

ADMISSION AND RECEPTION OF A YOUNG PERSON

Admission Criteria

Young people and their parents are seen as separate people, each having their own needs, wishes and rights. Assessment for an admission will consider the *young person's* needs, in relation to his development and whether the needs could be better met in a more appropriate placement e.g. with relatives, a smaller unit, foster care or nearer to the young person's home (see care planning). No young person will be admitted if they are likely to have an adverse effect upon those young people already placed at Donyland Lodge.

The positive criteria for consideration of an admission to Donyland Lodge

To be admitted into Donyland Lodge a young person shall need to meet the following criteria:

- The young person, of between the ages of 11 – 16 years, wishes to join the community.
- The young person will have the potential to engage with adults and other young people to a reasonable extent e.g. they can be in a room with others safely and can communicate verbally with adult support.
- The young person has similar life experiences to other young people placed and exhibit similar difficulties as a result of these experiences. Such young people who have become socially disaffected due to their sufferance and responses to deprivation, neglect and abuse.
- The young person would have the intellectual potential to re-engage in mainstream education and higher learning were other debilitating factors were omitted.
- The young person can demonstrate, during the 28 day assessment period, their capacity to engage with the therapeutic community model of education, care and treatment.

In cases where the life history of the young person is not comprehensively known, the 28 day assessment period would be geared towards attempting to discover more about the events which took place during the young person's early life, prior to their arrival. This exploratory work would involve consultation with the young person, their parents and the referring authority.

The negative criteria for consideration of an admission to Donyland Lodge

The young person would not be accepted at Donyland Lodge if they meet the following criteria:

- The young person has a behavioural pattern of extreme violence.
- The young person has a behavioural pattern of fire-raising.
- The young person has a behavioural pattern of perpetrating sexual abuse.
- The young person has an extensive forensic history.
- The young person displays little capacity to engage with adults or young people in a safe manner.

- The young person has the potential ‘intellectually’ to re-engage in mainstream education or higher education were other debilitating factors (e.g. intrusive thoughts and feelings about past abuse and privation) omitted.
- The young person has extreme mental health needs – such as psychiatric diagnosis requiring admittance to an in-patient psychiatric unit e.g. an Eating Disorder, Thought Disorder, Severe Depression or Psychotic Breakdown.

On occasion a child will be assessed for an admission into Donyland Lodge if there have been one or two episodes of the dangerous behaviours listed above. In this instance, if it can be shown that a young person was responding to overwhelming circumstances of privation and abuse, and that such behaviour is not their normal *modus operandi* then an admission to Donyland Lodge may be considered, pending an assessment of manageable Risks. Similarly, if a young person *has* been diagnosed with a Psychiatric condition but have been assessed by a Psychiatrist, Psychologist or a Social worker as best placed within a Therapeutic Community then such an admission will be considered.

Admission Procedure

- 1) A referral may be made either by phone or in writing and the Therapeutic Services Manager or an assistant will complete an initial referral form.
- 2) The referrer will be sent a referral questionnaire requesting more in-depth information on the young person and his circumstances (which should meet schedule 2, Children’s Homes Regulations 1991), together with the Prospectus, Information sheets and any other information as deemed necessary.
- 3) A representative of the referring agency will visit Donyland Lodge. He she will meet with the Therapeutic Services Manager to discuss the purpose of Donyland Lodge, administrative concerns and any implications these might have for the placement of the young person.
- 4) The Therapeutic Services Manager will arrange a meeting with the young person, his family, other interested persons as deemed appropriate, and the referring agency at the young person’s current placement. This meeting will be for the purpose of sharing information, obtaining the views of the young person and his parents/persons with parental responsibility and other significant persons and making an initial assessment of the appropriateness of continuing with the process for admission. The young person will be given a Student Brochure that the Therapeutic Services Manager will discuss with them.
- 5) The young person will visit Donyland Lodge for 2 – 4 hours accompanied by his social worker and his parents/persons with parental responsibility. During this visit they will be shown around Donyland Lodge, and have an opportunity to formally meet at least two young people and two staff members for an exchange of questions both about life at Donyland Lodge and the visiting young person. If at any time the staff at Donyland Lodge, the young person, his social worker is certain that the placement would not be appropriate then the interview process will be terminated.

- 6) Given that Donyland Lodge, the referring agency, the young person's parents (where appropriate) and all other parties agree on the efficacy of placing the young person at Donyland Lodge, the young person will be offered a placement and asked if they wish to take this up. No young person will be admitted to Donyland Lodge without his consent.
- 7) During the 28 day assessment period young people will not have face to face contact with their parents or person's with parental responsibility. Both phone contact and written contact is supported and encouraged. The young people are assessed on their potential to engage with the therapeutic and educational routines and structures that we operate over the given period. When young people visit home or meet with family members during this period our assessment is marred and disturbed by first, issues pertaining to the family dynamic and the young person's role within this, and second, their absence from the place of assessment.
- 8) Stipulations about contact during the first month are discussed and agreed with the young person, (where appropriate) their parents/persons with parental responsibility and the referring authority prior to making the joint decision about the appropriateness of their placement. Exceptions to this agreement are made in instances where the young person's birthday falls during the assessment period or the assessment period occurs over the Christmas holiday.
- 9) Under Section 189 of Education Act 1993 (also Section 4.53 of the Code of Practice) is the duty of the LEA to gain consent from DfES to place a child with a statement at Donyland Lodge. We remind potential referring agencies of this duty. Furthermore we will confirm to them during the 28 day assessment period that this consent has in fact been given. Where PEP exists the Social Worker will be responsible for providing a copy of this document to the Head of Education prior to the young person's admission. Should the PEP require initiating, the Social Worker will be responsible for producing this in partnership with the young person, parents and the teachers at Donyland Lodge. The PEP should be prepared for presentation at the 28 Day Assessment Review.
- 10) The young person commences a 28 day assessment period at Donyland Lodge. The Therapeutic Services Manager together with the Team Leader will co-ordinate the assessment period and support the Welcomer arranging the practical and therapeutic needs of the young person during his stay with the community. The Welcomer is the designated key worker for the young person during the 28 days. Their role is to provide emotional support and advice to the young person while also introducing them to the community and its routines.
- 11) During this period: the young person is seen by the Consultant Psychiatrist, the Consultant Educational Psychologist and the Art Psychotherapist with a view to reporting to the Assessment meeting (there may be instances however, where one of our consultants is unavailable e.g. due to leave. In this case the earliest alternative assessment session will be arranged); health checks and registration with the local Doctor, Dentist and Opticians are arranged; twice daily assessment sheets are completed by the care team; the young person

meets weekly with the Therapeutic Services Manager, the Team Leader and the Welcomer to jointly review the week and to address any issues or concerns, and consultation with both the whole staff team , individual members and the whole student group shall take place in the final week of the assessment period.

- 12) **Reception on the day of admission**
 - The young person will be brought to Donyland Lodge by his social worker or an appropriate adult. They will be met by the Therapeutic Services Manager and offered refreshments. They will be introduced to the allocated Welcomer. They will be shown to their room, helped to unpack and to personalize their own space.
 - The room will be prepared and personal toiletries supplied as necessary. The room will, as far as possible reflect the interests of the young person, taking into account their age and cultural background and their interests and include a soft toy, school equipment and a book.
 - Regard should be given to the possible feelings of isolation, loss, fear and rejection that the young person might feel along with the contradictory feelings of hope, optimism and excitement of a new start to their life.
 - The Therapeutic Services Manager will ensure that all relevant forms have been completed and a record of the young person's possessions is made.
 - The young person will begin working through their Welcoming Pack with the support of their Welcomer. They will also be given a copy of our Student's Complaints Procedure and the Community Charter, and provided with a telephone card to enable a greater frequency of phone contact during the first month.
- 13) The Welcome Pack will be completed by the Welcomer during the assessment period. This includes both administrative tasks and a number of work sheets assessments to be completed by the young person with the Welcomer's support.
- 14) At the end of the 28 day assessment period a meeting will take place to review the appropriateness of the placement. The worker at Donyland Lodge will check with the social worker that all relevant agencies and persons have been consulted and that their views have been presented. The young person, social worker, parents/person with parental responsibility and other interested persons, whose views are considered to be relevant, are invited to attend. The young person will be offered assistance in formulating his views if necessary. The young person shall complete his own Student's Assessment. The Therapeutic Services Manager will make a presentation of the Assessment. This will usually include reports from Consultants in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Educational Psychology and Art Therapy.
- 15) At the end of the meeting a decision about the continuance of the student's placement is made; should the placement be continued the placement agreement is then deemed finalized. Contact with both family and the social worker will be discussed, an agreement about frequency reached and arrangements set in place for the next three months. An initial care plan that derives from the assessment will also be presented and developed in the light

of the meeting. A full care plan will be completed and agreed with the young person within one month of this meeting.

- 16) After their 28 day assessment the key worker will co-ordinate all aspects of a young person's life during his stay at Donyland Lodge. A Care Manager will oversee this process.