

A collage of various colorful doors and windows on stone buildings. The doors and windows are in various colors including blue, red, brown, green, and white. The buildings are made of stone and have different architectural styles, including arched windows and doors. The text "Amore Care Group" is overlaid in large blue letters.

Amore Care Group

Independent supported living for young adults 16-25

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Introduction

ACG is organisation that supports vulnerable children, young people and adults who are at risk of social exclusion. ACG specialise in working with young people and their families, and have comprehensive experience in providing specialist, welfare and educational based support, interventions and guidance to enable a successful transition into independent living.

We help transform lives through our residential services by taking a holistic approach and having a focus on the core values of being non-judgmental, providing high standards of care and empathy.

We accept each person as a unique individual and work with them so they can feel safe, secure and inspired to lead fulfilling lives. We believe that in order to offer an outstanding service, the needs of the individual must lie at the heart of everything we do.

ACG is a provider which specialises in the care, support and education of vulnerable care leavers and young adults through supported living services, outreach and training.

Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to prevent young people from becoming homeless, socially excluded and be able to maintain a tenancy when they leave care. The staffing team at ACG will assess the needs of the young people and assist them to build the skills required to live independently ensuring a positive quality of life after care and working in line with Every Child Matters outcomes.

OUR PRINCIPLES ARE BASED ON

- Quality of care
- Openness and transparency
- Involvement of the care leavers in the design and delivery of services
- Participation of the care leavers in decisions which affect them individually and collectively
- Networking, multi-agency collaboration and benchmarking best practices

At ACG, our Objective is always to provide the best possible care and support for those we work with.

To enable us to achieve the highest standards possible we will:

- Provide an environment, which the care leavers can be proud of and feel able to invite family and friends to.
- Work alongside colleagues and other agencies to build strong relationships with care leavers, their families and friends.
- Provide an environment in which young people can be encouraged to develop physically, psychologically, intellectually and socially.
- When appropriate, offer specialised support and council from experienced staff who will encourage and enable the care leavers to achieve and move into independent living. External resources will be made available to the care leavers as deemed necessary by their individual pathway plans.
- Provide a safe environment where the care leavers can reflect on their experiences, stabilise their behaviour, regain control and find coping mechanisms.
- Provide the maximum opportunity for each care leaver to mature as an individual, to develop their personal identity and accept responsibility for their own actions.
- Promote the independence of the care leavers at all times and encourage them to care for themselves by offering a high level of emotional support and practical help in health and educational/employment issues, cooking, budgeting and household tasks.
- Provide a supportive environment for care leavers in which, with guidance, they can assess themselves realistically and determine their own options.
- Preserve and support the care leaver's links with their own community by working in partnership with the care leavers, their parents, other carers and those with parental responsibility.
- Involve the care leavers in decision-making.

- Ensure that all staff receive ongoing training, support and guidance to enable them to support the care leavers to the best of their ability.
- Ensure non-discriminatory practices in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy.

We will deliver the above aims and objectives in a non-judgmental, non-punitive way engendering an ethos of care and mutual respect, aiming to encourage young people to become well-balanced, positive and productive members of our society whilst working towards independence.

Our Services

PURPOSE OF THE SERVICE

Our purpose at ACG is to provide a high standard of accommodation and supportive environments for care leavers aged between 17-25 years. This service is to ensure the care leavers are able to develop and maintain respect, self-reliance and self-care skills and enable them to make informed, age-appropriate decisions, concerning their present and future so they can achieve a successful transition into independence and adulthood.

SERVICES WE PROVIDE • Residential (Independent Supported Accommodation)

Services offered will be based on an assessment of the care leaver's needs and be part of the pathway plan for them.

The young people we accommodate and support may have varying needs which may include:

- Autistic spectrum disorder
- Attention deficit disorder
- Mental health issues
- Challenging behaviour
- Moderate learning disabilities
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Self-harming behaviours
- Gang involvement
- Criminal behaviour
- Low level sexualised

The Core service includes on-site support for the care leavers 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 52 weeks per year from a team of skilled service support coordinator's, who build strong professional relationships with the young people.

The Service support coordinator's help to deliver specific interventions for independent living and are the first point of call for the young people's emergency interventions/support needs whilst within the care of ACG.



The service support co-ordinator's are complimented by a team of Youth Intervention co-ordinator's who offer key work support to the tenants. The Youth intervention co - ordinator's assess, support and provide on-site personalised support for the young people on their caseload to help them gain the skills/resources needed to move into independent living with positive outcomes. The youth intervention co-ordinator's work closely with the young people's social worker/personal advisor's, with a clear understanding of each other's roles so to ensure there is no duplication.

The level of support provided will be increased or decreased as required and in consultation with the placing authority to meet individual needs.

Our staff team assesses and documents every aspect of the young person's daily living to establish their level of independence and what areas require support to develop. We use the 'Young Persons Star Online' to support young people with their journey of change to support them to live independently and be used as an evidential tool.

Key-working sessions will help young the care leaver's build up skills in areas that require extra provision until a safe level of independence is achieved and they can then be supported in the transition to their own home, this also includes encouragement and support for our residents in accessing employment, education and training.

It is anticipated that the service within ACG will be for a period of six months for each care leaver, however we do take into consideration that it may be longer for those under 18. This is done to ensure the care leaver is ready and prepared before taking this major step in their lives. Over this time, they will be set up with their own bank accounts, passport, benefits and anything else you would expect someone living independently to possess.

When young people are assessed as ready, staff will begin setting them up in their own homes. This will be a transition period of three months to ensure they can maintain and uphold their tenancies without support.

ALL YOUNG PEOPLE WILL RECEIVE SUPPORT WITH:

- Hygiene routines
- Maintaining a clean and safe living environment
- Food preparation and healthy eating
- Food and grocery shopping and budgeting
- Joining and attending leisure and health activities
- Accessing and registering with health services
- Healthy relationships and safe sexual health
- Education, training or employment
- Family contact
- Taking care of their emotional and mental health
- Religious and cultural needs/preferences
- Reducing substance and alcohol abuse
- Safety and self-harm reduction
- Managing emergencies
- Socialising and community integration
- Bill payments, banking, savings and money management
- Obtaining independent accommodation and accessing a tenancy
- Joining the housing register and support with bidding for council properties





Floating Support Service

Our floating support service aims to provide individually tailored support for those care leaver's in their own homes when they progress into independent living.

This service is available only to those care leaver's who reside within our semi-independent provision, who have already accessed our support and built positive relationships with their keyworkers and youth intervention workers.

The Youth Intervention Co-ordinator team commence the 'Floating Support' service 3 months prior to moving into ACG where they will support a smooth transition into tenancy and relationship building as a first line keyworker, followed by 3 months support post tenancy and continue to support the care leaver's to ensure they uphold a tenancy at their own properties.

OUR FLOATING SUPPORT SERVICE MAY INCLUDE:

- Daily living skills
- Support with education/training/employment
- Careers guidance
- Finance and benefits management
- Cooking and healthy eating
- Health and welfare
- Drugs and alcohol counselling
- Citizenship training
- Emotional support
- Anger management
- Support with attending appointments
- Parenting skills





Referral Process

The care leaver's are referred through the local authorities placements teams. The referral includes a social worker or Personal advisors initial referral form and risk assessment, this is coupled with a self-assessment form that the tenants are requested to complete based on them self-evaluating their current independent living skills. Once these are deemed suitable by a placements manager they are discussed monthly at a comprehensive panel meeting where each potential tenant is represented by their respected social worker or personal advisor and a decision is made collectively by those present.

When considering referrals, ACG will always prioritise meeting both the needs of the care leavers referred and of those already in placement being mindful of the care leaver's cultural, religious and communication requirements.

All referrals received will be managed in such a way as to ensure minimal disruption to the care leaver referred, the care leavers already in placement, staff and the general running of the building.

Admission process

Moving can be a daunting experience. ACG hopes to make this process as smooth as possible for all involved.

Once a referral has been accepted and a conditional offer made, the care leaver will be informed via a letter sent from the local authority. The care leavers social worker/ PA will then arrange via the ACGs referral manager a visit to view the property with the care leaver to meet the Project Service Manager and the proposed keyworker.

During this visit, they will be given an opportunity to view their flat, the building and then make a decision on whether they choose to want to take up a tenancy with us. All care leavers will have a positive and welcoming experience on admission.

Staff at ACG will plan the most appropriate way of helping a new tenant settle and feel comfortable in their flat.

Staff will take time to consider ways in which a young person can be received into the building that would make them feel settled and comfortable amongst the group. Staff will also ensure current residents are involved in the welcoming process if they would like to be.

SETTLING IN

Prior to arrival, ACG will provide the young person with an information pack, which will include a welcome pack with introduction to the provision, our staff and the local area.

Risk assessments will be completed prior to the tenancy start date, and be reviewed regularly thereafter. Staff, in consultation with the project service manager, must continue to ensure the care leaver is a suitable match with other residents at Belinda Ferrison House.

Any risks to the new tenant and/or other care leavers in the provision must be adequately assessed, and the placement will attempt to and ensure these are mitigated against.

UPON ARRIVAL

ACG will ensure that the care leaver's primary care needs are catered for at the point of admission.

This will include a welcome pack of toiletries, towels and bedding, cutlery, utensils plate's cups, bowls and kitchen appliances. Cleaning products will be provided along with a resource pack of tea, coffee and sugar, milk bread biscuits and toilet roll.

The care leaver will be properly welcomed on arrival. Refreshments will be provided for the care leaver, social worker, family members, or other escorts who are in attendance.

Staff will make the care leaver and guests aware of the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire, familiarising them with exit routes and the fire assembly point.

The care leaver will be introduced to all the other tenants and staff in the building at the nearest possible time.

The care leaver will be offered help to unpack and arrange their flat.

At a reasonable point during admission, a formal admission procedure will need to be undertaken. The care leaver should agree with when this is to be carried out as they may wish to unpack first.

The formal admission procedure should include the following:

- The care leaver will be given a copy of the complaints procedure, and this will be explained to them.
- The care leaver will be given a copy of the "Buildings Rules", and this will be explained to them.
- The care leaver will be given two copies of their tenancy agreement, which they must sign. One copy will be placed in their file.

PLACEMENT BREAKDOWN

ACG strongly believes in making a firm commitment to the care leavers we support.

We recognise that there may be challenging times and will do everything we can to support care leavers in our care during those most challenging times.

We will only ever initiate the termination of a placement when the tenant has not complied with the tenancy agreements set out prior to placement, which consists of a 4 step warning system which would involve all professionals related to the tenants care.

In the event that an assessment determines the care leaver's needs can no longer be met and the recommendation is for the care leaver to be moved to another service, we will support them in making the transition, through positively promoting the move and trying to understand their feelings.

Accommodation and Location

All ACG locations are staffed 24 hours a day to allow for support to be given at a time that suits the young person.

Each young person has their own fully furnished flat, which contains:

- All bedroom furniture, bed, mattress, wardrobe, chest of drawers and bedside cabinet Bedside lamp, clothes hangers, laundry basket and neutral curtains. The young person will be able to choose their bed linen (pillows, duvet, bed sheet, duvet cover and pillows) based on a number of options presented by the staff.
- Living room furniture - sofa and armchair, TV, cupboard, Floor lamp and curtains.
- Bathroom – mirror, shower curtain, towels, and a blind for the window.
- Kitchen – contains white goods, Hoover, mop, bucket, and brush.

For safety and security there is emergency lighting, a fire alarm system and equipment accessible, fire doors throughout and security cameras on the entrance to the property and hallways and landings.



Fire Safety

At ACG we ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to deal with fire safety at all our premises.

Employees are aware of the fire and evacuation arrangements and other emergency procedures. Emergency equipment is provided, tested and maintained appropriately and fire risk assessments are completed.

- An alarm test is carried out regularly.
- Alarm points are tested alternatively.
- All tests are recorded in the buildings fire log.
- Emergency lighting tests are carried out at the same time and recorded in the fire log.
- Our policy is for fire evacuation drills to be carried out monthly.
- Employees/residents will be made aware of fire procedures and of the location of firefighting equipment and escape routes from the premises as part of their induction/ admission.
- Employees will ensure that there are no obstructions to any such equipment or escape route.
- Employees must report any deficiency of the firefighting/safety equipment to the project service manager immediately.
- Employees are trained in the actions to be taken in the event of a fire emergency, and to know what actions they will be expected to take.
- Any person discovering a fire will immediately operate/activate the alarm via the nearest fire point.
- In the event of a fire or sounding of the alarms, the building must be evacuated as quickly as possible via any appropriate exit.

The designated person/staff member will ensure their individual responsibilities are undertaken which include:

1. Assisting and ensuring tenants and any visitors vacate the building.
2. The logbook and visitors' book are taken out in order to check that all tenants, visitors and personnel can be accounted for and provide the fire service with accurate information.
3. Telephone 999 requesting the services of the fire service.

Staff may attempt to tackle the fire provided they have received appropriate training with the equipment available until the fire brigade arrives but at no time should they put their own life or wellbeing at risk.

Details of any activation of the fire alarm must be recorded in the fire log as must details of any evacuation including drills.

The staff will conduct weekly visual electrical checks e.g. Cracks to the casing of electrical appliances, cracks or cuts to wiring, damaged electrical sockets, plugs etc. in line with

health and safety requirements. Any defects found will be addressed immediately. A current electrical installation certificate is held by the property. An annual portable appliance test (PAT) is conducted by qualified electricians; there is no gas supply to this building.

Safeguarding

ACG fully recognises and takes seriously its responsibilities on safeguarding, therefore all staff receive safeguarding training which raises awareness to this and their responsibility and duty in protecting the care leaver's in our care. Our priority is to ensure they are safe from any form of abuse.

Staff have a key role in identifying abuse if it occurs and bringing it to the attention of responsible authorities. We will follow the guidelines set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and ACG's own policies and procedures to;

- Ensure every member of staff knows the name of the designated safeguarding officer (LADO) and understands their role.
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the project service manager/local authority/designated safeguarding officer
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters.
- Consult with local safeguarding professionals in the development and maintenance of our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Keep written records of concerns about the tenants even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely and in locked locations.
- Follow internal procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed in accordance with the ACG's recruitment policy and UK legislation, specifically in respect of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- Ensure all staff are subjected to enhanced DBS disclosures, enrolled on the online update service for annual checks.
- Ensure ACG's GDPR policy is understood and followed by staff and tenants alike.
- Provide systems of security such as visitor and staff ID checking arrangements and signing in processes, and security cameras, door access and vision panels (where possible).
- Providing educational opportunities for staff to develop and refresh safeguarding knowledge.
- Establish and maintain an environment where the care leaver's feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure care leaver's know that there are staff in the organisation whom they can approach if they are worried and want to talk.
- Ensure care leaver's know who to contact outside of our organisation if they feel unable to disclose information to someone within.

At ACG we want the tenants to see their flat as their home and they should feel safe and secure in it. The staff will not tolerate bullying and will always challenge it. Staff will always be prepared to listen and do everything possible to ensure appropriate action is taken; such action may include involving police or initiating child/adult protection procedures.

The provision works proactively in undertaking risk assessments to identify the potential for care leaver's who may be bullied or those who may bully. An ongoing risk assessment is also made in regard of how both the care leaver's immediate and extended environment can contribute to bullying.

Staff will ensure they work as a collective, cohesive team to ensure bullying is challenged at all times within the premises and that the values and ethos of that depend upon the principles of respect, consideration and co-operation. Any care leaver being bullied will be treated with empathy and understanding and given support and protection.

Equality and Diversity

ACG aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's' differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and we ensure that all staff members are suitably trained in all aspects of equality and diversity Including legislation and their responsibilities.

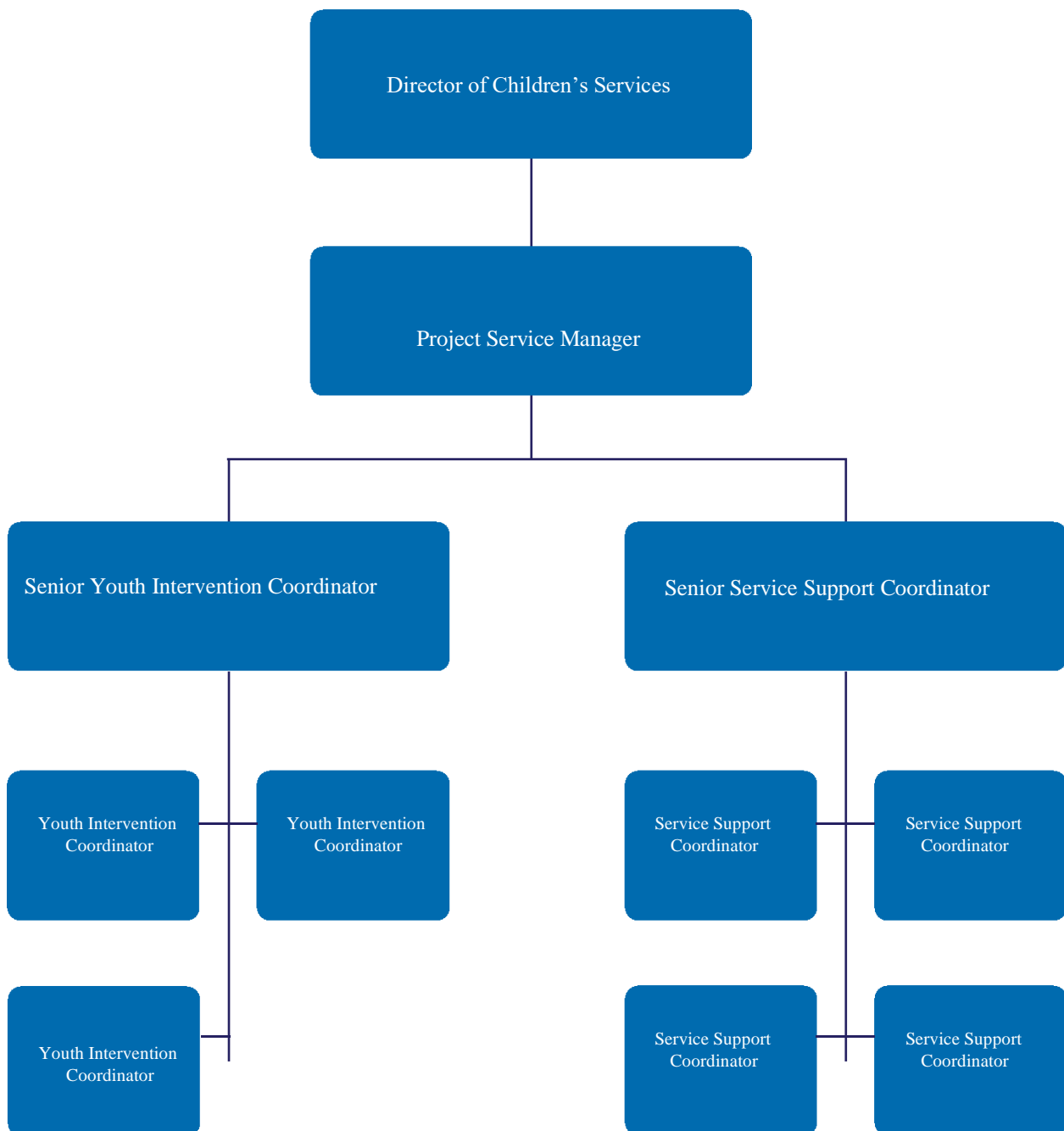
The staff will challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way.

We encourage tenants to develop respect for themselves and for others and deliver services that recognise and build on the strengths of care leaver's from all cultures, religions, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability and backgrounds; in ways that meet their needs and help them to achieve their full potential.

Tenants are offered opportunities to try out new experiences, which are not restricted by traditional gender options. They are also encouraged and supported to understand their rights and be well-informed about ways of challenging discrimination.

Staff recognise the importance of care leavers needing to know their rights as this empowers them and assists in protecting them. Staff respect these rights and will advocate for those rights on behalf of them and their families.

Organisation Chart



OPERATING HOURS

ACG is a 24/7 provision. The staffing profile consists of a Project Service Manager Monday-Friday 9-5, a Senior Service Support Coordinator who Supervises 4 Service Support Coordinators all working on a Rota system of 8-4, 4-8pm and 12-8am. A Senior Youth Intervention Coordinator and 3 Youth Intervention Coordinators working between the hours of 8-8 Monday to Friday and 9-12 Saturdays. These Flexible hours will enable all to be able to effectively support all of the residents throughout the day and night.

ON CALL ARRANGMENTS

Problems within the provision will generally be fielded by the seniors and staff who may then consult with the project service manager.

ACG operates on a 24/7 on call system and those designated as on-call will ensure that they are within reach of their phone for the entire period they are on call to offer support and guidance at any time.

LONE WORKING

A full risk assessment for lone working will have been carried out on each staff member based on each role at ACG and appropriate support will be available if necessary.

STAFF TRAINING

ACG is committed to maintaining a competent, motivated and skilled staff team. We recognise the importance of training in achieving this aim.

ACG has its own training and development manager who completes and training needs analysis on each staff member to ensure that we provide core skills training to all its employees and that they are refreshed and kept up to date with training throughout their career to enable the highest quality of support can be offered to all the young people.

These, in line with regular staff supervision, enable the project service manager to identify the training needs of its staff.

ACG is fully committed to all care staff completing their Diploma Level 3 in Children and Young People Workforce and to supporting our qualified staff to maintain, develop and extend their professional knowledge.

