed, skilled workforce. Appropriate use of supervisions and appraisals would have helped identify those staff struggling to adapt to new ways of working and those who will become future leaders, allowing managers to implement appropriate development programmes.

## **Social Workers**

The high turnover of social workers has meant that they are constantly having to be re-taught about Jersey and their children and families. Some have come to Jersey as their first posts and their lack of experience has been reported by Service Leads and Home Managers to have led to inappropriate and unhelpful behaviour. As this is a crucial role in the child's life, it is vital that their knowledge and skills are sufficient to work with Jersey's children. Retention has been an ongoing issue on the Island and has been covered in detail elsewhere.



## **Issue 5: There are gaps in the services**

*“We will expand, join up and target our early help offer to ensure that children and young people get the support they need when they need it, to prevent risk and issues from escalating.”* **Children and Young People’s Plan 2019-23**

Jersey has made remarkable progress in provision for and the protection of its children and young people. Children’s rights and the children’s voice is well represented, the UN Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has been widely publicised throughout schools and awareness of Jersey’s responsibilities under this have been promoted throughout the Island, in particular by the Office of the Children’s Care Commissioner.

Early Help has been launched to ensure children and families get the right help, right time. It is hoped that this will prevent the unnecessary entry to care. To build on this and meet the aims of the Children’s Plan, a system that enables the Island’s services to unify under one research-based assessment and planning programme is recommended. Such programmes are ACEs led and provide a rich database of interventions and outcomes for staff to refer to. Any system would need to meet the assessment needs of Health, Education and Social Care to ensure seamless collaborative working.

Having one system across the services is designed to improve the Island’s future planning ensuring finances are allocated optimally. The Transformational, Collaborative Outcomes Management (TCOM)<sup>7</sup> is one that could meet Jersey’s needs and it is recommended that this, and other models, are explored. This could be applied to Health, Education and Social Care ensuring all services are ACE informed and assess children using the same criteria. This will inevitably result in smoother transitions and more effective service and placement planning.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://tcomconversations.org>

## **Children's Homes**

Discussions with Jersey's service commissioners suggest that there are sufficient beds to meet the needs of Jersey's children who are looked after and that this sufficiency could be reduced once the Early Help and Intensive Fostering services are fully operational. Presently, the homes are working to capacity, and while the services are being developed and reshaped, the current homes will need to remain fully operational to care for those children currently accommodated. However, there remains a lack of specialism in the cohort of children's homes resulting in some severely traumatised children being placed off-Island. While that this may need to continue into the future, development of specialisms should mean that the need will be greatly reduced. As stated earlier, one of the homes should be scheduled for closure. The current number of children needing accommodation currently precludes this, but it should occur as soon as is possible.

The remaining homes should be invested in to make sure the premises are fit, and a review of their individual purposes agreed with the Senior Management Team and Registered Managers. The Care Commission has indicated that one home should be returned to a two bedroom home once the current children leave.

It is further recommended that therapeutic services are available to all the children accessing any of the homes or short break services. Therapists should also be commissioned to work with staff to increase their understanding of their children's needs and to ensure consistent care. This could be commissioned or provided in collaboration with CAMHS.

There will remain a need for the current level of residential homes to remain until other services aimed at reducing admissions are operational, but these would, eventually, be reduced further.

## **Supported Accommodation Homes**

The purpose of one of the Supported Accommodation homes should be reviewed. At the current time, there is a significant cohort of children with care needs or who due

to age and experience require far more than support, living in both homes. It is recommended that one home should seek to vary its registration to provide nurture and support for those children and young people who are not capable of independent living but whose needs cannot be met in a children's home. This would include those returning from more structured children's homes off-island and who require a period of assessment and readjustment before transitioning elsewhere. The home would have strict admission criteria and its purpose would be to carry out robust assessments of need to inform planned transitions, and nurture to develop their emotional capacity to where they are ready for a less intensive environment. Transitions may include the other supported accommodation home, reunification with families, adult provision or into their own property. This would ensure that children and young people are placed appropriately and that staff in those homes have the right skills to meet their needs.

There is currently no firm agreement with the landlord of one of the home's landlord for the Government of Jersey to continue using it to provide a service. This is needed to ensure that the young people have a sense of security. Once this is secured, extensive refurbishment of all the bedrooms will be required. The property is ideally situated for care leavers in the Island's capital, St Helier. When this is secured, it is proposed that the home should continue as a Supported Accommodation Home. The interventions offered would be research led and based upon robust assessment and individual need. There would be close liaison with Housing, Personal Advisors, colleges and local businesses from the premises. The aim of this is to develop a wrap-around specialist service to ensure that Jersey's young care leavers have the best chance of a positive and productive future.

### **Complex Needs Short Break Services**

The Short Breaks Service has a vision of how it will develop and where it sits within the overall vision of the Child Development Centre. Part of this includes the provision of a Home Care service from one of the homes. However, providing this out of its current cohort of staff, would result to cuts in services to those already accessing the provision. The Service Lead and Manager favour a supplementary service with a dedicated staff team. Entering people's houses and providing care requires a

different skill set to taking children into a specialised care environment, and this alone would support the proposal for a separate team. The provision of this service would also potentially reduce the pressure on respite services, freeing beds for those more in need.

The Registered Manager at the other complex needs home spoke about those families whose child was receiving services apart from theirs, and whose circumstances meant that their child no longer really needed to access the homes. However, the Short Break Homes are doing such a good job that people become reliant, and it is very hard to remove services. The knock-on effect of this is that it can be difficult to bring in new children, as places are effectively being blocked. As there are no plans to extend the service, the step-down criteria must be made explicit from the initial offer of services to safeguard sufficiency.

Both homes and nearly all parents spoken to, expressed concerns regarding the transition into adult services for their children. To quote one of the staff, “there a mad panic with 6 weeks to go”. Transitions are largely dependent upon the availability of services at the time of need, and as needs and sufficiency fluctuate, it can be difficult to plan far in advance. Undoubtedly better planning from point of contact with the services up to transition must be developed and may include tendering for further, diverse adult provision, but this is for joint services to tackle and beyond the remit of this review.

While the Short Break Homes are providing an excellent service for its current cohort of children, there is no provision for those that need longer periods of care. Children who remain in a care facility for more than 24 hours, are classed as looked after<sup>8</sup> and this affects the Island’s ability to provide focussed, longer breaks or extended stays, to meet specific needs. Short Break homes have also previously been used for long term placements and this has meant families have been denied their agreed services. Managers have fought hard to ensure that their services are now ringfenced and that this does not happen in the future.

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<sup>8</sup> Children (Jersey) Law 2002 1A (b):References to a child who is looked after by the Minister

While there has been a history of inappropriate admissions to the specialist short break services with children becoming resident at the homes, this is not the case currently as consequently, this deprives some children of their respite. It would, however, suggest a need for the development or commissioning of a small, residential provision and/or specialist fostering.

Short Break Managers told me that through negotiation and hard work developing and defining their services, they were confident to appropriately challenge to ensure that the service was now exclusively used for short breaks. This should be maintained at all costs to ensure that the service can continue to operate effectively. Should more permanent beds be required, this must be in addition to and not out of the current cohort.

Despite their praise, parents explained that they have had to fight for services, how they feel isolated and how the withdrawal of New Horizons and Les Amie has left some without the additional support that enabled them to cope. Some mothers explained that they don't like to access support groups as they become embarrassed by the quality of the services that they access at Eden and Oakwell. Both homes have plans to develop service specific support groups for their parents, but these have been stalled by Covid.

## **Fostering**

The Independent Jersey Care Inquiry identified that there was no full-time payment for foster carers', and this has now been addressed. As a result, the Island is working to increase its sufficiency and to develop intensive foster families for whom this will be their full-time role. They will be supported by a specialist therapeutic team including a psychologist and dedicated social workers.

As the ability and specialism of the homes increase, foster carers could potentially also work with children in the homes to enable more successful step-down plans.

## **Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**

CAMHS has recently moved from HCS into CYPES. The service is currently being redesigned and there will be increased financial investment. The service is committed to prioritising children looked after and the plans including greater integration with children's social care services. At the present time, while they provide reports and feed in, the lack of provision within the residential services means that their input is an addition, as opposed to an integral part of the child's care plan.

Jersey currently has no Tier 4 CAMHS Inpatient provision. The service commissions beds on the children's ward at the Government's hospital, which the Head of Service considers appropriate for those children who take overdoses and self-harm. However, for those children with mental health issues, this may not be an appropriate setting and homes do not currently have the specialist skills to help these children. Self-injurious behaviour and overall referrals to the service are increasing and a specialist facility should be considered to meet future need.

The review recommends that CAMHS has a permanent presence within the proposed Resource Centre. This would ensure that they form a planned part of any child's care from their initial contact with the services and through to transition onwards.

## **Education**

The Inclusive Education provision on the Island is under development. While there is a strong school for children with complex needs, similar strength has been lacking for care experienced children and those open to Early Help and the Edge of Care. Until 2017, there was no Virtual School<sup>99</sup> in Jersey. An interim manager has been

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<sup>99</sup> The Virtual School is responsible for monitoring and promoting the educational progress and achievement of looked-after Children and care leavers. provides information, advice and guidance to looked-after children and care leavers about education, employment and training

developing the post and they are now in a position to appoint a Virtual and Deputy Head to substantive posts.

Developments have been made in enabling access to the Jersey Premium for care experienced adults and for children who are looked after from 16 onwards. There are a number of children receiving education off-Island and ensuring their needs are met can be difficult, but the acceptance of online attendance due to Covid has increased capacity.

The major issue appears to be for children who struggle to fit into mainstream schools. There are currently limited alternatives and a disproportionate number of children who are looked after or receiving services are either suspended or not attending. This is an issue that is beyond the scope of this review and will be considered in the forthcoming Inclusion Review that the Government of Jersey has commissioned.

## Recommendations and the Government's Response

|    | <b>Recommendations:<br/>Service Development</b>   | <b>Accepted</b>                              | <b>Response</b>   |
|----|---|--|---|
| 1  | <p>In order to better meet the aims of the Children's Plan, a system that enables the Island's services to unify under one research-based assessment and planning programme is recommended.</p> <p>Any programme should be trauma-informed and provide a rich database of interventions and outcomes for staff to refer to.</p> <p>Any system would need to meet the assessment needs of Health, Education and Social Services to ensure seamless collaborative working. Having one system across the services that facilitates early identification of need should improve the Island's future planning ensuring finances are allocated optimally. The Transformational, Collaborative Outcomes Management (TCOM) is one that could meet Jersey's needs and it is recommended that this is explored further.</p> | <p>The Government of Jersey accepts this</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole Service Development - SMT</li> <li>• Look at Service Level led outcome models. Research and consider with SLT, DLT and ELT</li> <li>• Consideration with the Safeguarding Partnership Board</li> </ul>                           |
| 2. | <p>Therapeutic services should be provided across all children's residential and short break services.</p>  | <p>The Government of Jersey accepts this</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop therapeutic team - All services involved - Education, CAMHS, therapeutic Social Workers, FSW, Psychologist</li> <li>• Staff training – Trauma-Informed.</li> <li>• QA input engagement &amp; audit – how do we know</li> </ul> |



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| 3. | <p>The secure children's home should be repurposed into a Resource Centre providing up to 4 short break beds and 4 emergency beds. The Resource Centre should be run by the Edge of care Team with support from RCCOs. The Centre should provide outreach services in collaboration with the Youth Service, family and children's therapy and CAMHS and be a resource facility for children and families in crisis. The implementation will require a period of planning and extensive refurbishment, and a further recruitment drive.</p> <p>There may also be a need to retain a small remand provision until alternative provision is identified. It is hoped that this could be operational within 12 months.</p> | The Government of Jersey accepts this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This work has begun.</li> <li>• The Government has appointed a full-time project manager to lead the development of this work, reporting to a Multi-Agency Management Board.</li> <li>• The work is being developed with consideration of the £7 million redevelopment funding and the new Therapeutic Children's Home.</li> </ul> |
| 4. | <p>A small bespoke therapeutic home should be established to provide intensive work with young people at risk of being secured on welfare grounds. It is likely that it may be used intermittently and should therefore be staffed by specialist workers from the 'Resource Centre'. Consideration should be given to redeveloping one part of the secure children's home to provide this service.</p>  | The Government of Jersey accepts this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This work has begun.</li> </ul>  |

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| 5. | Fieldview should be re-registered as a home that provides nurture and support to those young people who are not able or ready to move into supported accommodation. This would include those returning from more structured children's homes off-island, and who require a period of assessment and readjustment before transitioning elsewhere. | The Government of Jersey accepts this         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Statement of Purpose</li> <li>• Develop team with focus on specific support for needs.</li> <li>• Working group to be established.</li> <li>• Work with the other Supported Accommodation Home</li> <li>• Some young people are not ready and need more support before transitioning to the other home.</li> <li>• The voice of young people and care experienced people should be prominent and the service co-produced– steering group and Jersey Cares.</li> </ul> |
| 6. | Agreement should be reached with the landlord of one of the supported accommodation homes to enable the provision to continue to operate. The property requires extensive upgrading. The service should be supported to develop into a speciality home, providing structured Supported Accommodation.  | The Government of Jersey accepts this         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversations have begun with the landlord</li> </ul>  |
| 7. | A dedicated Home Care team should be developed for the Complex Needs Services. It is envisaged that it should operate out of Eden House once the property has been developed in line with its current plans. The service should include nursing input allowing for promotion and further development of the staff at Oakwell.                    | The Government of Jersey does not accept this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too many elements to this. To be operated out of Oakwell.</li> <li>• Reword Statement of Purpose, separating out the various service elements.</li> <li>• A scoping exercise is needed.</li> </ul>   |
| 8. | Explicit step-down criteria should be agreed for the current Short Break homes to safeguard sufficiency.   | The Government of Jersey accepts this         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needed ASAP</li> <li>• Review Pathway and Operational Procedure.</li> </ul>  |

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| 9.  | Consideration should be given to the development or commissioning of a dedicated complex needs children's home.                                    | The Government of Jersey accepts this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concept yes, definition no</li> <li>• Bespoke planning</li> <li>• FJ example, JS example</li> <li>• 3 x overnights is maximum before it becomes shared care?</li> <li>• Further investigation needed</li> <li>• Need to improve the family support and Edge of Care Offer to children with complex needs</li> </ul> |
| 10. | Consideration should be given to the development of Tier 4 provision.  | The Government of Jersey accepts this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This work is already underway and being constantly reviewed, particularly given the increased demand for CAMHS due to Covid-19</li> <li>•</li> </ul>  |
| 11. | One of the children's homes should be scheduled for closure, respecting the needs and best interests of any children currently living in the home. | The Government of Jersey accepts this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative provision needed.</li> </ul>  |

| <b>Recommendations:<br/>Service Delivery</b> |  | <b>Accepted</b>                               | <b>Response</b>  |
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| 12.  | Statements of Purpose must be used as part of the assessment and planning process involved in making a placement at a children's home.   | The Government of Jersey accepts this         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of Purpose needs to be specific</li> <li>• 100% links back to numbers. 3,4,5,6,</li> </ul>  |
| 13.  | The criteria for accessing specific services must be explicit. Registered Manager's risk assessments and compatibility assessments must be taken into account in all placement agreements and they must be afforded the power of veto in relation to inappropriate referrals. The Government of Jersey, as a responsible provider, has a duty to ensure that provision can adequately meet the needs of any accepted referral. | The Government of Jersey accepts this         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need 3,4,5,6, then 13 – holistic assessment</li> <li>• Compatibility Assessment to be actioned. Outcomes from other recommendations once actioned will assist with implementation.</li> </ul>   |
| 14.  | It is important that homes develop their own identity, shaped by the children living there.  | The Government of Jersey accepts this         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homeliness and identity should be developed without delay.</li> </ul>   |
| 15.  | Age restrictions on Homes Certificates of Registration should be reviewed to enable younger children to be admitted to homes if it is assessed to be in their best interests   | The Government of Jersey does not accept this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would always opt for kinship care, foster care and intensive fostering</li> <li>• If these children couldn't access foster care, they would need something quite specialist if in residential care. It would not just be a matter of increasing the age range of our children's homes.</li> </ul> |

| Recommendations:<br>Personnel |  | Accepted                                      | Response   |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 16.                           | The rolls of RCCO 3 and above should be recognised as 'Essential Employee' and afforded 'Licensed' status to enable an off-island recruitment drive for qualified RCCOs                    | The Government of Jersey does not accept this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only level 3. Registered Managers are already licenced.</li> <li>• Invest in our current staff Succession planning</li> </ul> <p>Discussion around the salary not being sufficient, however in complex needs/specialist homes more specialised/therapeutic skills required, which may not be available on Island, so licenced posts could be explored.</p> <p>Needs to be reviewed if on Island is not successful.</p>              |
| 17.                           | There should be one Registered Manager for each registered home or service.  | The Government of Jersey accepts this         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This work is underway as a priority.</li> <li>• The budget has been agreed. Matching and recruitment has begun.</li> </ul>  |
| 18                            | Residential Child Care Officers terms and conditions should be reviewed, and new rotas introduced in the Supported Accommodation and Children's Homes.                                     | The Government of Jersey accepts this         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WFM Review</li> <li>• Rotas a huge piece of work with HR/Unions</li> <li>• Annual leave policy and procedures to be considered.</li> <li>• Employment Law to be considered – working without a break within a 24hr period.</li> <li>• Consider waking night staff in addition during assessment period.</li> <li>• Staff paid working hours rather than sleep-in rate reducing daytime sessions to 4 from the current 5.</li> </ul> |
| 19.                           | Regular meetings between the Senior Management Team and service staff should be developed to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the service vision is articulated</li> </ul> | The Government of Jersey accepts this         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication and Engagement Strategy required.</li> </ul>  |

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|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- service development plans are explained, and updates provided</li> <li>- staff are afforded the opportunity share insights/challenge appropriately</li> </ul>  |                                       |  |
| 20. | Pay, terms and conditions should be reviewed for Registered Managers and Service Leads.   | The Government of Jersey accepts this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relates to 18</li> </ul>  |
| 21. | <p>A new role of Quality Assurance / Training Officer specific to the residential and short break services should be established. Its purpose would be to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staff remain up to date with all mandatory training,</li> <li>• courses specific to the needs of Jersey's children are developed and delivered</li> <li>• all training and development is in line with current research and best practice.</li> <li>• they complete ongoing assessment and audit of the practical application and impact of the training provided in the homes.</li> <li>• a quality assurance tool is developed specific to the needs of the different homes and short break facilities within the residential services</li> <li>• a quality assurance audit is conducted against specific KPIs at least bi-annually that informs further training and development needs.</li> </ul> | The Government of Jersey accepts this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs a role to be approved ASAP</li> <li>• Consider a year contract as a focussed QA role and review.</li> </ul> |

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| 22. | Supervision and Appraisal should be carried out for all staff in line with policy.   | The Government of Jersey accepts this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of additional Registered Managers and single home focus will provide capacity and capability to do this</li> <li>• Aligned to the need for a staff structure to support this to be done.</li> <li>• Review supervision policy and include Reflective Supervision and My Conversation, My Goals.</li> </ul> |
| 23. | Advocate's alleged claims of rights of entry to the homes and powers to access records should be clarified. Further to this, an accurate understanding of their rights and responsibilities should be shared and understood by all home staff. | The Government of Jersey accepts this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity of roles required Jersey Cares / Children's Rights team</li> </ul>   |

| <b>Recommendations:<br/>Secure Children's Home</b> |  | <b>Accepted</b>                       | <b>Response</b>  |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| 24.  | There is a strong likelihood that staff specialist skills may deteriorate as the unit often lies empty for extended periods and staff are redeployed. Consideration should be given to how staff retain their knowledge base and how they would then be available to respond to infrequent admissions. | The Government of Jersey accepts this | Work has begun on this recommendation. The secure children's home will be developed into a resource centre, serving both the needs of children and young people in a secure and non-secure setting within a therapeutic and trauma-informed operating model. This will enable staff to develop their skills, competence and confidence.  |
| 25.  | The rationale for risk-assessed searches on admission should be fully documented for each child.   | The Government of Jersey accepts this | This will be implemented without delay.  |
| 26.  | An in-depth ligature risk assessment of the home should be conducted, and all identified risks removed.  | The Government of Jersey accepts this | This will be conducted without delay and regularly moving forward and documented.  |
| 27.  | Bedroom doors should be replaced by strong secure doors with viewing panes that look more homely, and the environment decorated to be more child appropriate.  | The Government of Jersey accepts this | The new doors have been ordered and will be fitted as soon as possible.  |
| 28.  | What happens after a secure placement should be discussed at the first, and all subsequent multi-agency meetings. Ad hoc threshold reviews should take place as children's plans change, to enable more appropriate and planned step-down to alternative children's accommodation or returns home.     | The Government of Jersey accepts this | This has been implemented. A multi-agency secure children's home management board has been established and meets monthly to oversee operations. All referrals for 72-hour Secure Accommodation Orders are now routinely shared with board members for review in advance of them being approved by the Director of Children's Services. There are plans in place to combine the Placement Panel and the Secure Accommodation Order Panel, including professional and lay members as appointed by Ministers. The new combined panel and the management board will be responsible for ensuring Ad hoc threshold |



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|     |   |                                       | reviews should take place as children's plans change.   |
| 29. | A clear pathway plan from admission through to post discharge must be established. This should include education and intensive therapeutic intervention to ensure that children's time in the home is beneficial and life changing, as opposed to a form of punishment and containment.   | The Government of Jersey accepts this | The secure children's home project manager has begun this work and is developing the pathway planning process with partners and young people.                   |
| 30. | If the home is to continue to operate as a secure children's home, then agreement should be reached regarding its purpose and function. If a child is assessed as meeting the threshold, then they should be accommodated in line with the operating rules of the home. The sufficiency and skills of the home's staff should be recognised as appropriate to maintain their welfare and safety whether different sexes or statuses are accommodated. | The Government of Jersey accepts this | A new Statement of Purpose has been drafted for submission to the Jersey Care Commission.   |
| 31. | Compatibility Assessments should include the ability of the Registered Manager to decline an admission on compatibility grounds. This is an important consideration in future planning for service provision as if this is to be met, there will need to be an alternative option available.  | The Government of Jersey accepts this | The Registered Manager will be enabled to undertake compatibility assessments and to decline admissions on compatibility grounds. Assessments will be recorded. |
| 32. | In England, the Social Care Inspection Framework (SCIF) is used by Ofsted to inspect Children's Homes, but with different assurance frameworks for secure and open settings and it recommended this type of approach is followed in terms   | The Government of Jersey accepts this | The Government is in regular conversations with the Jersey Care Commission about the developmental needs of the regulation and inspection framework.            |

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|     | of policies, procedures and inspection.   |                                       |  |
| 33. | The Registered Manager should be able review the procedures, however this should follow a policy approval process and standardised format rather than being carried out unilaterally. This review process should also involve the voice of the child. | The Government of Jersey accepts this | The Registered Manager will be enabled and expected to review the procedures involving the voice of the child and within the multi-agency context, and under the auspicious of the new Secure Children's Home Management Board arrangements. |

## Appendix 1: List of Contributors

|   |
|---|
| All children and young people who shared their experiences and views            |
| All parents who shared their experiences and views                              |
| All Residential Child Care Officers   |
| Registered Manager for the Secure Children's Home and one Children's Home       |
| Registered Manager for two Children's Homes                                     |
| Registered Manager for one Children's Home and one Supported Accommodation Home |
| Registered Manager, Short Breaks Home   |
| Registered Manager, Short Breaks Home   |
| Acting Registered Manager, Supported Accommodation Home                         |
| Service Lead for Short Breaks   |
| Service Lead for Children's Homes   |
| Minister for Children and Housing   |
| Director of Safeguarding and Care   |
| Director General, Children, Young People, Education and Skills                  |
| CAMHS Team Manager  |
| Team Manager Probation  |
| Team Manager Fostering and Adoption   |
| Director of Commissioning, Integrated Services, CAMHS and Early Help            |
| Head of Inclusion   |
| Manager Edge of Care Team   |
| Principle Youth Worker for Youth Services                                       |
| Jersey Care Commission  |
| Children's Rights Officers  |
| The Children's Commissioner   |
| Independent Visitor   |
| Head of Commissioning and Service Redesign                                      |
| Apologies to those whose names who I have missed in error                       |

## Appendix 2: Letter of Introduction to Young People

Hi,

My name is Liz Cooper and I've been asked to look at, or review, the children's homes in Jersey.

As you currently live in one of the homes, it's really important that your experiences and views form the main part of my review. Only you know what it's like living in one of the homes, so I am asking if you would be willing to share your experiences with me.

At the end of the review, I will be writing a report that will be shared with politicians and people who can make change happen if needed. Your views can be part of that.

I will be on the island for 2 months and during that time, I will visit each of the homes.

I will need to look at records to better understand what goes on day to day and you will be asked if its ok for me to do that. I will not share any of your personal information with anyone, and anything that you do say to me that I want to use in the report will be totally anonymous.

I have written to your families to explain why I'm here and to ask them to support you in taking part in this. I have also invited them to speak to me if they want to.

I really hope you will speak to me and if you don't want to when I'm in your home, you can always ask that I come back to see you. You can also contact me directly on [Email Address].

Looking forward to meeting you,

Liz Cooper

### **Appendix 3: Letter of Introduction to Parents and Carers**

Hello Everybody,

My name is Liz Cooper and I have been invited to Jersey to review the children's services, in particular the residential homes. The aim of this review is to see whether the services are meeting young people's needs or whether they could do things a bit better.

I have been asked because I have a long history in looking after people, both children and adults, and I am independent from the Government of Jersey. I have a background in nursing, teaching, inspection, and residential care on the mainland. I currently work for the Independent Children's Home Association, who represent over 75% of the voluntary, charity and independent providers over there. I personally ran 6 homes rated as outstanding just before joining the ICHA.

I am going to be visiting all the homes and hope to talk to as many of your young people as I possibly can to ensure that their views are at the heart of the review. There will be a report at the end, but I am not going to be looking into their family lives, and any information reflected in the report will be totally anonymous.

I have already spoken to a number of staff and have been very impressed by their passion for the rights of children on the island and their desire to make sure that they receive the best services. Similarly, some of you may also want to share your experiences and opinions of how your children have been or are currently being, cared for. If so, please feel free to contact me on [Email address].

I hope you will support your children in taking part in the review and I hope to speak to some of you as part of this process.

Yours,

Liz Cooper  
DCEO at the ICHA

**Appendix 4: Report on the Secure Children’s Home.**  
**Prepared by Liz Ambler on behalf of the ICHA, August 2020.**

**Background**

This review of the Secure Care Unit was carried out on 17 and 18 August 2020 as part of a wider review of children’s services being carried out by the Independent Children’s Homes Association (ICHA) for the Government of Jersey.

The reviewer spent two days at the secure children’s home, speaking with staff, managers and the one child<sup>10</sup> residing at Greenfield during that time. Another child moved out on the day the reviewer arrived. In addition a desk top review was performed of relevant documentation provided, including the most recent external review of the home carried out in May 2019 by Stephen Ashley (referred to as the 2019 review), the Jersey Care Commission requirements and recommendations from the pre-registration inspection on July 10 2019 (the report of which was received in September 2019) and a number of documents from the Children’s Commissioner in relation to Youth Justice services and the secure children’s home specifically. The background to the service was provided in detail in the 2019 review and this has not been revisited here.

This report is laid out in sections roughly aligned to the requirements of the pre-registration inspection report; it considers the environment, the therapeutic and operational model (including the purpose of the home), thresholds for admission, placement panel and admission assessment, policies and procedures, and staffing, (including roles and responsibilities and recruitment and retention).

**Environment**

The environment was covered extensively in the 2019 review and as such is not repeated here in that level of detail.

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<sup>10</sup> The term child is used for all aged 10-17 for ease throughout this document – this refers to all those placed within the secure children’s home and includes the Jersey definitions of a child as someone who has not yet reached the age of 15, a young person as someone who is 15 or over to the day before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The Registered Manager has made some changes in relation to recommendations within that report; the key one being in relation to the admissions room and process, which previously involved admission to a cold and unwelcoming room and a strong suggestion to have a shower in a cold bare room with small shower cubicles.

The admissions area has been 'softened' slightly with the addition of sofas, so it is a less intimidating environment but still remains quite stark, however this is not dramatically different to the unit the reviewer previously oversaw.

It is necessary to have a clear uncluttered environment at the admission stage in order to be able to quickly ensure any contraband, which could be items that could be used for self-harm or to harm others, are easily identified. The showers in the admissions are rarely used now which is an improvement and as all rooms are en-suite a child can shower in more privacy in their own room. At the home, all children being admitted are now swiped/scanned with a metal detector similar to the type used at airports, prior to moving onto the unit.

I believe that there should continue to be a risk-assessed search where they are in a child's best interests to ensure they cannot harm themselves or others and the reasons for carrying out a search/pat down or not, should be fully documented.

The environment is not entirely risk free, with ligature risks present. For example, the televisions in the home in both bedrooms and communal areas are not secured, meaning that the power cables and the television itself, if smashed, could provide opportunities for use as weapons against self or others.

As has been previously highlighted, the environment could certainly be improved with some simple touches including different coloured walls, more pictures etc. Children resident in the home should be involved in decisions, or if the home is unoccupied the views of children in the open homes could be sought. Arguably the most important and impactful change would be the replacement of the bedroom doors which are metal and noisy and give the impression of a cell door. Children have reported being disturbed by the noise of the doors being opened and closed during the night and it is

possible to have strong secure doors with viewing panes that look more homely, and will also be quieter

The Registered Manager confirmed he had access to a budget for improvements, however the initial change of senior management and uncertainty around the future of the unit meant any positive environmental changes did not occur, this has now been compounded by the pandemic and the limits this has placed on both movement of people and products.

### **Therapeutic and operational model**

The Jersey Care Commission pre-registration report<sup>11</sup> stated that; *'The registered provider and the registered manager at the secure children's home should plan and implement a therapeutic model that translates into an operating model – what staff actually do – and that a short life working group is used to agree this over the next three months. Three months from the certification date. The group should include representatives from the secure children's home/Children Services, from health, education, police and probation services.'*

This meeting was due to take place in November 2019, however due to some key members of staff leaving, this was postponed and has not yet been rescheduled. This has been further compounded by the current Covid pandemic which has limited face to face contact. Finally, this appears to have now been superseded by the round table taking place on Friday 28 August 2020.

I was advised that an action plan in response to the Jersey Care Commission's registration recommendations was completed in September 2019, however it transpired this had not been sent on by the previous Director so was resubmitted by

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<sup>11</sup> The Jersey Care Commission pre-registration inspection was carried out in July 2019, with the report received in September 2019; to note a further inspection has been carried out since that inspection but the report has not yet been received by the secure children's home team.



the current Director earlier this year, when the information was identified as missing by the Care Commission.

In terms of therapeutic intervention, each child is seen by the Children Looked After (CLA) Nurse soon after admission in relation to any physical health concerns, and appointments with dentists, opticians etc. are arranged and facilitated by the home. The team in the home are clearly invested in the children in their care and there are some great examples of direct work carried out by the support workers and individual children. However, the lack of intervention from trained professionals, particularly in relation to mental health, is a concern and it appears the waiting times for these services are the same for a child in a secure setting as for a child in the community. I was told about one individual who had waited four weeks for a psychology assessment and was led to understand that this is not uncommon. The consultation was carried via Zoom as a result of the pandemic as the psychologist was based in Guernsey. I have been unable to establish with certainty the availability of psychologists and/or psychiatrists in Jersey and if this situation was a symptom of the pandemic alone.

In addition, there is evidence in another child's notes (on a SAO) of being discharged from CAMHS due to a lack of engagement. This is of concern as clearly if a child is admitted to a secure setting, there is a need for therapeutic intervention which is in the child's best interests, to enable them to address the causes of the behaviours that led to the admission, whether on welfare or criminal grounds.

With a lack of formalised, accessible therapeutic input from admission, residing in a secure home becomes merely a punishment. This is of particular concern for children admitted under a Secure Accommodation Order (SAO). Secure Children's Homes in England and Wales are working collaboratively with NHS England in a Framework for Integrated Care referred to as Secure Stairs<sup>12</sup>. This ensures access to the required specialist services including forensic mental health, from admission, and provides a pathway and support throughout a stay in secure and onwards into the community.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/health-just/children-and-young-people/>

This approach could be adapted for the Island setting to ensure appropriate and timely access to the required interventions for these vulnerable children.

### **Purpose of the unit**

Both the 2019 review and recent formal advice from the Children's Commissioner, which refers to that review, document the 'confused purpose' of the secure children's home. A key concern raised by the Children's Commissioner being in relation to the '*multi-purpose*' use of the home for three separate groups of children:

- *to accommodate a child who is serving a sentence for a criminal offence*
- *to accommodate children placed there on Secure Accommodation Orders*
- *and a section of the home has been re-designated as an in-patient unit for the hospital.*

The third group of children are no longer accommodated. From discussions, it appears this situation only arose as a result of the pandemic and was due to proactive planning within other parts of the wider health system, to free-up capacity in the acute hospital for children should it be needed.

While the pandemic presented a new and unexpected situation internationally, this usage highlighted perhaps that rather than the purpose of the home being confused, there is a lack of understanding about what 'secure care' actually means. The secure children's home staff report issues with internal doors not being secured by the hospital staff seconded to look after the hospital patients, due to an apparent lack of understanding about the necessity of security. In addition, having these patients in part of the building limited the access of the children on the secure side to the communal outdoor spaces. When children have already been deprived of their liberty legally, there should not be a further deprivation of liberty within the secure setting unless it is in the child's best interest, which this was not. One secure resident did raise a complaint about their inability to access parts of the building when the Robin Ward patients were present.

Language used by professionals in children’s records reinforces this apparent lack of understanding about secure care. For example, an advocate has noted in one sentenced child’s record that ‘*the secure children’s home is currently being used as a YOI as \*\* is 17*’. In another record for a child under a SAO, an external professional refers to a child’s bedroom as a cell. A Secure Children’s Home, by definition, takes children to the age of 17, on both welfare orders and sentenced, it does not change based on who is resident at the time, it remains a Secure Children’s Home.

Furthermore, concern has been raised about the locking of bedroom doors overnight, which inhibits the children’s ability to move freely around the unit. The locking of doors and set bedtimes is normal practice in a secure home and is done in the children’s best interests to provide safety and structure. Anecdotally children report feeling safe in their bedrooms at night, often for the first time in a long time. All rooms are en-suite.

In terms of children who have been sentenced to a secure children’s home and those who are admitted to a secure children’s home under a welfare order being in the same secure children’s home, this is something that happens in secure children’s homes in England and Wales. The fundamental difference is the size of these homes and the ability to keep welfare and sentenced children apart. Table one (below) summarises the secure children’s home estate in England and Wales and demonstrates that of the 15 secure children’s homes in England and Wales, six take both welfare and youth justice board (YJB) children. In addition, it outlines the mixed gender nature of the majority of these services.

Table one – Secure Children’s Homes in England and Wales (forming the Secure Children’s Network) - <http://www.securechildrenshomes.org.uk/secure-accommodation-network/>

| Name                             | Location | Number of beds           | Gender | Type of placement            |
|----------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|--------|------------------------------|
| Adel Beck Secure Children’s Home | Leeds    | 24 (3 x 8 bedded houses) | Mixed  | 16 beds – YJB<br>8 - Welfare |

|   |                            |                               |   |   |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Aldine House<br>Secure Children's<br>centre | Sheffield                  | 8                             | Mixed                                   | YJB and welfare   |
| Atkinson secure<br>Children's Home          | Exeter                     | 10                            | Mixed                                   | Welfare only  |
| Aycliffe Secure<br>Centre                   | Durham                     | 38 (over 6<br>homes)          | Mixed                                   | 8 – YJB<br>30 Welfare                                     |
| Barton Moss                                 | Manchester                 | 27                            | Male                                    | YJB (will take welfare<br>under certain<br>circumstances) |
| Beechfield Secure<br>Unit                   | Copthorne,<br>West Sussex  | 7                             | Mixed                                   | Welfare only  |
| Clare Lodge                                 | Peterborough               | 16                            | Female                                  | Welfare only  |
| Clayfields House                            | Nottingham                 | 18                            | Mixed                                   | 14 – YJB<br>4 - Welfare                                   |
| Hillside Secure<br>Centre                   | South Wales                | 22 (over 3<br>wings)          | Mixed                                   | YJB and welfare   |
| Kyloe House                                 | Morpeth,<br>Northumberland | 12                            | Mixed                                   | Welfare only  |
| Landsdowne<br>Secure Unit                   | Hailsham, East<br>Sussex   | 7                             | Mixed                                   | Welfare only  |
| Lincolnshire<br>Secure Unit                 | Sleaford                   | 12                            | Mixed                                   | YJB and welfare   |
| Marydale Secure<br>Children's Home          | Merseyside                 | 12 (over 2<br>wings)          | Mixed (6<br>female<br>only,<br>6 mixed) | Welfare only  |
| Swanwick Lodge                              | Southampton                | 16                            | Mixed                                   | Welfare   |
| Vinney Green<br>Secure Unit                 | Gloucestershire            | 24 (in two<br>blocks; 16 + 8) | Mixed                                   | YJB   |

Due to the low numbers of children presenting with a need for secure accommodation under either welfare, remand or sentenced grounds, it remains difficult to see how the two groups can be worked with separately to ensure the differing requirements and best interests are met. In addition, the low numbers of children requiring these settings, as identified in the 2019 review, means the children supported at the home are often subject to long periods of isolation. A knock-on effect of these low numbers is that staff will not be maintaining their skills and knowledge around the specific requirements of a Secure Children's Home.

It is clearly vital that the model for care and support, including the therapeutic interventions and operational function of the unit, is agreed as a priority. However, the decision around the purpose of the secure children's home is not a straightforward one, with implications and impacts on many other services on the Island.

### **Thresholds for admission and continuation of placement**

A Secure Accommodation Order (SAO) under the Children (Jersey) Law 2002 is a permissive order, meaning that it can end when the requirements for the order are no longer met, irrespective of if the time period of the order has been completed.

The 'welfare' criteria which must be met before a Child may be placed in secure accommodation are that:

- The child has a history of absconding and is likely to abscond from any other description of accommodation; **and**
- If the child absconds, (s)he is likely to suffer Significant Harm; **or**
- If the child is kept in any other description of accommodation (s)he is likely to injure her/himself or others.

Regular meetings take place to review the threshold criteria for each individual, but these should also occur ad hoc if an activity such as a long home visit indicates that secure threshold is no longer met. For example, a child was observed going on leave to her foster parents for three days with an expected return to the secure children's home following this, and previous overnight visits had successfully taken place. This would seem to indicate that this individual no longer met threshold.

It may be the case that parents or foster carers have concerns about keeping an individual safe and if this is the case, transition to an open children's home should be

considered if secure threshold is no longer met, whilst a home transition is planned and implemented. An expanded Edge of Care Team could be well placed to link up this pathway.

### **Placement panel and admission assessment**

The care commission pre-registration report stated the need to; *'Include the registered manager of the secure children's home as a member of the Placement Panel that meets within 72 hours of the Criminal Court deciding on a secure accommodation placement for remand or sentencing. (Already in place.) For emergency secure accommodation orders consult the registered manager of the secure children's home before making a decision. Similarly, before any application to the Family Division of the Royal Court for a secure accommodation order.'*

The Registered Manager confirmed he is now a member of the panel, however due to the numbers of children requiring secure accommodation and the home being the only option on the island, compatibility with existing residents is rarely a consideration. This need for compatibility assessment will include the ability of the Registered Manager to decline an admission on compatibility grounds. This is an important consideration in future planning for service provision as if this is to be met, there will need to be an alternative option available.

### **Placement confirmation and risk-based admissions procedures**

As outlined by the Jersey Care Commission, *'most admissions may be emergency or urgent admissions, but good intelligence – and this means putting energy into building and sustaining strong and positive relationships with the other registered managers, and with the police and probation services – can provide an initial risk assessment to determine the appropriate admissions procedure'*.

The Registered Manager confirmed that a condition of registration is that the initial assessment and personal plan is discussed at a multi-agency meeting at the home within 72 hours of any placement, and at least monthly until the end of placement. This meeting includes the child themselves, family members, social workers and representatives from other relevant agencies such as advocates.

What happens after a secure placement should be discussed at the first, and all subsequent multi-agency meetings. I was told this is a challenge in part due to the lack of a step down pathway, and a lack of therapeutic input and intervention that could contribute to the behaviour changes required to move on from the threshold for SAO, or moving on from the criminal behaviour that led to a sentence.

I was told about a recent admission (in June 2020) who was admitted under a SAO from one of the open homes as an emergency admission due to her increased risk. A sentenced male was living at the home at the time and there were concerns raised in the multi-professional meeting about the two individuals being in the same space. The two did not know each other previously. As a result, a variation to registration was requested and granted which allowed the visitors room on the other side of the building to be used for the female.

This approach of itself, is not necessarily wrong, and if gender separation is deemed a requirement, consideration should be given to utilising both sides of the home if it remains the location for secure children's accommodation. However, this approach is currently not consistent as a further female was admitted under a SAO, and this same level of separation was not deemed necessary, and she had a bedroom on the same corridor as the male resident. Age may have been a consideration as the first female was 12 years of age and the second 16, however there needs to be a clear procedure and pathway in place for management of different ages and genders if separation is required on these grounds.

As table one shows, it is not uncommon for secure children's homes to be mixed gender as the staffing levels, the homes security measures and compatibility assessment ensures the safety of the children already living in the home, and those incoming.

### **Policies and procedures**

The Care Commission reported that the secure children's home procedures describe a very 'institutional approach', and the inspector recommended that these are reviewed and if appropriate, replaced by the policy and procedures used by all the

other Children's Homes. He did however confirm that a new operating model would inform any Greenfield specific policies required. This is an important point and it needs to be acknowledged that a Secure Children's Home should, and does, run very differently to open Children's Homes and policies and procedures are unlikely to be relevant to both settings without some specific adaptations.

In England, the Social Care Inspection Framework (SCIF) is used by Ofsted to inspect Children's Homes, but with different assurance frameworks for secure and open settings and it recommended this type of approach is followed in terms of policies, procedures and inspection. Measuring a Secure Children's Home on a framework designed for open Children's Homes is setting the secure setting up to fail.

As recommended, the Registered Manager should be able review the procedures, however this should follow a policy approval process and standardised format rather than being carried out unilaterally. This review process should also involve the voice of the child.

### **Staffing, including recruitment and retention**

As in previous reports, the staff team seen are clearly passionate about the children in their care, and the review of records carried out shows some excellent direct work with the children being carried out in the home. However, the lack of routine scheduled therapeutic input as a routine part of a child's admission and ongoing care is of concern (as above).

There is a reference in the 2019 review to 2:1 staffing levels, this should not be applied as a blanket rule, but as a minimum when there is only one child in the home, increased numbers of placements allow for shared staff, but the low numbers do not currently allow this.

The Jersey Care Commission recommended that '*the Registered Manager is the recruiting manager for all future appointments, and that all existing staff HR records from past appointments are transferred and kept by each registered manager*'. Whilst it is important the Registered Manager has oversight of all recruitment decisions made as they have overall responsibility for the home, this has been interpreted or advised



at service level as the Registered Manager needing to interview all shortlisted applicants, which is time consuming and arduous. Clarity should be provided around the ability to delegate to suitably qualified or experienced members of the team to support with this task as this also provides a development opportunity for staff and contributes to succession planning.

HR records for the most part continue to be held centrally, with minimal documentation kept on site (mainly attendance certification provided to staff following training). This in itself should not be a major issue, and if process means that records are kept centrally by government HR and this is agreed, then the requirement for locally held records should not be a criterion measured against during inspection. However, with the current centrally held records I was not suitably reassured that the Registered Manager would be able to access these records in a timely way should he need to so some change is required.

## **Education**

The regulatory standards state that *'the registered person (provider) must ensure that proper provision is made for the education and leisure of any child who is a care receiver. In particular, the registered person must promote the child's educational attainment by ensuring access to, and making use of, appropriate educational facilities. Where a child is over compulsory school age, assisting and supporting the child with further education, training or employment'*.

The registration inspection reports outline the requirement for a teacher on the staff team at the home or on loan from the school, when required to ensure the children are able to access education. I was told anecdotally that when children refuse lessons the teacher leaves with minimal persuasion given to the child to attend school. Records reviewed do bear this out to some extent, providing a narrative around this. For example, one child's record states she asked how she was expected to attend a whole day of school when she had been absent for so long previously and therefore refused to attend. To be working in a child's best interests there should be intensive support to attend and remain in education while in the secure setting, in order to build a foundation for the future.

## Summary of Areas for Consideration

34. There is a strong likelihood that staff specialist skills may deteriorate as the unit often lies empty for extended periods and staff are redeployed. Consideration should be given to how staff retain their knowledge base and how they would then be available to respond to infrequent admissions.
35. The rationale for risk-assessed searches on admission should be fully documented for each child.
36. An in-depth ligature risk assessment of the home should be conducted, and all identified risks removed.
37. Bedroom doors should be replaced by strong secure doors with viewing panes that look more homely, and the environment decorated to be more child appropriate.
38. What happens after a secure placement should be discussed at the first, and all subsequent multi-agency meetings. Ad hoc threshold reviews should take place as children's plans change, to enable more appropriate and planned step-downs to alternative children's accommodation or returns home.
39. A clear pathway plan from admission through to post discharge must be established. This should include education and intensive therapeutic intervention to ensure that stays on the unit are beneficial and life changing, as opposed to a form of punishment and containment.
40. If the home is to continue to operate as a secure children's home, then agreement should be reached regarding its purpose and function. If a child is assessed as meeting the threshold, then they should be accommodated in line with the operating rules of the home. The sufficiency and skills of the home's staff should be recognised as appropriate to maintain their welfare and safety whether different sexes or statuses are accommodated.
41. Compatibility Assessments should include the ability of the Registered Manager to decline an admission on compatibility grounds. This is an important consideration in future planning for service provision as if this is to be met, there will need to be an alternative option available.
42. In England, the Social Care Inspection Framework (SCIF) is used by Ofsted to inspect Children's Homes, but with different assurance frameworks for secure and open settings and it recommended this type of approach is followed in terms of policies, procedures and inspection.

43. The Registered Manager should be able review the procedures, however this should follow a policy approval process and standardised format rather than being carried out unilaterally. This review process should also involve the voice of the child.

There have undoubtedly been some improvements since the 2019 review, however the pace of change appears slow and this appears to be related to both the uncertainty around the future of the home and the global pandemic.

It is clear a policy decision needs to be made on the future of secure children's accommodation on the Island of Jersey. However, the island setting clearly brings a unique set of challenges in relation to the requirements for, and the provision of, secure care which cannot be looked at in isolation, but as a part of the wider children's social care pathway.

#### **About the Author**

*Liz Ambler has a background as a registered nurse and has worked in health and social care for 25 years in a range of settings, running services in the UK and internationally. Most recently Liz was Chief Operating Officer for Nugent, a charity in the North West of England supporting some of the most vulnerable people in society. As part of this role, Liz was responsible for England's only charity run secure children's home.*



## Appendix 7: Example Rota for a 2-Bed Children's Home with 1:1 staffing

### Week 1

| Staff     | Mon | Tue | Wed/TM | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|-----------|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Man       | On  | on  | On     | on  | on  | x   | X   |
| RCCO<br>3 | D   | x   | TM     | x   | D   | x   | X   |
| RCCO<br>3 | X   | D   | TM     | x   | x   | D   | X   |
| RCCO<br>3 | X   | x   | D      | x   | x   | x   | D   |
| 0.5       | X   | x   | X      | D   | x   | x   | X   |
| RCCO<br>2 | D   | x   | TM     | x   | x   | D   | x   |
| RCCO<br>2 | X   | D   | TM     | D   | x   | x   | D   |
| RCCO<br>2 | X   | x   | D      | x   | D   | x   | x   |
| Bank      | AL  | AL  | AL     | AL  | AL  | AL  | AL  |

### Week 2

|           |     |     |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Man       | on  | on  | On | on | on | x  | x  |
| RCCO<br>3 | D   | x   | X  | D  | x  | D  | x  |
| RCCO<br>3 | X   | D   | X  | x  | D  | X  | x  |
| RCCO3     | X   | TRN | D  | x  | x  | x  | D  |
| 0.5       | X   | TRN | X  | D  | x  | x  | x  |
| RCCO<br>2 | A/L | AL  | AL | AL | AL | AL | AL |
| RCCO<br>2 | X   | TRN | D  | x  | D  | x  | x  |
| RCCO<br>2 | X   | D   | X  | x  | x  | D  | x  |

|      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bank | D | x | X | x | x | x | D |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**Week 3**

|           |    |    |     |       |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|-----|-------|----|----|----|
| Man       | on | on | On  | on    | on | on | on |
| RCCO<br>3 | X  | x  | D   | x     | x  | D  | x  |
| RCCO<br>3 | D  | x  | TRN | Admin | x  | x  | D  |
| RCCO<br>3 | X  | D  | TRN | x     | D  | x  | x  |
| 0.5       | X  | x  | X   | D     | x  | x  | x  |
| RCCO<br>2 | X  | D  | X   | D     | x  | x  | D  |
| RCCO<br>2 | AL | AL | AL  | AL    | AL | AL | AL |
| RCCO<br>2 | D  | x  | X   | x     | D  | x  | x  |
| Bank      | X  | x  | D   | x     | x  | D  | x  |

**TRN=Training**

**TM=Team meeting**

**D=24-hour shift**

**X=off duty**

**Appendix 8: Example Rota for a 3-Bed Children’s Home with 1:1 staffing**

**Week 1**

| Staff     | Mon | Tue | Wed<br>TR   | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|-----------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Man       | On  | on  | on          | on  | on  | x   | x   |
| RCCO<br>3 | D   | x   | 3 hrs<br>TR | x   | D   | x   | x   |
| RCCO<br>3 | x   | D   | 3hrs<br>TR  | x   | x   | D   | x   |
| RCCO<br>3 | x   | x   | D           | x   | x   | x   | D   |

|           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 0.5       | x  | x  | 3  | D  | x  | x  | x  |
| RCCO<br>2 | D  | x  | 3  | x  | x  | D  | x  |
| RCCO<br>2 | x  | D  | 3  | D  | x  | x  | D  |
| RCCO<br>2 | x  | x  | D  | x  | D  | x  | x  |
| RCCO<br>2 | AL | AL | AL | AL | AL | AL | AL |
| RCCO<br>2 | D  | x  | x  | D  | x  | x  | x  |
| RCCO<br>2 | x  | D  | 3  | x  | D  | x  | x  |
| Bank      | x  | x  | D  | x  | x  | D  | x  |
| 0.5       | x  | x  | 3  | x  | x  | x  | D  |

**Week 2**

| Staff     | Mon | Tue<br>TRN | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|-----------|-----|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Man       | on  | on         | on  | on  | on  | x   | x   |
| RCCO<br>3 | D   | x          | x   | D   | x   | D   | x   |
| RCCO<br>3 | x   | D          | x   | x   | D   | X   | x   |
| RCCO<br>3 | x   | TRN        | D   | x   | x   | x   | D   |
| 0.5       | x   | TRN        | x   | D   | x   | x   | x   |
| RCCO<br>2 | A/L | AL         | AL  | AL  | AL  | AL  | AL  |
| RCCO<br>2 | x   | TRN        | D   | x   | D   | x   | x   |
| RCCO<br>2 | x   | D          | x   | x   | x   | D   | x   |

|           |   |     |   |   |       |   |   |
|-----------|---|-----|---|---|-------|---|---|
| RCCO<br>2 | D | x   | x | x | x     | x | D |
| RCCO<br>2 | D | x   | x | D | x     | x | D |
| RCCO<br>2 | x | TRN | x | x | Admin | D | x |
| Bank      | x | x   | D | x | D     | x | x |
| 0.5       | x | D   | x | x | x     | x | x |

Rotas would be available 6 weeks in advance

Staff would request specific days off as required, to be agreed at the manager's discretion, based upon the needs of the service.

All staff to have 1 full weekend off in 3.

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