



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

Services for Children, Young People and Families

Children in care

Children's homes

Staffing policy

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Introduction

Trafford Children, Families and Wellbeing (CFW) service strive to ensure that children living at the children's homes are looked after by staff competent to meet their needs.

Arrangements are made to ensure that the children's homes are staffed appropriately to meet the needs of the children placed. Careful selection and vetting processes, staff support and guidance, adequate staffing levels and appropriate training are essential.

Recruitment and selection of staff

- Children's homes work in accordance with Trafford Recruitment and Selection procedure which is a fundamental part of Trafford Borough Council's commitment to equality and diversity in employment. It sets out what should happen throughout the recruitment process from when notice of a vacancy arises to the time when a new person starts in the job. The procedure exists to ensure that the best person for the job is appointed and that any potentially discriminatory practices are eliminated. All recruitment decisions within the children's home should be taken in accordance with this procedure.
- Anyone who is involved in any stage of the recruitment process must have a clear understanding of this procedure. The manager of the home is involved in the recruitment process and ideally is a member of interview panels. The manager should have received the council's 'Recruitment & Selection' training.
- The recruitment process is an assessment process of the fitness of staff for their role. The manager of the home will not employ any staff who does not satisfy that they are fit to work in the children's home. The assessment process includes previous employment, qualifications, experience, physical and mental fitness and statutory checks. Enhanced DBS checks are undertaken on all staff working at the home.
- No person under the age of twenty one will be employed to work in the home. All staff working at the home will be at least four years older than the oldest child.

Employment of staff

- All newly appointed staff are subject to the satisfactory completion of an initial induction which includes a probationary period of 6 months.
- Trafford Probationary Period Policy and Procedure guidelines have been produced to assist managers in monitoring the performance and/or capabilities of new entrants during their probationary period. They also set out the role and responsibilities of staff members during their period of probation. The aim of the probationary period is to ensure that all staff can meet the requirements of the job and perform to the standards expected.
- During the probationary period managers are expected to closely monitor and train staff, to ensure that they understand the systems, procedures and

requirements of their role. Managers must ensure that employees are fully inducted into the post. There is an Induction process developed to support new staff. All new staff are subject to a 6 month Probationary period. At the 5 month point their performance is reviewed. Refer to H.R. Policies

- All staff are provided with a job description outlining their duties and responsibilities. It is vital to the induction process that the manager provides information about the purpose and function of the home, policies and procedures and health and safety within the home.
- The children's homes operate in accordance with Trafford procedures regarding disciplinary, grievance, managing capability, codes of conduct, and whistleblowing. All of these are found on the Trafford intranet human resources pages.
- All staff at the home are supported to develop their skills and knowledge and appropriate training is made available. Staff are supported to attend training, training needs are reviewed during supervision and personal development plans.
- Each home will rota a staff meeting to take place at least monthly.
- All Trafford CFW employees are able to access counselling, physiotherapy and occupational health services.

Arrangements to cover staff absence

- The manager of the home will at all times ensure that the staffing level at the home is appropriate for the size of the home in accordance with the homes Statement of Purpose and the number and needs of all children accommodated.
- Each home will specify within the statement of purpose the minimum number of staff on duty each day and night, including waking night and sleeping-in staff. The manager will continually assess the staffing level required and will increase the number of staff on duty when necessary.
- The manager of the home is to ensure adequate staff are on duty to provide a level of care to safeguard and promote the health, welfare and safety of the children living at the home. The manager of the home is responsible for making appropriate arrangements to cover annual leave, sickness absence and other forms of staff absence.
- The manager of the home will ensure that each shift is appropriately staffed and although a master rota is prepared movements of staff to cover gaps on the rota will occur to cover absences.
- Trafford CFW employs relief residential child care officers (RCCO) who cover staff absence at the homes.
- The children's homes will offer staffing assistance to another home when possible.

- When it is not possible due to demand or that it is assessed as not being suitable to cover using a relief staff member then the shift is offered as overtime to the existing permanent RCCO staff within the service.
- The use of agency staff is kept to a minimum to ensure consistency for the children living at the homes. Any need for the use of agency cover must be discussed with the Placements Manager or Head of Service for CiC. If agency staff are used by the home the manager must check that they have passed all checks under the Children's Homes Regulations within the last twelve months and evidence kept on file.
- Approved Agency for Relief Staff; - Reed Agency, Tel No. 0161 817 2698
- Short term absence of the manager will be covered by the Senior Assistant(s) based at the home who will manage the day to day running of the home in consultation with the Placements Manager.
- At any time when there is no manager or senior assistant on duty the most qualified and experienced residential child care officer staff will take the lead for that shift.
- CFW Children in Care Service has a manager on-call system who can be contacted for advice out of hours.