

The Mulberry Bush School

Statement of Purpose



‘Learning to live, living to learn’

CONTENTS

Section	Details	Pages
1	Introduction to the Mulberry Bush Organisation	5
2	The Quality & Purpose of Care	6
2.1	A statement of the range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the Mulberry Bush School provide care and accommodation	
2.2	Details of the Mulberry Bush School's ethos, the outcomes that we seek to achieve and our approach to achieving these	
2.3	A description of the accommodation offered by the Mulberry Bush School including – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) How the accommodation has been adapted to the needs of children (b) The age range, number and sex of children for whom accommodation is provided (c) The type of accommodation, including sleeping accommodation 	
2.4	A description of the location of the Mulberry Bush School	
2.5	The arrangements for supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children	
2.6	Details of who to contact if a person has a complaint and how that person can access the complaints policy	
2.7	Details of how a person, body or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child can access the child protection policies or the behaviour management policy	
3	Views, wishes and feelings	18
3.1	A description of the Mulberry Bush School's policy and approach to consulting children about the quality of their care	

3.2	A description of the Mulberry Bush School's policy and approach in relation to – (a) Anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families; and (b) Children's rights	
4	Education	21
4.1	Details of provision to support children with special educational needs	
4.2	If the home is registered as a school, details of the curriculum provided by the home and the management and structure of the arrangements for education	
5	Enjoyment and achievement	24
5.1	The arrangements for enabling children to take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills	
6	Health	24
6.1	Details of any healthcare or therapy provided, including – (a) Details of the qualifications and professional supervision of the staff involved in providing any healthcare or therapy; and (b) Information about how the effectiveness of any healthcare or therapy provided is measured, the evidence demonstrating its effectiveness and details of how the information or the evidence can be accessed	
7	Positive relationships	27
7.1	The arrangements for promoting contact between children and their families and friends	

8	Protection of children	28
8.1	A description of the approach to the monitoring and surveillance of children	
8.2	Details of our approach to behavioural support, including information about – (a) The home’s approach to restraint in relation to children; and (b) How persons working in the home are trained in restraint and how their competence is assessed	
9	Leadership and management	30
9.1	The name and work address of – (a) The registered provider; (b) The responsible individual; and (c) The registered manager	
9.2	Details of the experience and qualifications of staff, including any staff commissioned for the professional supervision of staff, including staff that provide education or health care	
9.3	Details of the management and staffing structure of the home, including arrangements for the professional supervision of staff, including staff that provide education or health care	
9.4	If staff are all of one sex, or mainly of one sex, a description of how the home promotes appropriate role models of both sexes	
10	Care planning	38
10.1	Any criteria used for the admission of children to the home, including any policies and procedures for emergency admission	

1. Introduction to the Mulberry Bush - a registered charity

The Mulberry Bush - Showing the way in therapeutic child care

Drawing on its unmatched expertise, experience and innovation, the Mulberry Bush is a centre of excellence which delivers a unique approach to therapeutic care for children, their families and communities.

The Mulberry Bush as a charitable organisation incorporates four separate but complementary areas;

The Mulberry Bush School is a leading therapeutic residential school in the UK for 38 week and 52 week children – all staff are trained to an exceptionally high level to enable them to support troubled children and their families so that they can achieve the best possible prospects for their futures.

Mulberry Bush Outreach shares the charity's core principles of a Psychodynamic understanding, Reflective culture and Collaborative working to strengthen the culture and leadership in organisations that support vulnerable children and families.

Mulberry Bush Research aims to develop and shape a research culture to influence practice within The Mulberry Bush and other schools, agencies and providers of care to vulnerable, traumatised children and their families. We collaborate with researchers in academic and other childcare settings.

Mulberry Bush Consulting supports organisations, with the process of change. Delivering lasting, meaningful change for those working with children and adults in education, social care, health, criminal justice and more.

As a charity, The Mulberry Bush is committed to raising awareness of the issues facing troubled children and their families.

Charitable Purpose:

'To provide specialist therapeutic services to meet the social, emotional and educational needs of emotionally troubled and traumatised children, their families and wider communities'

2. Quality and purpose of care

2.1 A statement of the range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the Mulberry Bush School provide care and accommodation

The Mulberry Bush is a therapeutic community providing a highly integrated combination of therapeutic education, care and treatment for primary aged boys and girls with severe social, emotional and mental health difficulties. *(In health terms the children would be deemed tier three or four, and have ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) scores of four or more)*. It also works intensively with those children's families. A child's placement at the Mulberry Bush is for 38 or 52 weeks. Children are referred from all over England and Wales.

The children we help come to us with a wide range of needs and a variety of diagnoses. Many of the children can broadly be described as having an attachment disorder of some kind while other diagnoses may include; Attachment Disorder, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Autism, Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and Complex Trauma or Developmental Trauma Disorder.

The following list is designed to provide straightforward information for those who are thinking about referring a child to us. It describes some of the behaviours that children are likely to display (although not necessarily all at the same time). While this list focuses on difficulty it is important to note that children placed with us also have many positive qualities which we look to nurture and make more dominant features of their personalities.

- Attachment difficulties can cause a child to struggle with relationships with their family, friends and important people in their lives. They can often find it difficult to develop meaningful relationships with others.
- A lack of empathy means that a child finds it difficult to understand the feelings of others or to take other people's feelings into consideration.
- Children with an imbalance between dependency and independence will either be over reliant on other people or will try to be prematurely or excessively "non-dependent".
- If a child has experienced conscience development delay they are likely to have little understanding of their effect on others.
- Many of the children placed with us experience deeply and intensely felt and expressed sadness. At these times they will struggle to engage with others or will absent themselves from groups.
- A further symptom might be a child's very limited capacity to tolerate frustration, which can result in high levels of aggressive behaviour.
- A child placed with us often seeks total control over many situations. This might be evident through constant arguments over rules and structures or a rigid reliance on them.
- It is also possible that a child denies any responsibility for situations they might have some responsibility for.
- Commonly, the children we work with experience difficulties expressing their feelings other than through behaviour breakdown. They struggle to talk about their feelings and let others know through extremes in their behaviour.
- There is likely to be a variety of school learning difficulties which might include poor attention, an inability to learn from experience, destroying school work or general low levels of achievement. Essentially, their emotional problems present barriers to successful learning. Due to these difficulties having also been present for the children in their previous school placements, they also commonly have significant gaps in their learning.

- Low self-esteem is another common trait. Children might be reluctant to show the work that they have produced or try new experiences. As they do not feel good about themselves they will avoid appropriate risk-taking as it may result in what they perceive as “getting it wrong”. They may also repeat negative patterns of behaviour to avoid the risk of change and experiencing the unknown.
- There are times when a child at Mulberry Bush School will display sexually inappropriate behaviour. This can include sexually explicit language, gestures and inappropriate touch which cause others to feel uncomfortable.
- Some children may wet or soil themselves when ordinarily at their age they would be “toilet trained”. The medical term for this is enuresis (wetting) and encopresis (soiling).
- It is common that a child will easily induce high levels of anxiety in others. They make people around them feel very worried either by putting themselves and others in danger, by threatening violence or damaging property. They often have a sense of unpredictability and being out of control.
- In addition to the behaviours described above, a child referred to us also may have been prescribed behaviour modification medication. Although there may have been some change in the child’s behaviour at first, the effects of the medication seems to be less pronounced over time.

Children rarely exhibit all these features and even the child who demonstrates many does not usually do so to a high degree all the time. Additionally, there are almost always a number of positive features about a child who causes such great concern. Many of the children referred to the Mulberry Bush School can be loving and lovable. At times the children can be genuinely and movingly open about their difficulties and fears as well as being concerned about others. We would not wish the child to lose these capacities which may serve them well. We work to develop and increase the occasions when such positive qualities are genuinely present.

2.2 Details of the Mulberry Bush School’s ethos, the outcomes that we seek to achieve and our approach to achieving these



Core principles

Psychodynamic approach

Staff need a good psychodynamic understanding to provide an informed psychodynamic approach

Reflective culture

The development of a reflective culture at all levels and in all disciplines is paramount

Collaborative working

Collaborative working is central to a high quality treatment environment

Showing the way in therapeutic child care

Vision Statement: Transforming Troubled Lives Together – providing excellent therapeutic interventions to severely emotionally troubled children and their families to support them to thrive and achieve fulfilling lives within their communities and as part of society.

To achieve this we aim for the children to make outstanding progress in their ability to meet our 11 key elements:

1. Use and apply learnt skill and knowledge
2. Be a successful learner
3. Make a contribution and become involved in the immediate and wider community
4. Improve their self –awareness and value achievement
5. Involve themselves appropriately in their care and the care of the environment
6. Involve themselves appropriately in a group
7. Reflect on and communicate feelings rather than act them out
8. Ask for help and make use of it
9. Keep themselves and others safe
10. Build healthy and mutually trusting relationships
11. Be able to play

An assessment of the child and where applicable the family's needs, is carried out during the first term (4 months) of placement. This together with the comprehensive referral paperwork provides baseline assessment information from which care, education and treatment plans are developed and ensures that progress is closely monitored. Support is given to families to develop their understanding of the difficulties they face and enable adaptation and change where appropriate.

We are a **Therapeutic Community (TC)**; a structured, psychologically informed environment where the social relationships, structure of the day and activities are all deliberately designed to help people's health and well-being. Interacting with other community members is the mechanism for change. Everything that happens in the interactions between community members in normal everyday life is a learning opportunity. Relationships of all kinds are important. There is a **reflective culture** where members are encouraged to be curious about themselves & each other and are helped to be so; all staff members are participant observers in the therapeutic work. The essence of a TC is being with rather than doing to. All community members are expected to make a contribution to the community in a way that fits with their ability. Responsibilities and expectations increase as community members grow and progress. This creates, for all community members, an important sense of belonging to a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

In our therapeutic community the life of groups and groupings is important. A group reflects, amplifies and changes the emotional life of the people in it so a group is a good place to process life experiences, communicate unmet needs and take in therapeutic experiences. Groups offer children peers, role models, chances to communicate, a culture to invest in and make their own.

Things we do: Weekly Get Together, community meetings, circle time, making things better, Key worker / teacher meetings, planned routines, lots of talking about ourselves and each other; class, house, group work and many other groups and groupings.

The Mulberry Bush's theoretical approach is psychodynamic / psychosocial. In addition, our work is informed by attachment theory and a systemic approach, both in how we think about the children but also in how we think about staff dynamics. Our approach fits well with social pedagogy. Ongoing developments in trauma research and the impact of trauma on brain development is helping the organisation further adapt and define its approach. The process of helping the child is a combination of therapeutic living and education, closely integrated with work with families and professional networks. It can also include individual or group therapy and life story work.

The Mulberry Bush School offers individualised integrated therapeutic care, treatment (group living in residential households) and education (following the adapted National Curriculum) plans overseen by a multidisciplinary treatment team of highly trained professional staff including a therapist. This

group for each child is referred to as their Treatment Team. The main therapy in the provision is the therapeutic milieu, but individual and group therapies are available and include individual drama and music therapy, individual psychotherapy, group work, life story work, speech and language therapy, educational psychology, family work, VIG (Video Interaction Guidance) work, family therapy and MFT (multi family therapy). The Mulberry Bush Outreach service aims to use the charity's core principles to strengthen the culture and leadership in organisations. This is achieved through the provision of training, consultation and support for those supporting vulnerable children, their families and communities.

Our adapted education curriculum reflects the great value we place on helping all pupils to make good progress in their academic, social, health and emotional skills and knowledge. We recognise the fundamental importance of raising all pupils' self-esteem, improving their attitudes towards learning, developing their view of themselves as competent learners, and preparing them for their next stage of education and life, and therefore place significant emphasis on reading, writing, phonics, math, PSHE, personal development and spoken language.

Children are placed at the Mulberry Bush School due to their severe social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The placement provides a holistic, integrated approach to their education and care. In order that all children make the best possible progress our curriculum planning provides focused teaching within the school day, and then lots of opportunities within the residential experience for extension, generalisation and practice of this learning. Together this creates a 24 hour curriculum approach.

The Mulberry Bush School Model of Practice			
Children who have suffered trauma	Our Staff members offer therapeutic relationships that are	The Mulberry Bush School	
Communicate through their behaviour	Resilient	Is a therapeutic community	Works closely with families and professional networks
Need therapeutic relationships in addition to empathy, nurture and affection.	Containing	Knows that play matters	Fully authorises staff members working directly with children
Have potential for a healthy and wholesome social, emotional and academic life	Non-judgmental & non-punitive	Offers an adapted curriculum	Believes Support and professional development are essential for all members of staff
Require adaptation to them as individuals. May find family life overwhelming.	Authentic*	Supplements psychodynamic theory with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Systemic theory ● Attachment theory ● Neuroscience ● Social pedagogy 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma informed practice 	
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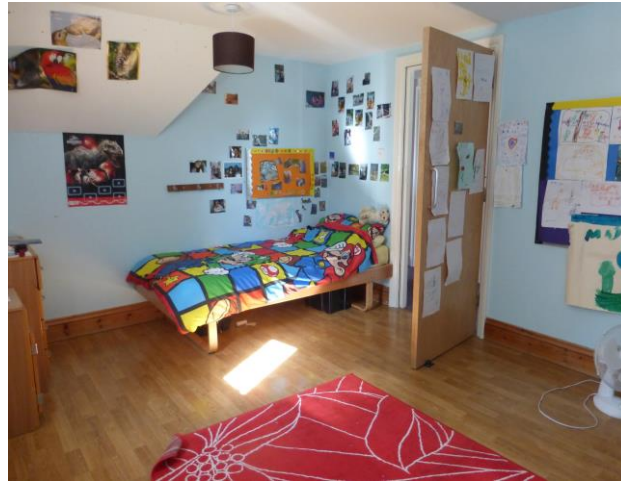
2.3 A description of the accommodation offered by the Mulberry Bush School including –

- (a) How the accommodation has been adapted to the needs of children
- (b) The age range, number and sex of children for whom accommodation is provided
- (c) The type of accommodation, including sleeping accommodation



The Mulberry Bush is a residential special school with children’s home. It was established on the same site in Standlake (<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/TheMulberryBushSchool>) in 1948. The 5 acre purpose built site is located in rural Oxfordshire and provides a school, residential homes, Therapies and Networks Team and a training team all on one outstanding site. There is a focus on play and the accommodation provides a wide range of facilities that encourage play individually and in groups.

The Mulberry Bush School consists of five purpose-built residential houses for up to 31 children between the ages of 5 and 13 years (or up to end of year 8 school year). The education part of The Mulberry Bush School is on-site and operates as an independent ‘non maintained special school’ for children of the same ages, 5 to 13, who are resident at the Mulberry Bush School. Children on a 52-week placement reside in the Burrow or Bramble House, while children on term-time only placements live in one of three houses, Jigsaw, Sunset or Pegasus. The ground floor of Rainbow House is used for children’s activities, whilst the upstairs of Rainbow House is occupied by the Therapies and Networks Team and includes spaces where family work takes place.



We currently have three term-time houses occupied (Pegasus, Sunset, Jigsaw) and two 52-week houses (The Burrow and Bramble House).

Between the three term time houses (Pegasus, Jigsaw, Sunset) there are 24 single bedrooms, however, we are limiting our total capacity to 5 or 6 children (boys and girls) per household. Each house has a range of communal areas, and their own garden with play equipment. Additional to this are separate offices and meeting rooms, therapy rooms, a soft-play room, regulation room, sports hall, a central kitchen and dining area. The site also offers an equipped independent 1-bedroom visitor's flat which is available to visiting families as well as a suite of independent rooms (The Squiggle Family Rooms) connected to the Burrow for family work. The Squiggle Rooms also contain an office and a sleeping-in flat for an adult supporting the Burrow and Bramble House.

The Burrow has six ensuite single bedrooms and two sleeping-in rooms. Upstairs is a light, communal 'snug' area designed to support the children during settling time, have quiet time and to take part in group meetings. The Burrow has a large communal kitchen/dining room and separate lounge both of which open out into its own garden with purpose-built play equipment. The Burrow has been purpose built for children who currently do not have a family placement for them to return to during weekends home and school holidays. The purpose of this provision is to enable continuity of care and treatment in the absence of family and when identified supporting the child, family and network with the task of negotiating how to become a family unit. Whilst located on the same site as the other houses and the school, The Burrow has a clearly defined boundary and separate entrance to differentiate the children's living experience between school time and holiday time.

Bramble House also has six ensuite single bedrooms and a sleeping-in room. The maximum child occupancy of Bramble House is five children, the sixth bedroom has been converted to an upstairs quiet/play room. An additional adult will sleep in the Squiggle Room so they are available to offer support if required. Bramble House has a similar large communal kitchen / dining room and lounge to the Burrow and it also has a downstairs play-room which gives the children an alternative space to play and engage in a variety of activities. Bramble House has a large garden with new purpose built wooden play equipment.

Each child at The Mulberry Bush School has their own bedroom and the children are supported in personalising and individualising their rooms to reflect their interests and personal identity. All of the children's bedrooms are in close proximity to the staff sleeping-in rooms. Bramble House sleeping-in room is located at the foot of the stairs on the ground floor.



All houses are located around a large 'village green' that provides carefully designed play equipment, an all-weather pitch and ample space for the children to play with staff, ride bikes, play football and run around.



The whole site is maintained to a high standard by an in house 3-person maintenance team. All houses have been specifically designed to provide a safe, reliable and homely environment for the children as they are helped to find ways of understanding their complex lives, managing their challenging behaviours and to live and learn alongside others. The homely environment supports the group process, having large living spaces where the group can gather to think and talk together.

The Mulberry Bush School is registered for up to 31 boys and girls aged 5 to 13 years. The children live in groups of up to 6 across 5 houses and 4 classes.

The tasks of the houses



Jigsaw, Sunset and Pegasus Houses (parallel houses)	
	<p>The aim of Group Living (residential teams) is to foster the social, emotional, educational and physical development of the child, through their placement objectives and treatment plan; this is done within an integrated reflective working model, through strategies and therapeutic intervention in all areas of the school. The child's Treatment Team (Key Worker, House Manager, Therapist, Teacher, Family and Network Practitioner) is responsible for planning and monitoring progress throughout the child's stay.</p> <p>When children start at the Mulberry Bush the focus is on bringing children into the school in as nurturing and safe way as possible, supporting them through a period of adjustment to Mulberry Bush routines, expectations and ways of working. For a minimum of twelve school weeks, out experiences of living and working alongside new children are gathered along with some formal assessments being carried out. At the end of this period an Assessment Placement Report is completed and shared with families and professional networks. A</p>



number of Placement Objectives are set at this point and are included in the report – these identify the areas of work we believe are the most significant for us to focus on throughout a child’s placement at the Mulberry Bush.

During the first two weeks, new children are gradually introduced to more of the adults who will be working with them, and to children from other houses. This includes a staggered introduction into class, with a reduced timetable and with house adults alongside them. By the end of two weeks, it is hoped that new children will be able to manage the full school day alongside their peers, although support is available for those who need longer.

The household team works closely with the education team and the therapies and networks team to observe, assess and reflect on the children’s behaviour, social and emotional functioning, mental health and educational needs, all contributing to an overall assessment of the child across all areas of the school. They also get to know and develop a working alliance with the family and network, considering the work that will be needed to stabilise the situation for the child, either supporting the family to create greater stability when at home or to assist in finding a new family.

There is an ongoing process of assessment throughout the child’s stay, ensuring that we maximise the child’s progress and we are looking to intervene in areas where we feel a change in approach may help. This Treatment process is summarised in the child’s Integrated Treatment Plan which is shared with the child’s family and professional network.

The experience of living in groups with and alongside the children forms the main therapeutic provision. Staff are highly trained and provide a highly structured living experience for the children individually and in groups, combining structure, routine and boundaries, opportunities for thinking together about living in the group and plenty of fun activities. Staff also support the children in their transitions into the education day and attendance at any individual or group therapy. All the households have a shared task of preparing the children for their transitions home at the weekend’s home or school holidays or to their time in The Burrow if they are not going home to a family.

The Burrow and Bramble House (52-Week House)



The Burrow, opened in 2018 and Bramble House, opened in 2024 are purpose-built homes for staff to look after children on 52-week placements. As with all house teams, the Burrow and Bramble House are staffed by a consistent team who provide the children with continuous care during term time, holidays, and weekends. During term time, the Burrow and Bramble House children attend school along with all other Mulberry Bush children, and during weekends and holidays the staff and children take part in everyday, family type activities trips and short holidays. The children are engaged with a 24-hour planned curriculum experience that provides fun whilst supporting the children's agreed treatment aims.

The Burrow's and Bramble House's key focus is supporting children during periods in their lives when it is not possible to live in a family home. Working closely with the Local Authority and the Therapies and Networks Team, the staff support children who are experiencing a breakdown at home by providing them with consistency of care throughout the process of finding a new home placement or stabilising the current one. The staff work with the family/carers to support the process of coming together as a family, building, and maintaining family relationships and in some cases moving into a new family placement enabling the child to step-down to a term-time only placement (38-week).

2.4 A description of the location of the Mulberry Bush School

Standlake is a village in the west of Oxfordshire. Standlake village has a recreation ground, a primary school - (with which the Mulberry Bush School has an excellent relationship), cricket club, riding stables, fishing lakes, a small leisure centre/swimming pool which the children can access and village hall. Five miles to the west is Witney, an historic market town with a good selection of shops. Around ten miles to the east is the city of Oxford which has an ethnically diverse population and which offers many positive opportunities for the children.

Due to The Mulberry Bush School being contained on one site with excellent facilities, there is a sense of boundary and containment separate to the village which enables children to integrate in a safe and structured way, dependent upon their developmental needs.



Whilst Standlake is a village in rural Oxfordshire there are very good transport links with the M40 within 20 miles to the east, the M4 to the south and the M5 to the west. There are also two mainline train stations in Oxford and another in Didcot. There is a regular bus service that runs through Standlake that joins Standlake with Witney and other surrounding towns, and from there buses run very regularly to Oxford.

The location provides the children with an environment that reduces opportunities to engage in risk taking behaviours and is conducive to the therapeutic treatment of them. The Mulberry Bush School is located within reasonable proximity to local villages, towns and services ensuring access to health, education, cultural and leisure facilities as identified in the children's individual Care Plans.

2.5 The arrangements for supporting the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children

During the initial stages of a child's placement their cultural, linguistic and religious needs will be assessed. This will support the staff's understanding of the whole child including their background, cultural experiences, religious experiences and current home circumstances and setting. Once the assessment has taken place, cultural, linguistic and religious needs of the child are included in the child's relevant plans. Staff are supported in identifying additional training requirements to enable them to meet the needs of the children.

During the course of each year The Mulberry Bush acknowledges and celebrates a selection of cultural events. Staff liaise closely with families to ensure that any involvement their child may have in cultural events does not compromise or go against their own family beliefs and values. During our family open day families are invited to bring a favourite meal or dish to share. As with arrangements for the needs of children from ethnic minorities, all strategies are integrated into all aspects of provision, play, discipline, education, assessment, staffing.



2.6 Details of who to contact if a person has a complaint and how that person can access the complaints policy

The complaints officers are the Chief Executive Officer, John Turberville (jturberville@mulberrybush.org.uk) or the School Director, Lee Wright (lwright@mulberrybush.org.uk). If the complaints officer is unable to resolve the matter, the complainant can contact the Chair of Trustees via his secretary Kathy Smith (ksmith@mulberrybush.org.uk).

The school can provide the complaints policy which is also available on the web site: www.mulberrybush.org.uk under 'school' then 'policies and documents required by the DfE'.

If anyone wishes to contact Ofsted their phone number is: 0300 123 1231

There is a clear complaints procedure for children and complaint forms are available from any staff member. Children are able to contact an independent advocate at Coram VOICE by phone from their households if they wish (0808 800 5792) or can contact the Children's Commissioner 0800 5280731.

2.7 Details of how a person, body or organisation involved in the care or protection of a child can access the child protection policies or the behaviour management policy

The Mulberry Bush Safeguarding Policy and the Behaviour Management Policy, including sanctions, rewards and use of restraint can be found on The Mulberry Bush website.

<https://www.mulberrybush.org.uk/our-school/policies-and-reports-required-by-the-dfe/>

3. Views, wishes and feelings

3.1 A description of the Mulberry Bush School's policy and approach to consulting children about the quality of their care



Consulting children and all community members is at the heart of The Mulberry Bush's therapeutic community approach. Through this process of engagement, the children are empowered to become agents in their own lives in age appropriate ways and valued participants in the safe running of the community. The children are consulted through the following forums:

- Community meetings - once weekly where every member of each house gathers to think together about the week, celebrate achievements, targets, children's agenda and anything of significance
- Household meetings - up to three times a day to plan, think together and to consider anything that might be affecting the group or its individuals.
- The Get Together - once a week during term time the whole school gets together to celebrate achievements, sing with the choir, hear the work the school council has done and think together about common themes affecting us.
- Circle time - class time to think together in the group and plan the day's work
- School council - group of elected students who meet weekly to think together, make decisions and plan for future developments, chaired by a student chair person
- 'Child's contribution' section on the Integrated Treatment Plan - before every review each child has the opportunity to fill in a questionnaire based on their experiences and wishes for the future - this assists them into participating in their reviews.
- Staff interviews - the school council members participate in meeting and interviewing potential new staff
- Children's questionnaire - the children have a detailed set of questions annually which are pulled together to give the whole school areas to work on over the following year
- Teacher / key worker meetings - once a term the children and their key worker attends a discussion with their teacher to talk about how they are doing in class and with their work and planning for how they can get the help they need to continue progressing
- Targets setting - in the classes and houses children are involved in thinking about areas to work on and then reviewing their progress against these areas.

3.2 A description of the Mulberry Bush School's policy and approach in relation to –

- (a) Anti-discriminatory practice in respect of children and their families: and**
- (b) Children's rights**

The Mulberry Bush is committed to valuing and promoting diversity in all areas of recruitment, employment, training and promotion. The Mulberry Bush will work towards an environment that is based on fairness and inclusiveness, where all children and all employees can develop their full potential, irrespective of their race, colour, nationality, gender, marital status, age, disability, religious belief, political opinion, or sexual orientation.

We believe that it is not possible to be neutral in relation to equality and diversity. We must work to recognise, address and reduce the prejudice in society and our school which is rooted in the anxieties and difficult feelings we all have, but struggle to face. If we do not do so we collude with the status quo and so contribute to the harm these cause.

We recognise that to achieve success in this area we have to acknowledge and address the bias and privilege inherent where one group is in a majority position. This is in accordance with the psychodynamic and systemic principles which underpin our work.

We expect all staff to respect the diversity of the children and their colleagues.

Our staff, our children and all visitors should expect to be treated fairly and with dignity.

Achieving and maintaining diversity is not only concerned with keeping within the confines of the law, but also gradually seeks to educate every staff member so that discrimination can become a thing of the past.

There is an equality and diversity policy in place which can be supplied on request. There is also an active Inclusion Steering Group which is taking a lead on developing practice and support in relation to inclusion and diversity.

At the Mulberry Bush we are committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for all the children in our care. Through the program of encouraging the children to become involved in all aspects of being a part of the community, their needs and rights can be met and everyone can find ways of living harmoniously together. All types of bullying are actively discouraged and we have set interventions to help those children who are being bullied and those who bully. Religious and cultural festivals and celebrations are acknowledged, learned about and celebrated.

We believe that all children should be treated as individuals. However to achieve this it is important that attention is paid to the needs of children from ethnic minorities. Such a strategy needs to be integrated into all aspects of our provision, play, discipline, education, assessment, staffing.

The School recognises that preservation of the child's ethnic and cultural heritage is an inherent right. It is essential that assumptions are not made on the basis of children's background. During the assessment of a child, their cultural, linguistic and religious needs will be explored. This has two linked aims:

- To increase staff teams' awareness of the culture of a child's home and community.
- To increase staff awareness of their own preconceptions and unexamined beliefs which might affect their work with children and families.

All staff working with the children should have a good understanding of the child's needs and how they may differ from others. It may be appropriate to seek services and personal contacts in the community that will support the child's ethnicity.

For the ethnic minority child, the relevant plans need to recognise their physical and social needs related to food, hair and skin care, clothing, religion, education and history.

At the Mulberry Bush School, we are committed to achieving equality. One of the main obstacles to this is racism. We do not underestimate the extent and effects of racism both within our society and our school climate. We aim to identify, challenge, deal with and eliminate racism in our school, thus promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Working with issues of racism in any setting is both vital and challenging work. At The Mulberry Bush we live and work with children who have experienced serious disruptions to their primary care and nurture. Consequently they often have an immature sense of self and their self-worth. The children placed at the school for specialist care, education and treatment find it very difficult to contain their own strong feelings and raw emotions. Therefore, when upset, they will use many forms of abuse to express their own hurt and make others feel the impact of that hurt. Racist language is one such form of abuse. Our view is that when a child uses such language, even in an unintentional and unthinking way, it is the role of adults to explain to them that any abuse is unacceptable and that we continually need help to own our hurtful feelings rather than put them onto others. We also need to feel empowered to explain to children that racist language inherently carries with it destructive and manipulative societal implications, which none of us should accept, if we are engaged in helping children to grow into caring future parents and citizens.

The children are aware of and use the complaints procedure when they feel other means of addressing their concerns have not been heard. Children have regular contact with their family members as appropriate, are also advised of their right to contact their social worker and have access to an independent advocacy service provided by Coram Voice.

4. Education



4.1 Details of



provision to support children with special educational needs

Assessment and Individual support

Many of the children who are placed at the Mulberry Bush have a range of complex learning difficulties alongside their social, emotional, mental, health problems which affect their ability to learn. Our Special Needs Co-Ordinator has responsibility to oversee the following areas of work to ensure that these children are supported:

- That learning difficulties are identified as soon as possible. We work with a freelance Educational Psychologist who assesses identified children and provides advice to staff. We also employ a Speech and Language Therapist, who assesses all new children when they start at the school, and sessionally, an Occupational Therapist to assess identified children early in their stay and then to advise staff on strategies to help children in identified areas.
- For some children we use local primary schools to explore where a child stands within the mainstream child group and to aid with reintegration.
- To provide individual and small group programmes to meet individual needs. Once a problem area has been identified the teacher plans work to help the child to address this.
- To have oversight of learning interventions.
- To provide support for teaching teams in planning for individuals. The Special Needs Co-ordinator is able to use her experience and knowledge to assist the teaching teams in their planning or for putting them in contact with others who could help.
- To use external professionals and agencies to work with children and support staff in their work. We have developed a range of links with local agencies that are available to support our work. These include our local GP practice, CAMHS, Hearing Impairment Service, Educational Psychologist and Occupational Therapist.

Structure of the Education Department

Children at the Mulberry Bush School are taught in three stages, Cherwell and Evenlode Classes, Windrush Class and Thames Class. All children new into the school begin their time in Cherwell or Evenlode Class. These classes are based on the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and aim to enable children to settle into learning in a classroom environment. Many of the children who start at the Mulberry Bush have not been receiving full-time education for an extended period of time and have been in many schools, alternative provisions or home tutored before starting with us. This means that, very often, they are anxious about being in the classroom, find it difficult to build trusting relationships with adults and are unable to make and maintain friendships with other

children. In the foundation groups the focus on the work is often about enabling each child to have a positive and successful experience of learning.

Children move through the stages depending on the development of their learning behaviours. Children are encouraged to reflect on their progress in working alongside other children and managing a classroom environment through use of a series of Learning Wheels, which provide sequenced targets related to the Boxall Profile.

Once children are able to manage well in a classroom, they move to Windrush Class, where they continue to develop their learning skills. This is often where we see the most rapid academic progress.

Some children move, finally, to Thames class, where there is a higher expectation of independent learning and resilience to receiving feedback and challenge in a learning environment.

All work is differentiated with teachers using our bespoke curriculum; this identifies the next steps for learning for each child. We follow carefully chosen schemes of work for each subject, and our assessment programme (Earwig) indicates children's progress through the objectives outlined in each scheme.

4.2 If the home is registered as a school, details of the curriculum provided by the home and the management and structure of the arrangements for education

The school has a strong focus on the core skills of phonics, reading, writing, maths, PSHE, personal development and spoken language. Each subject is structured through use of a carefully selected scheme of work, including Sounds-Write (phonics & reading), Talk for Writing, White Rose Maths and the PSHE Association SEND Framework. We are currently reviewing the structure of the foundation subjects, and working with the Dimensions Curriculum to introduce a new topic-based approach to teaching the arts, humanities, science and technology (February 2024).

Music and PE are taught by external specialists, who visit the school weekly. Additionally, there is a singing teacher who works with children who express an interest in singing or song-writing. There is a choir that runs weekly, during the school day. The children also take part in a 'daily mile' twice each week, and are encouraged to achieve as many laps of the front field as possible in a 15-minute slot at the start of the school day. The newest children to the school also take part in Movement Group weekly.

Children are assessed using Earwig, following sequential learning objectives that are matched to the schemes of work. Earwig also allows us to set and monitor educational targets. We use standardised assessments for reading (Salford reading test) and most subject statements in Earwig are matched to a year group, so that we can report to children's networks the broad age-related levels at which children are working.

We have revised our Learning Wheels and these have been reintroduced to the children as of February 2024. These define the progress that we expect to see in children's capacity to learn in a classroom environment, and are closely aligned to the Boxall Profile. We assess children 6-monthly using the Boxall Profile and use this to set class and individual targets.

Full details of the curriculum are set out in the school's Curriculum Policy, which is available on the website or by request.

Our school day runs from 9.15 am until 3.15 pm with an hour break from lunch between 12.00 and 1.00 pm. Children are brought over to class by the adults who have been working in the house in the morning: this is our 'transition time'. These adults will give brief feedback about key events from the morning and night before and stay a short while to settle each child to their early work. At lunchtime, the children eat together in the diner or their classroom, then have outdoor or indoor play options, including a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. At the end of the school day, children are collected from class by their house adults.

The routine for the day, broadly, is settling, phonics, writing, circle time, break, snack time, maths in the morning and in the afternoon reading and a topic-based lesson.

Working together

The Education Team works very closely with Group Living to ensure the best outcomes for every child placed at the school. Each child's teacher is part of the treatment team and is therefore involved in discussion around individual input, provision and progress; socially and emotionally and academically.

When children first start at the school, their house staff support a timetable provided for every new child to allow them to integrate into the classroom slowly. Each child is on a reduced class timetable, increasing the time in the classroom over a two week period. During this time, when in class, every child is supported in class by an adult from their house.

There are termly pupil progress meetings. During these meetings we review the termly progress of each child, academic and social/emotional and discuss whether each child has met their expected progress. From these meetings it might be decided that further assessments are carried out, observations take place or a learning intervention put in place.

We also hold a yearly Education Open Day for parents and carers to meet with teachers.

5. Enjoyment and achievement

5.1 The arrangements for enabling children to take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills



The Mulberry Bush School organises a wide variety of opportunities in order to incorporate a fun and effective 24 hour curriculum. These are aimed at reinforcing and extending each child's skills and knowledge, and help them apply their learning to different contexts. We have on site a large playing field, an all-weather pitch and a fully equipped multi-purpose sports hall. We also have a ball pool / soft play area where the children can let off steam and a sensory room where children can regulate themselves when agitated. Each household is well resourced to provide a wide range of activities after school and at the weekends to support children's learning. These may include art, reading, sports, numeracy games, music and discussions. We encourage the older children to join local clubs and societies, such as football, athletics, theatre and dance.

We run our own after school clubs and activities. Our list of clubs and activities varies based on the child group but may include:

- Basketball
- Running
- Football
- Pedal Go-carts
- Sensory regulation area (ball pool)
- Gardening
- Pokemon
- Skating
- Minecraft

We provide individual music for many children. Children attend off site community organised activities and clubs (we call them secondary experiences) such as tennis, rugby, football, horse riding, drama, dance etc.

Each year we organise a camping week where the children are split up into three groups, that balance emotional functioning and safety, and they participate in camping in tents in different parts of the country or on our site. They have many activities arranged for them with some educational element involved.

We also organise an activity week once a year. This involves some of our most functioning children going to Wales where they stay with our staff at an activity centre where they participate in a range of outdoor activities such as climbing, gorge walking and kayaking. The rest of the children stay on site but may do canoeing, horse riding, wall climbing, mountain biking, or just running up hills and rolling back down again.

6. Health

6.1 Details of any healthcare or therapy provided, including –

- (a) Details of the qualifications and professional supervision of the staff involved in providing any healthcare or therapy; and**
- (b) Information about how the effectiveness of any healthcare or therapy provided is measured, the evidence demonstrating its effectiveness and details of how the information or the evidence can be accessed**

All staff are highly trained in Therapeutic Child Care (Level 5 Foundation Degree in Therapeutic Work with Children and Young People accredited by University for the West of England) and through their internal training together, staff are enabled to share similar ways of understanding the pupils' needs. The staff are involved in regular case conferences, consultations and treatment team meetings.

Therapists are part of treatment teams and provide consultancy to the task. Pupils are actively encouraged to become involved in understanding their own needs and working with staff to have these needs met

The Therapies and Networks Team, as well as providing consultation, guidance and support to teams, provides music therapy, individual and group drama therapy, psychotherapy and speech and language therapy to those children who are identified as having a need for, and the capacity to make use of, this element of our service. All therapists have a professional accreditation with a recognised training body, which includes regular continuous professional development (CPD). Therapists have their own professional insurance. The school checks annually that therapists keep their registration up to date.

Therapists have internal peer group supervision once per fortnight. They have individual supervision once per half term.

We have good links with the local child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) service. We also have direct access to consultation with all the local specialist CAMHS teams with whom we can consult as necessary.

The School Council who play an active role in the overall health of the school and link with managers to make changes where identified.

We have over many years employed a school nurse. Our school nurse currently works on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

We employ a part time Speech and Language Therapist, and we are looking into sessional Occupational Therapy.

We have a 'Safeguarding Trustee' who meets with our designated officers regularly ensuring appropriate action is taken and systems are working effectively.

Children are registered with the local GP Practice with whom we have an excellent working relationship. Shortly after arrival at the school, we have the option for the GP to carry out a medical on each child.

Each child has a Placement Plan which through our Internal Case Conferencing system ensures that all departments are working to develop a shared understanding of the child and they are supported to maximise the use of learning opportunities. The Integrated Treatment Plan includes records that show in graphical form the child's progress.

Therapies and Networks Team:

The Mulberry Bush **works closely with families and professional networks** because working with a child in isolation is less effective and more difficult. Very often our experience is that children referred to us have networks around them that have been struggling together for some time and so benefit from some additional support. This involves building relationships with families and external professionals that help to stabilise home and school life, develop a shared understanding of the child, mobilise all possible resources and understanding, and build and maintain a therapeutic consensus between us all.

All staff members aim to collaborate actively with families and networks. Most families and carers have strengths and resources that can be mobilised to solve problems and improve the quality of family life in ways which work for their family. We also have a great deal to learn from parents and carers. Staff members try to work together with families and carers so we can all understand what a child's behaviour might be communicating to us. Parents and carers can then explore new ways to help change long-established dynamics and patterns of relating. Working closely with the professionals in a child's network involves coming to a shared understanding and sharing risk when necessary.

Things we do: We offer a range of opportunities (residential family weekends, multi family therapy, home visits, foster carer days, adoptive family groups) where families, staff members and children can work together.

Therapies and Networks Staff & Qualifications:

- Jennifer Browner – BA (Hons), MSc Special Education, MACP– Head of Therapies and Networks Team, Consultant Child Psychotherapist
- Kate Ellery – Registered Speech and Language Therapist, HCPC
- Stuart Harragan – MSc. Psycho-Social Studies, BA (Hons), PGS Social Services Management, Cert. in Therapeutic Childcare, NVQ4 CCYP - Family and Networks Practitioner
- Diana Nixon – Family and Networks Practitioner, Domestic Violence qualification
- Rebecca Lutman – FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young Adults
- Emily Jones, Dramatherapist - BA, MA in Dramatherapy
- Dave Noble, Music Therapist - BA, Post Grad Diploma in Music Therapy
- Sophie Warrell - Family Link Worker

7. Positive relationships

7.1 The arrangements for promoting contact between children and their families and friends

The Mulberry Bush works with children's families as well as with the children residentially. Promoting contact and integration of children with their family, or another family if this is not possible, is central to our ethos. The Therapies and Networks Team includes three Family Network Practitioners who promote contact with children's families and engage in work to enable the creation of a stable home base for the child to integrate back to. For those children who have no family base, we work actively with the local authority to identify a family for the child and support a carefully planned transition of the child to that family. As well as hosting contact visits, we have a family flat where families can stay over for extended periods of time with their child and a family suite (Squiggle) which provides therapy rooms and ensuite accommodation for families.

To support the stability of families, we also run termly residential family weekends, where a number of families stay at the school and we work with them in different groups and groupings. Families are supported to engage in planned activity sessions which provide the opportunity to have fun whilst also giving parents the opportunity to observe staff talking to and working with their child. We run termly foster carers' groups which provide both a peer support element as well as some training in how to best work with children who can be so challenging during their placement. We have recently started a similar group for adoptive families.

We welcome parents and carers visits to their child and ask that these are planned in advance.

Children have the opportunity to develop friendships outside of the Mulberry Bush School through clubs such as brownies, cubs, sport etc. These relationships are supported within the context of the child's developmental and emotional needs.

8. Protection of children

8.1 A description of the approach to the monitoring and surveillance of children

The school believes that due to the experiences the children have had, it is important that staff remain in close proximity to the children at all times. High staffing levels, structure and routine ensure that children are kept in sight and held in mind at all times. During transitions throughout the school day Therapeutic Childcare Practitioners support teaching staff by accompanying the children. During term time there is one member of staff who is timetabled to sleep in each of the residential houses 38-week houses and two additional members of staff sleep-in on site to support overnight and early morning. During holidays and long weekends when only the Burrow and Bramble House are occupied one member of staff is timetabled to sleep-in in each house and an additional two members of staff sleep-in on site to support.

At night time there is a senior members of staff available on an on-call rota to the residential team at all times, as are the Registered Manager and Responsible Individual.

Group living staff teams are timetabled to work alongside the children up to 10:00pm, although staff remain on shift until children are settled. It is our experience that once children are settled they remain asleep. Between the hours of 10.00pm and 8.00am the children of each household are monitored by the staff 'sleeping-in'. All bedroom doors have a door buzzer system that is linked to a panel in the staff sleeping-in duty flat and to a tablet. The door buzzer system will alert the member of staff sleeping-in if a child leaves their bedroom. Each bedroom door can be activated or deactivated, depending on the level of risk presented by the individual child. The use of the door buzzer system is reflected in the child's risk assessment. Where necessary, for example when a child become frequently distressed at night and is fearful of leaving their bedroom, an additional child monitor is sited outside the child's bedroom door to enable adults to respond to their distress. These monitoring systems are put in place in consultation with referring authorities and/or parents/carers in order to ensure that the emotional needs of children can be attended to. These systems are designed to enable the child's needs to be tended to by the sleeping in staff member.

We have an electric door locking system that ensures that we know that doors are secure from the outside during the evening and night time hours, or if any door is tampered with. We have a policy to support this system.

8.2 Details of our approach to behavioural support, including information about –

- (a) The home's approach to restraint in relation to children; and**
- (b) How persons working in the home are trained in restraint and how their competence is assessed**

At the Mulberry Bush we are aware that children are often referred because other settings have been unable to look after them due to their severe challenging behaviours. At times it may be necessary for staff to physically intervene to prevent risk of harm to another child, to themselves or to an adult, or to prevent serious damage to property. Part of our work is therefore to reduce the need for adults to take over the management of the children and through the course of their placement to support

them to take control of their own behaviour. The knowledge taught on the Foundation Degree supports staff to understand and engage with the behavioural communication of the child. The Team Teach method focuses on increasing the range of de-escalation strategies and interventions in order to reduce risk and reliance on restraint and restrictions, and also safe ways of physically intervening where necessary.

Where staff have responsibility for the teaching, care and management of the children they are trained to Intermediate Level. Where they do not have any responsibility in their job descriptions for the children or are not working directly with the children they are trained at Foundation Level. We have three staff trained as Team Teach advanced tutors.

Authorisation is given to staff to use the techniques included in their training as indicated in the child's records and risk assessments.

All physical interventions are recorded and any ground restraints are reported to Team Teach every 6-8 weeks for monitoring. We have a permanently employed practitioner who is an advanced Team Teach trainer who monitors and analyses incidents of restraint, supports staff to consider their practice and offers additional support through regular 'Early Intervention Clinics'. This role is further supported by an independent consultant who visits termly and occupies the role of external verifier.

Incidents of physical intervention are subject to weekly monitoring in order that trends and patterns can be examined in more detail and interventions to support change can be put in place.

9. Leadership and Management

9.1 The name and work address of –

- (a) The registered provider;
- (b) The responsible individual; and
- (c) The registered manager

The Mulberry Bush School
Abingdon Road
Standlake
Oxfordshire
OX29 7RW

The Responsible Individual is Lee Wright and his work address is as above.
The Registered Manager is Claire McCarthy and her work address is above.

9.2 Details of the experience and qualifications of staff, including any staff commissioned for the professional supervision of staff, including staff that provide education or health care

Set out below is our staff list with their qualifications. In addition to the qualifications staff arrive with we require all care and education staff to undertake our Foundation Degree in Therapeutic Work with Children and Young People. This is a level 5 qualification accredited by the University of the West of England and supports our staff to understand therapeutic practice and to provide a high level of consistency and continuity of experience for the children in how they are understood.

Staff List – January 2026		
	Chief Executive Officer	John Turberville , BSc, Int. Cert. In Family Therapy, MA In Therapeutic Child Care
	Director of Specialist Therapeutic Practice	Lee Wright , BSc (Hons), PGCE in Education
	Dep CEO/Director of Training & Professional Development	Dr Dave Roberts , PhD, BA (Hons), Dip. SW, MA in Therapeutic Child Care, Advanced Award in Social Work, Prof. Cert. Management, PGCHE
	Director of Insight & Influence	Sarah Paget , MA in Consulting and Leading in Organisations: Psychodynamic and Systemic Approaches, BA (Hons) Social Psychology and Cognitive Science, MH Nursing (L2).
	Director of Marketing & Communications	Jo Mitchell
	Director of Finance	Sarah Archer

Department Heads	Referrals & Partnerships Manager	Angus Burnett , PG Dip Dramatherapy, MA In Therapeutic Child Care, Institute of Leadership and Management Senior Practitioner (Level 7) Executive Coaching
	Business Development Manager	Ruth Kibble
	HR Manager	Charlotte Gelder BSc Hons International Transport Management. BSc Hons Psychological Science. CIPD Level 5
	Head Teacher	Jessica Hooper , BMus Music First class. Postgraduate Certificate in Education National Award for SEN Co-ordination (NASENCo)
	Head of Therapies & Networks Team	Jennifer Browner , BA (Hons), MSc Special Education, Member of the Association of Child Psychotherapists
	Head of Group Living/Registered Manager	Claire McCarthy , BSc (Hons) PG Dip. In Psychodynamic Care, Level 6 Leadership and Management
Childrens Services		
Therapies & Networks	Music Therapist	Dave Noble , BA & Post Graduate Diploma in Music Therapy HCPC
	Dramatherapist	Emily Jones , MArts in Drama Therapy HCPC (Mat leave)
		Jess Hargreaves (Mat Cover)
	Speech and Language Therapist	Kate Ellery , MSc Speech & Language Sciences HCPC RCSLT
	Family & Network Practitioner Team	Stuart Harragan , BA (Hons), PGC Social Services Management, MSc Psycho-Social Studies, Certificate in Therapeutic Childcare, NVQ4 Care of Children Young People
		Sophie Warrell BA (Hons) in Technical Effects for Performance FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children and Young People
		Diana Nixon , City and Guilds Families Moving Forward. BBK – Domestic Violence. Accredited Course on Complex Needs and Drug/Alcohol Abuse.
		Rebecca Lutman , FdA In Therapeutic Work With Children & Young People, NVQ3,
Care Teams	Deputy Heads of Group Living	Nicky Turberville MA Play Therapy, BA (Hons) Psychology, NVQ4 Health & Social Care & Leadership & Management for Care
		Richard Hartwell , BA (Hons) NVQ4 Care Of Children & Young People, NVQ4 Health & Social Care and Leadership & Management for Care
	Household Managers	Siobhan Foster-Weston , BA, FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Joy Oldfield , BA (Hons) Psychology, PG Dip. Psychoanalytic Observational Studies, FdA In Therapeutic Work With Children & Young People
		Claire Gaskins , BSc (Hons), FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Brian Tungate , Dip. Pre-School Practice, Early Years Foundation Degree, FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People

		Kevin Babu , BA (Hons) Psychology & Counselling, FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
	Deputy Household Managers	Alex Niner , FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Lisa Hutchings , Diploma National Nursery Examination Board, NVQ3 Health & Social Care, FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Victoria Faulkner-Barrett FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Michelle Bassett FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Molly Coombs FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People, Level 3 Diploma in Childcare and Education
	Advanced Practitioners	Kevin Ellis BA (Hons), FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People, Dip. Therapeutic Life Story Work
		Becky Hince FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children and Young People
	Senior Therapeutic Childcare Practitioners	Danielle Pryde , NVQ2 Childcare & Education, FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Carolyn Sweet , NVQ3 Health & Social Care, FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Tamara Stanton FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Lauren Morgan FdA In Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Sophie Pietersen FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People. NVQ3 Health and Social care. Diploma in Higher education.
		Mike O’Kane , Bachelor of Education Primary, FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Phoebe Mead BA (Hons) Sociology, FdA In Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Andrea Hicks FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Kirsty Williams BA (Hons) in Special Education Needs and Inclusion - FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Kayley Dowley FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
	Therapeutic Childcare Practitioners	Toby Stanton FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People

		Marshall Balmer FdA In Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Emma Stratton FdA In Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Emily Payne FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Sumitra Subramaniam
		Eve Borrott BA (Hons) Criminology and Sociology
		Helene Schlichter
		Patsi Symonds
		Martin Attwood
		Victoria Reaston-Brown BA Hons in Primary Education/SEN (QTS). Montessori trained teacher.
		Nyree Coates NVQ2 in Children's Care, Learning & Development. L3 Dip Children and Young People's Workforce (QCF)
		Tegan Holt
		Laura Valentina Grisales-Moncada
		Bethany-Anne Burrows
		Leesa Davies
		Carrie Parsons BSc (Hons) Business Psychology
		Alana Wilson
		Michelle Tungelund
		Toni Rafferty
		Doug Jones
		Ginnie Warburton
		Millie Channer
		Mia Troy
		Jordan Ayres
		Teagan Quennell
		Chloe Lewy

		Kelly Webb
		Joanna Parsons
		Madilyn Roberts
		Desti Richardson-Smith
		Mieke Mulder
		Allan O'Connor
		Lily Macauley-Hick
		Jack Balding
		Ellie Launer
		Alex Irvine
		Matylda Evans
		Marla Lester
		Sebastien Edwards
		Pansy Poolman
		Qadira Wraight-Barnes
		Orla Kewley
		James Wallace
Education Team	SENCo & Acting Head	Fiona Clarke

	Specialist Therapeutic Teachers	Hannah Curley , BA Hons General Primary
		Charlie Bloor BSc (Hons), Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS), QTS, Forest School Leader.
		Maddie Hodgkins BA Hons Early Childhood Studies and Psychology, QTS and MA Play Therapy
		Megan Tooley
	Senior Therapeutic Education Practitioners	Lewis Scott FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Charlotte Clements FdA In Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Carla Chalk FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young Adults
	Therapeutic Education Practitioners	Amanda Stayt
		Kerry Hookham
		Toni Rafferty
		Hana Good
		Holly Young
		Callum Shea
		Lily Hickman
	Peripatetic Specialist Therapeutic Teacher	Rupert Stace , Post Graduate Certificate In Education, FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
	Therapeutic Behaviour & Play Specialist Team Leader	Adam Clarke , FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
	Deputy Therapeutic Behaviour & Play Specialist Team Leader	Kamilah Valentine BA Health Sciences and social services (psychological counselling), FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
	Therapeutic Behaviour and Play Therapy Specialist Support	Lewis Scott FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
	Senior Therapeutic Behaviour and Play Therapy Specialist Support	Sharon Turner FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
Outreach	Charity Learning and Development Lead	Dawn Davidson , B.Ed. (Hons) PG Cert in Psychodynamic Counselling
	Education Outreach Lead & Deputy Head of Outreach	Laura Dennis , FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People, BA (Hons) Primary Education, NASENCO, National Professional Qualification for Headship

	Therapeutic Training & Support Lead	Victoria Ewart BSc (Hons) Psychology with Sociology, PGCE 14-19 Psychology
	Therapeutic Trainer & Outreach Practitioners	Colin Lutman PG Dip in Psychodynamic Practice
		Morwenna Farnan FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People, BA (Hons) Criminology, MSc Psychology
		Polly Francis BA (Hons) Primary Ed
		Emma Knipe BA (Hons), Dip. Pre-School Practice NVQ3, FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children and Young People, HNPQ Leading Teaching
		Alison Winder FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People
		Jane Alexander
	Therapeutic Practice Trainer	Penny Copping MSc Psychodynamics of Human Development
	Learning and Outreach Administrator	Angela Brown Nat.Dip. Childcare & Development. Cert Education Business Administration (dist.)
MB3	Venue Manager	Michael Staines , MA in Integrated Professional Development (UWE), Pg. Dip. Psychoanalytic Observational Studies, NVQ4 Health & Social Care + Leadership & Management for Care, APPCIOS (BPCC) Organisational Therapist. Member Therapeutic Communities Accreditation Panel (RCPsych). Trustee The Consortium for Therapeutic Communities.
	Senior Archivist	Debra Doggett (BA Hons) Heritage studies, (PGDip) Archives & Records Management
	Archivist	Gareth Beynon MSc Information Management and Preservation
	Project Archivist	Anna Riggs
	Cleaner	Debra Grannell
Marketing Team	Head of Fundraising & Marketing	Joanna Mitchell
	Senior Fundraising Manager	Russell Mclver
	Community Fundraising & Events Manager	Tania Kirby
	Trusts and Foundations Fundraising Manager	Daisy Kinahan-Brown
	Snr Marketing & Communications Manager	Luke Hearn

	Digital Marketing Executive	James Perella
	Brand Marketing & PR Executive	Alexandra Adam
	Marketing Intern	Olivia Davies
	Events & Fundraising Administrator	Felicity Simmons
Support Teams	Charity Resources Manager	Sue Miller (TechIOSH) NEBOSH National Certificate in Occupational Health & Safety, Certificate in Fire Safety, Certificate in Environmental Management, Certificate in the Management of Health & Wellbeing, APM Introductory certificate
	School Nurse	Laura Pemberton , BSc (Hons) Nursing, RNLD, BSc (Hons) Nursing RNC, FdA Therapeutic Work with Children and Young People,
	Safeguarding Lead	Jane Birchenough BSc Hons Combined Studies (Psychology and Sociology) MSc Applied Criminological Psychology
	Quality Assurance Manager	Donna Crozier
	Data Analyst & Research Assistant	Matthew Wareham , BA (Hons), FdA in Therapeutic Work with Children & Young People, Post Grad Cert in Education.
	HR Administrator	Gabriela Genoiu BA Business Studies, University of London
	Financial Administrator	Georgina Elliott-Dew
	PA to the CEO & Charity Administrator (Administrator to the Trustees)	Kathy Smith RHS Level 2 & 3 Diploma in the Principles and Practices of Horticulture
	School Secretary	Jodie Phillips
	Receptionist	Lisa Sherriff
	Receptionist	Claire Chalk
	Maintenance Manager	Gareth Jones
	Maintenance Operative	Chris Bowsher
	Head Housekeepers	Jayne James
		Sarah Leach
		Susan Stewart
		Carol Adams
		Crystal Buckle

		Adel Bounouioua
		Sarah Crothers
		Martha Miller
		Sasha Paterson-Payne
		Margaret Vaughan
	Kitchen Manager	Joan Cave
	Kitchen Assistant	

9.3 Details of the management and staffing structure of the home, including arrangements for the professional supervision of staff, including staff that provide education or health care

The School is organised around an integrated provision in which the main task areas of Group Living (care and treatment), Education (National Curriculum), the 'Shifford' team (behaviour management support), Therapies and Networks Team (work with the parents and carers of children and the provision of therapy), are supported by teams of admin, ancillary, kitchen and maintenance staff.

Each component part of the School works in service to the primary task, in order to provide meaning and continuity for children who have experienced fragmented and traumatic early life situations.

Our staff are trained to understand behaviour as a communication and trained via our own level 5 Foundation Degree. By understanding the emotional meaning of the behaviour, and reflecting on the impact of this with the children, we help the children make sense of their complex inner worlds. This self-reflective stance is built into all our staff support systems. We believe that if our staff are to work effectively with such challenging children, they have to model this practice and feel valued and supported.

Within each department staff are supervised and supported within a clearly defined line management structure. All members of staff receive individual supervision on a termly basis; group supervision on a 2-3 weekly basis and a reflective space on a 2-3 weekly basis.

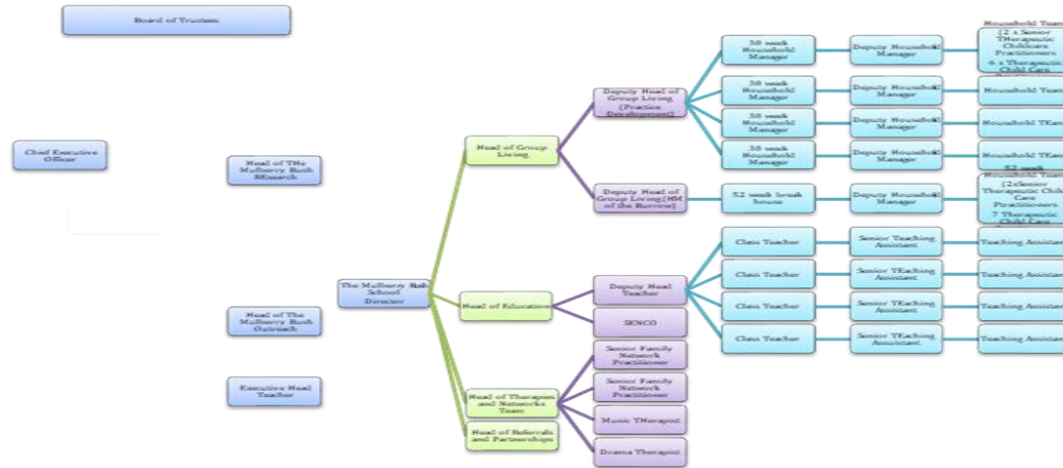
The Chief Executive Officer has external supervision from Christine Thornton - Organisational Consultant and Group Analyst.

The Senior Management Team has a facilitated reflective group provided by Christine Thornton - Organisational Consultant and Group Analyst.

Therapists have external clinical supervision for their clinical work.

All staff facilitating a reflective space have external supervision with Melissa Midgen – Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist – and/ or Dennis Czech – Psychotherapist.

Structure of The Mulberry Bush School



Registered Charity Number: 309565 www.mulberrybush.org.uk Ofsted URN 1275569

Last updated July 2025

9.4 If staff are all of one sex, or mainly of one sex, a description of how the home promotes appropriate role models of both sexes

We always have a balance of boys and girls at the Mulberry Bush and try to maintain an equal balance in houses and classes. Currently we have; 19 boys and 5 girls. They are split amongst the houses and classes as follows:

House / Class (Jan 2026)	Boys	Girls	Staff - Men	Staff - Women
Jigsaw House	4	0	2	8
Sunset House	4	1	2	9
Pegasus House	3	1	2	8
The Burrow	5	1	4	11
Bramble House	2	3	3	11
Windrush Class	4	3	1	2
Cherwell Class	3	1	1	2
Thames Class	4	1	0	3
Evenlode Class	5	1	0	3
(Peripatetic Staff/Shifford)	-	-	3	3

We try to maintain a good gender balance in the staff team, in houses and class teams and men and women are very conscious of their responsibilities as male and female role models as well as providing maternal and paternal roles.

10. Care Planning

10.1 Any criteria used for the admission of children to the home, including any policies and procedures for emergency admission

All admissions to the Mulberry Bush are planned; the school does not take emergency admissions.

At the early stages of a referral it is useful to get an overall picture of the child. The documents forwarded by the Local authority (or any other referrer) should be able to help us decide on the appropriateness of the child's referral to the Mulberry Bush. The sooner we are able to do this then either - the referral can proceed efficiently with the confidence that the child will be suitably placed or, we can let you know that the child may make better use of a different provision and, where possible, make recommendations.

The documentation will also allow us to define indicators and contra-indicators for progress.

Key documents that are useful to progressing a referral are as follows:-

- Statement of Educational needs – the most recent copy with any amendments
- EHCP
- Chronology
- Psychiatrist, Psychotherapist, Psychologist or Educational Psychologist reports
- Last LAC Review report
- Recent school reports

Visits

At an early stage, we would expect the Local Authority to support the child's parents or carers to visit the school in order to understand where their child may be placed. This will give the parents/carers the opportunity to have a thorough look around classrooms and residential areas as well as meeting staff to ask questions. It is hoped that this will allay some of the anxieties they may have and support the referral and admission. During the time that the child is in the classroom and house, the accompanying adults can either go off site and explore the local area or stay and talk to staff.

If they are not already familiar with the school then the Local Authority will make arrangements to visit at around the same time as the parents/carers.

Once a referral has been agreed, the child's visit will be planned at the Pre-admission meeting. These visits are as follows:

- Preliminary visit – Lee Wright, our Director, visits the child at home to talk about the school and make an informal initial assessment of how the child will fit into the school; how they relate to people, how they might present themselves once at the school and how they will fit in with the child group.
- First visit – two to two and a half hours. This visit will start at around 11.00 am and allows the child to meet a few people before having an experience of the classroom

and lunch in Rainbow House. Usually, one of the children who sit on the School Council will help to show the child around and answer questions about the school.

- There can be further visits including an overnight visit if this is thought to be useful and viable.

Admission

Admission will be at 11.00 am on an agreed date, unless pre-negotiated. On the day of admission there will be a 'Getting to Know You' meeting chaired by the Deputy Head of Group Living. This meeting provides a handover of the child into the care of the school and although it covers very formal ground, it is intended to take place in a relaxed atmosphere and help the child feel as much at ease as possible at such a big juncture in their lives.

Views and Feedback

"The Mulberry Bush offer a seamless process from the commissioning process through to reviewing and monitoring placement progress.

Their commitment to children is so strong that this seamless service continues into the commissioning of the next placement.

A truly outstanding service that places the individual needs of a child at the centre of everything they do". (Commissioner, 2015)

A huge and sincere thank you for your care of C..... over the past two years - your love, care, concern, compassion, empathy and guidance reflect your motto of 'learning to live; living to learn'. We are just so impressed by the efforts you make to build up relationships with C..... and the whole family. The 'open' days have been fantastic for all of us. The Mulberry Bush School is an amazing place; you provide such quality of care, nurturing and encouragement. We wish you every success in the future; the children who 'pass through' must certainly find a safe haven with you all. Our gratitude to you.

(Ex-pupils Grandparents)

Our Children's Comments recently:

- "the Mulberry Bush is good; it's helping me love science and everything"*

- "I think that the Mulberry Bush is a very good school and it helps children, including me. They know how you are feeling and will give you a hug when you need one you don't even need to say once you get to know them"*

- "I like the school and am sad to be leaving"*

- "The adults help me when I am angry and the children are friendly. They give me the right work"*

- "I like it. It has stopped me from swearing a lot and I am now able to have a ps4 at home"*

- "The Mulberry Bush has helped me realise how aggression is not the right way to solve problems. Being big and tough is not the way to be - it's OK to be a child"*

- "I enjoy being in the Mulberry Bush - this is the first place I have had friends and I do loads of fun activities"*

- "I enjoy my time at the Mulberry Bush because it is helping me calm and stop hurting people. I have learned it is OK to be different"*