



## Children's Homes Governance Board

### 1 Background

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On 18 March 2019 the Children and Young People's Committee voted to end the practice of "Rota Visits" and to replace this with a new Governance Board to oversee children's homes, including Clayfields House Secure Unit, led by Elected Members and with cross-party representation alongside senior professionals from multi-disciplinary backgrounds. The Board is not a sub-committee and does not have any of the delegated decision-making powers.

### 2 Purpose and Objectives

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**The purpose of the Children's Home Governance Board will be to:**

1. Ensure that Children's Homes operated by the Local Authority have a clear sense of purpose and a vision for the future and to make recommendations to the Children and Young People's Committee to support this
2. To ensure that Children's Homes are safe places for children to live
3. To oversee the standards of care in Children's Homes and the continuous improvement of that care with a goal of all homes being rated "Outstanding" by Ofsted
4. To make recommendations to the relevant County Council Committees in respect of the size and shape of Children's Homes provision and any commercialisation of services
5. To ensure that the views of children and young people receiving care and, where relevant, their parents or carers, are taken into account in the development of services
6. To ensure that Children's Homes provide good value for money.

### 3 Accountability and Challenge

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**The Chair of the Children's Home Governance Board will be responsible for:**

- Ensuring the Board meets its objectives
- Ensuring the Board remains focused, has clear authority, and that work is actively managed
- Ensuring that decisions requiring formal agreement are referred to the relevant Committee in line with the Council's constitution.

## 4 Core Membership

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Core members will include:

- Vice-Chairman of the Children and Young People's Committee (Chair)
- an opposition Elected Member who sits on the Children and Young People's Committee
- Service Director, Youth, Families and Social Work
- Service Director, Commissioning and Resources
- Group Manager, Regulated Services
- Group Manager, Safeguarding, Assurance and Improvement
- Head of the Virtual School

Other attendees may be asked to attend as and when required for one-off meetings, or for a specific period of time. The Service Managers for Residential Services and Clayfields House will provide professional and technical advice to the Board.

Membership of the Board may change as it becomes more established and the role of specific representatives are defined more clearly.

## 5 Scope & Responsibilities

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- ❖ Considering all Regulation 44 reports, Ofsted reports and subsequent action plans and holding the service area accountable for delivery of those plans.
- ❖ Taking an active involvement in the development and model for residential children's home provision in Nottinghamshire including setting the purpose and vision
- ❖ Receiving concise reports on the physical environment, health and safety, effective use of resources (including finance and workforce) and the use of de-escalation, restraint and serious incidents
- ❖ Taking an active interest in the services delivered by health, justice and school/education partners for children in residential settings
- ❖ Identifying areas of practice and provision for particular scrutiny based on reports and intelligence
- ❖ Receiving exception reports on Regulation 44 and Ofsted reports from private children's homes where Nottinghamshire children are placed.

## 6 Frequency and Format of Meetings

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**The Children's Home Governance Board will be held on a bi-monthly basis.**

The final agenda will be set in consultation with the Chair and will be circulated, with accompanying papers, to members a minimum of five clear working days before the meeting. Any late papers will normally be tabled.

Agreed action points will be provided to members within a week of each meeting.

Standing agenda items are to include:

1. Ofsted reports and action plans
2. Regulation 44 visits and action plans
3. Additional update reports from each home, produced using an appreciative enquiry approach
4. Financial report
5. Exception reports from external children's homes
6. Relevant feedback from the Children in Care Council/ children and young people in care.

The 'Access to Information and Meetings' provisions set out in the County Council's Constitution are not applicable to the Board. This does not affect other specific rights relating to access to information which are contained in law; for example, the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act.

## 7 Ways of Working

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Members should endeavour to read agenda papers in advance of meetings to allow for informed discussion.

Members will identify a suitable deputy to attend in their absence as an exception.

Members will be expected to undertake regular visits to Children's Homes settings, accompanied by the Home Manager, to observe and gain insight to inform their discussions and decisions at the Board. Wherever possible they should meet with children and young people during these visits.

Members should be prepared to periodically attend the Children in Care Council meeting to gain views directly from children and young people upon the Chair's invitation.