



# Statement of Purpose

## Mill House

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## 1.0 Statement of Purpose

Dynamic Youth Support Services will support young people in their transition to independent living. Our aim is to provide a safe, supportive and nurturing living environment for young people aged 16-17 years formally accommodated by a Local Authority in accordance with Section 20 or Section 31 (Care Order) of the Children Act 1989. Empowering and strengthening young people's practical, social and emotional skills in preparation for independence will be supported by a framework of one to one and group work opportunities. An experienced and skilled team member can be available each day and night. We have a passionate commitment to enable and empower young people with complex social, emotional and behavioural needs to promote positive outcomes.

## 2.0 Aims

- Provide safe and good quality accommodation for young people aged 16-17 years of age.
- Promote positive opportunities for young people to engage with the local community to promote inclusion, participation and emotional resilience.
- Work in partnership with professionals involved in young people's care to optimise the potential for positive outcomes.
- Enable the successful transition of young people to independent living
- To meet the cultural and religious needs of each young person

## 3.0 Objectives

- To measure the positive outcomes for young people using the DYSS 'Building Strong Foundations' transition to independence measurement tool. This assesses and evaluates young people at the point of joining us and at monthly intervals until they move on .
- Maintain a skilled and highly committed staff team to effectively listen and meet the needs of young people
- To provide a good quality, safe and supportive living environment for young people aged 16 to 17 years of age accommodated by the local authority.
- Optimise one to one and group work opportunities for young people to develop a strong personal identity

## 4.0 Our Values

At Dynamic Youth Support Services we believe that by working with young people strong foundations will be built. Our core values as a team provide the building blocks to support young people's transition to adulthood and independent living.

Commitment – To social justice and advocating on behalf of the young people that we work

Integrity – Maintaining both personal and professional integrity to provide an environment for young people that promotes their emotional well-being and social development.

Competence – Demonstrating that we provide effective support and encourage continued professional development as we strive for service excellence.

Respect – To promote the human worth and dignity of others through by positive role modelling

Motivation – To provide young people and professionals with an excellent service

Collaboration – To work with young people to promote their aspirations

## 5.0 Mill House



A 2 bedroom semi-detached property in a small village near Stroud in Gloucestershire, Mill House can provide supported living for one young person. We offer a large bedroom for the young person with a small sleep-in room or bedroom. Each bedroom contains a bed and furniture. The rooms are large enough to incorporate a quiet study area and a desk and lamp is provided. There is a communal lounge with a digital television. In the kitchen /diner there is a fridge /freezer, dishwasher and washing machine with appropriate cooking equipment. Adjacent to Mill House are public footpaths, fields and after a short walk, the canal. This offers opportunities for young people to access outside space in the absence of a garden. Mill house is located about two miles from a small train station with direct links to Bristol & Gloucester.

Support packages will be planned around the needs of the young person, with the flexibility to provide 24 hours a day, 7 days each week sleep-in support. Mill house can also accommodate shared living for two individuals who need low support.

We are committed to ensuring that the young people's voices are heard. There are regular key work sessions for young people and a weekly residents meeting. The residents meeting once a week creates an opportunity for young people and team members to prepare a meal together. Cooking a dish using fresh ingredients and sourcing local produce where possible means that a meal can become an expression of inclusivity and diversity. Celebrating traditions or marking events using food is an informal way of educating young people. It develops both social and independence skills in a relaxed atmosphere. Young people are offered this opportunity twice a week, with the residents meeting on a Wednesday evening and Sunday lunch.

Empowering young people to make informed choices means ensuring that there is an open, honest and transparent forum for discussion. One to one and group work opportunities will be offered to facilitate this. Young people will have a clear understanding of the internal and external route for any complaints; with access to a telephone to contact professionals and family members as appropriate. The house meets fire regulations, and health and safety standards. All electrical equipment is PAT tested. The house is in a cul de sac location with close access to open green space.

## 6.0 The Team

The provision of service excellence means a skilled, reflective team able to work alongside young people to promote positive outcomes. At Dynamic Youth our strength is the valuable contribution of the team's skillset; underpinned by a successful record in youth work, community development, effective early intervention and residential care. All members of the team have relevant DBS checks in place.

Using the 'Building Strong Foundations' transition to independence measurement tool each month we evaluate measurable outcomes for young people. A key to this is building a solution focused small steps goal each month. Young people and their keyworker will discuss the hits and misses for the month.

Working collaboratively to plan what needs to be achieved the following month, and what the risks are this promotes discussion and informed decision making. Working with young people; and as part of a larger integrated team of professionals our aim is to be part of a holistic package of support to promote aspirations and resilience. This means Dynamic Youth providing effective updates of positive outcomes and delivering service excellence through continual learning from feedback from young people, their families and partner agencies.

Dynamic Youth Support Services understands the value of critical reflective supervision in supporting and developing good practice. Informal supervision that provides a team member with support can be accessed daily face to face or by telephone. Effective handover meetings and team meetings are in place that encourage reflection. Formal supervision is scheduled each month. Personal Development needs are identified in annual performance reviews. A three to six month probationary period is in place to ensure that any team member demonstrates their commitment to the values and philosophy of the organisation. At Dynamic Youth we welcome feedback to grow and develop the service we provide. Feedback forms are completed by young people and professionals at regular intervals. Any



concerns regarding James House or team members by placing social workers should be reported immediately to the Operations Director or Responsible Individual in person, by phone or in writing.

## 7.0 Mission Statement

‘In a safe and supported living environment Dynamic Youth Support Services will empower and enable young people to develop practical, social and emotional skills. To make a successful transition to adulthood requires positive role models and community networks. Through the informal education of young people we will promote aspirations and empowerment to develop effective problem solving skills’

## 8.0 Philosophy

The provision of good quality, safe accommodation for young people 16 and 17 years of age is important to us. At Dynamic Youth Support Services we understand that life experiences for young people and families can be challenging. With a highly committed and skilled staff team we deliver creative and flexible programmes to develop the social and practical tools young people need to reach their potential.

Dynamic Youth Support Services Limited (DYSS) will promote positive opportunities for young people to engage with the local community; promoting inclusion, participation and emotional resilience. The aspirations of young people will inform our supported living packages. These packages are planned with young people to remove any barriers to a successful transition to independence.

At Dynamic Youth Support Services we effectively work with unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. By providing a safe environment and ongoing support we can enable young people to build community networks to promote inclusion and resilience. This is a reflective, flexible and listening organisation that responds effectively to deliver excellent service. We consistently seek to work collaboratively with the young people, team and key stakeholders. A commitment to social justice and respect for cultural diversity means that we understand our role in listening to the impact of change on the young people and providing an effective response.

With a strong desire to succeed we believe that integrated working with professionals and agencies ensures meaningful plans for young people. Empowering young people to make informed positive choices and reach their potential is supported by the every child matters agenda. Listening to young people’s wishes and feelings will underpin any plan. Delivering service excellence means providing care that works collaboratively with the young person. We maintain the young person at the centre of what we do.

## 7.0 Family and Friends Contact

There is a simple house rule that any friends visiting needs to be discussed and agreed prior to any visit. This enables the team to make a risk assessed judgement based on the current home dynamics. Any visitors will remain in communal areas and will sign in and out of a visitor’s book.

Family contact arrangements will be discussed and agreed as part of Mill House admission process. Young people will have access to a house phone and computer to support and facilitate this. Any family or friends contact visits will be recorded and can be reviewed by the young person as part of their keywork sessions.

Mill House does not have a landline, however our commitment to support individuals maintain contact with friends and family is facilitated by WIFI and phone top up incentives each month for engaging in key work sessions.

## 8.0 Enjoy and Achieve



Our goal for young people who live at Mill House is to achieve a successful transition to adulthood. This house is located 2 miles from a local small train station, cycle tracks, public footpaths and the canal. The nearest college is located in the town of Stroud. The team are committed to promoting positive opportunities for young people to engage with the local community to promote inclusion and participation

## 9.0 Cultural Diversity

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (<http://www.unicef.org/crc/>) states that ‘.. the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status’

Dynamic Youth are committed to providing equality of opportunity and will not base our care on gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, disability or race. Encouraging a discourse at James House that celebrates our unique differences and identities promotes mutual respect. Developing community, social and family networks means that young people strengthen their personal identity and resilience. Bristol is a city of diverse communities’ .Our goal is to facilitate opportunities for young people to assimilate into these communities as part of their transition to adulthood

## 10.0 Young People and Participation

Encouraging young people to participate in their plan towards independent living underpins the work that we undertake. Providing a welcoming, nurturing environment is an essential element of our role . Young people are encouraged to participate in the weekly house meetings to shape their shared living space. Managing and maintaining positive group dynamics requires clear and effective communication. House meetings are able to provide this.

## 11.0 Admission Process and Unplanned Admissions

### Criteria for admission to Mill House

1. Young people aged 16-17 years formally accommodated by a Local Authority in accordance with Section 20 or Section 31 (Care Order) of the Children Act 1989 .
2. The team can meet the identified needs of the young person as part of a professional team by accessing existing resources /local specialised provision
3. A risk assessment undertaken by the Operations Director regarding the matching of young people, skills of the team and outcomes young people are workign towards.
4. Young person has an identified educational, employment or training provision (Education,Skills Act 2008)
5. Social, emotional and behavioural challenges; excluding fire setting

Prior to admission the Operations Director will have met informally with the young person and their social worker away from James House. This will be followed by a visit to Mill House. Both of these visits with form part of the Dynamic Youth assessment process to determine if we can provide the type of support that the young person needs.

All relevant paperwork for a Looked After Child must be provided by the social worker as part of the admission process. James House will undertake an internal risk assessment when a referral is received and within 72 hours of admission. Any internal support plan will be informed by the young person’s Pathway Plan (Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000).

The young person will receive a Mill House guide which will provide relevant information, including the complaints process and helplines. Each bedroom has a welcome pack with toiletries, towels and



bedding . The young person will receive an induction which includes the fire safety procedure and escape routes and a tour of the local area and its facilities

## 12.0 Unplanned Placements

Mill House has a bedroom that is able to provide accommodation for an emergency placement. Each referral will be considered based on the information provided to inform a robust risk assessment. If additional staff resources are needed these will be funded by the Local Authority to meet the identified need of the young person.

## 13.0 Rights and Responsibilities

At Dynamic Youth we believe that young people have the right to live in an environment that is safe, where they feel able to grow and develop into confident, successfully young adults. This means that young people have the right to complain about the service that they receive from us, and other professionals. Young people will have a clear understanding of both the internal and external process for complaints. These processes are documented and available in the lounge at James House.

Young people have a responsibility to attend the identified educational, employment or training provision. A key role for us at Dynamic Youth is enabling this to happen. Young people will be supported with open, honest and transparent discussions to discuss expectations.

Dynamic Youth has a responsibility to communicate effectively, record accurately and work collaboratively with young people. A holistic approach to promote positive outcomes for young people means working with others. We ensure that timely and comprehensive updates are sent to relevant professionals.

As critically reflective practitioners we recognise the importance of high quality supervision to inform good practice. As an organisation it ensures that there is an opportunity to ensure that the essential checks and balances are in place to promote a positive working environment. Supervision is integral to the continued professional development of the staff team. It is undertaken by a member of the management team with the appropriate qualifications to promote reflective practice. Each member of the team will have a supervision file, and a Supervisory Agreement form is signed by the supervisor and supervisee. The supervision sessions will be recorded and stored electronically and securely. Supervision is scheduled to take place at regular monthly intervals, although the staff team can access support at other times. Performance development and Performance reviews take place annually. The staff team have access to ongoing training sessions and resources to maintain excellent service delivery.

## 14.0 Child Sexual Exploitation

Looked after Children can be vulnerable to child sexual exploitation; the team at Dynamic Youth are skilled professionals who are able to identify and share any concerns appropriately.

The official definition of child sexual exploitation (<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-exploitation/what-is-child-sexual-exploitation/>)

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation , drugs , alcohol , cigarettes ,affection ,gifts, money ) as a result of them performing , and/or another performing on them , sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or



young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

The definition of child sexual exploitation was created by the UK National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (NWG) and is used in statutory guidance for England.

### 15.0 Contact Details

Steve Robertson Operations Director 077 308 04508

Anna Symonds Responsible Individual 0779 041 5208

Louise Brannon Housing Manager 0759 031 9449

Alternative Contact Details: Placing Local Authority Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)

### 16.0 Introducing the Team

Steve Robertson, Director of Operations

MSc Social Work, BA (hons) Youth and Community Education Registered Social Worker

Steve successfully managed a children's residential home with three young people and in 2015, 2018, 2019 achieved an Ofsted Good in all areas following a full inspection. Steve has developed his professional skillset working with young people in a variety of settings during the last 18 years. A highly skilled and reflective practitioner Steve has taken a lead role in developing youth and informal educational provision for children between the ages of 10 and 21 years. Steve has a strong record of effectively working with young people in youth work, community development, early intervention and residential settings. A highly motivated and determined individual; Steve is passionate that young people's voices are heard. Working collaboratively with the young people at James House Steve will develop robust, meaningful plans to support aspirations.

Anna Symonds, MSc Social work ,BSc (hons) Social Policy Registered Social Worker

Anna has a strong working knowledge of residential care and ensuring that the correct processes are in place to develop effective practice .Anna effectively managed a JYIP Early Intervention Project for children 8 – 12 years of age and a ISYP Project for Young people 13 – 19 years of age Providing young people with a safe, nurturing environment where they can develop and grow underpins any work that Anna undertakes.

Louise Brannon, Housing Manager, Trainer, Workforce Development BSc (hons) Psychology, L5 Leadership & Management L3 Education & Training

Louise worked in statutory services for fifteen years within youth justice and for missing children. Then in 2015 Louise provided a range of services for vulnerable individuals, supporting individuals to achieve independence through accommodation, supported housing and residential child care in line with government legislation and regulations. Louise is adept at understanding and interpreting a range of inspections frameworks, is able to analyse data swiftly and offer organisations a range of improvement strategies. Louise's practice is based upon transparency and a fundamental desire to see young people achieve positive outcomes.