

## Acorns Short Breaks: Statement of Purpose



Rose Road Association, Bradbury Centre, Aldermoor Road,  
Southampton, SO16 5NA

A Company Limited by Guarantee Number 1366534.  
Registered Charity Number 276172.

### Introduction

The Acorns is registered in England as a Children’s Home. This means it must provide a “Statement of Purpose” for the information of people who use the home, including children, families and those who fund children to stay.

There are 25 items which must be included in a Statement of Purpose. So that this is an easier read and is useful for everyone, we have separated items into two parts.

Part 1 is the most useful information when someone is first starting to use the Acorns.

Part 2 includes all the other items which people might not need that often.

We also put a lot of information on our website including a visual tour of the Acorns and comments from people who have used the service.

[www.roseroad.org.uk](http://www.roseroad.org.uk)

We welcome enquiries at any time and will give you a warm welcome.

Tina Fullbrook  
Registered Manager  
023 8072 1219  
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<b>Acorns Short Breaks: Statement of Purpose</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	Registered Oaks and Acorns Manager
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## ACORNS: SHORT BREAKS SERVICE

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## **PART ONE**

### **1.1 Our Vision and Aims**

Responsible body:	The Board of Trustees The Rose Road Association Bradbury Centre 300 Alder Moor Road, Southampton, SO16 5NA
Registered Manager:	Tina Fullbrook
Chief Executive:	Juno Hollyhock
Responsible Individual:	to be appointed

#### **AIMS**

- We aim to recognise and respond to each child as an individual with the right to privacy, dignity, choices and respect.
- We aim to use a holistic approach to each individual's needs, ensuring each person can achieve their own outcomes in their physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development and achieve as much independence as possible.
- We aim to work with parents and other agencies through individual care plans and programmes designed to encourage maximum development and independence for each child/young person.
- We aim to provide a friendly and homely environment, which is safe and secure, comfortable, stimulating, fun, well equipped and enabling.
- We aim to provide opportunities for new friendships to develop for children outside of their home.
- We aim to extend horizons through experience, to enable individuals to develop and practise new skills and to provide leisure activities within the centre and the wider community.
- We aim to provide support and continuity for families by recognising their needs through flexible regular planned breaks and emergency support.
- We aim to consult with, and listen to families, enabling them to express their views and those of their child/young person, and to influence how the service is run and developed.

## 1.2 Who is The Acorns for?

The Acorns provides overnight short breaks for children with Severe Learning Disabilities and/or Autism in Hampshire and Southampton. The building is fully accessible for service users with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and complex health needs with disabled parking on site.

The accommodation is in a spacious single storey unit. Acorns for children has 7 bedrooms and is registered with Ofsted.

In Acorns your child will have a choice of a single or shared bedroom. All bedrooms are individually decorated with matching bedding and curtains, and décor relevant to children. Your child will be encouraged to bring in personal belongings to personalise their room.

In Acorns there are 8 beds in daily use. Short breaks are available on both a planned and occasional basis. Trained staff provide support on a one member of staff to two service user ratio, unless assessment demonstrates 1-1 support is required.

Southampton City and Hampshire County Council Children's Services along with Southampton and Hampshire Social Services and NHS Commissioning Group purchase most of the available bed nights for individual service users which they have assessed as needing this. You are also able to purchase nights privately through personal budgets or private funds, and we also provide nights to individuals through funding from charitable trust funds, which can be used flexibly as agreed with the funder. This is subject to assessment and eligibility criteria.

Any service user with severe learning disabilities or profound and multiple learning disabilities (which may also include children/young people with additional physical disabilities, autism or complex health needs) is eligible for referral.

The age for Acorns is between 4 and 18 years.

The service does provide for those with challenging behaviour when carefully planned, but due to the needs of other users, it is not suitable for users with severe challenging behaviour.

In exceptional cases, a child/young person's short breaks may become inappropriate, and an alternative short breaks setting may then be recommended, this process is undertaken in consultation with the placing authority.

**How the Acorns and Oaks work:** Adjacent to the Acorns is the Oaks where young people aged 18 upwards can stay. This is completely separated with its own facilities but young people over the age of 16 where appropriate and carefully planned as part of their transition to adulthood might stay there. Staff are employed to work across both Acorns and Oaks and have knowledge of all the service users, but on any one shift are dedicated to either Acorns or Oaks. Oaks has no upper age limit, but the service is essentially for younger adults. It is registered with and subject to the regulations of the Care Quality Commission.

### **1.3 Emergency admissions**

In the event of a family emergency we will try to respond positively if your child is already known to us. On these occasions we will work closely with you and your social worker to provide an appropriate response which causes minimal disruption to other families and try to meet your needs.

The Acorns does not normally provide an emergency service to families of children not already known. Should this ever be required consultations will take place with the Social Work Team concerned and we will follow our referral process to ensure all assessments are complete before a stay is considered.

### **1.4 Facilities and Activities**

In addition to the facilities as described above all bedrooms have profile beds and overhead hoists giving full access to users with physical disabilities and complex health needs. All equipment is suitable for children who are physically able. Rooms are clearly identified with a PECs symbol and word so a child with communication difficulties can orientate themselves around the building.

The building is secure with coded doors on external doors, kitchen doors, laundry rooms, cleaning cupboards and store cupboards. These can be unlocked if appropriate to provide opportunities for children to develop independence skills.

We have a number of vehicles and have public transport links enabling access to community activities such as cinema, bowling, theme parks and restaurants, used to promote and develop independence skills and provide equality for service users.

We have a range of activities available including arts and crafts materials, mobile sensory trolley, Wii, TV, DVDs, games, puzzles, books, garden games and toys, and cooking equipment. Children are encouraged to choose activities using their preferred method of communication. There is a multi-sensory room, soft play and hydrotherapy pool within the facilities. The garden provides children with the opportunity to play in a fun and sensory stimulating environment.

The use of internal and community activities will give your child a fun and stimulating stay with opportunities to develop independence skills in a supportive and safe environment with skilled staff.

Friendships that develop whilst staying are considered when planning stays. We actively encourage friendships through shared activities, outings and mealtimes.

### **1.5 Who runs the Acorns?**

Acorns is registered as a Children's Home by Ofsted who are responsible for ensuring our standards are maintained.

It is part of the Rose Road Association's charity status that it is run by a Board of Trustees who are volunteers and who appoint professional managers and staff to run different areas of its work. Trustees include parents and professionals from the public and private sector.

The trustees monitor the quality and effectiveness of the service provided to agreed standards. Acorns have an independent Regulation 44 inspectors that provide unannounced monthly inspections and produce a report which is sent to Ofsted.

The Manager of The Oaks and The Acorns is accountable to the Association's Chief Executive who reports to the Board of Trustees.

### **1.6 Staff training**

The Rose Road Association provides full training for all staff.

All staff must attend mandatory training and updates. These include moving and assisting, epilepsy, safeguarding, medication awareness, paediatric first aid/save a life.

We also have online training for all staff provided by Red Crier.

If your child has specific health or behavioural needs and staff require additional training this will be organised prior to your child's first stay. If we are unable to provide the training in-house we will source it from an external provider.

On occasions we are unable to meet appropriate staffing levels with our contracted staff. We have Bank support workers employed by Rose Road association who are able to cover shifts. These staff receive the same training and level of supervision as contracted staff. We also have good links with two agencies and in the event of us being unable to cover a shift with Rose Road staff we would arrange for a member of agency staff to work at Acorns. We have identified

agency staff who have become familiar with our routine and we would initially request these staff should the need arise.

The team consists of the Registered Manager, 7 x Assistant Managers, Support workers, Night support workers, Bank support workers, cleaners, a cook and a Drivers

All support staff are enrolled to complete the NVQ Level 3 after completion of their probation.

A full list of staffing and qualifications are available on request.

### **1.7 Making sure you are satisfied with the Acorns**

Our policy and practice is to empower children, young people and adults to take an active part in the development, delivery and evaluation of our services. We value, respect and listen to our service users. Staff are trained and skilled in communication methods including Makaton and PECs for non-verbal service users.

We will gather feedback from you and your child in the format which meets individual needs, e.g. verbally or pictorially. Staff are skilled in communicating with children with profound disabilities. They recognise non-verbal cues such as nodding, gestures, smiling, or changes in behaviour that give an indication of a child's views on the service.

Staff record any observations or verbal feedback they have received about likes/dislikes and children's choices into the care plan. Staff will continually ask children, using their preferred communication method, about their stay and if they have enjoyed particular activities and meals. To obtain their views pictures, photos, PECs or objects of reference can be used as prompts.

Your child's keyworker will attend service user's reviews. Where these are attended by your child, he/she can give feedback on the service at Acorns.

The keyworker will facilitate children completing Ofsted service satisfaction questionnaires. These are available in pictorial version. During Ofsted and CQC inspections inspectors may meet with your child and gain their views on the service. This feedback in the Inspection reports influences our action plan following every inspection.

The Rose Road Association has a Complaints and Concerns Policy and Procedures, and a clear process and protocol for staff to follow. This stipulates the timescale in which specific actions need to be taken. The policy will be given to all who use the service, with an easy read version where appropriate and we encourage



feedback from users. We encourage children to take part in Ofsted easy access questionnaires for service user feedback.

Any complaints are reported to quarterly monitoring meetings with the commissioners of the services to ensure they are kept fully informed and the Chief Executive reviews actions taken in relation to all complaints and disputes on a regular basis, examining for patterns in complaints and ensuring necessary action is taken to address training or systemic issues.

We use complaints positively to change policies and practices. We have developed parents' involvement in changing policies and recruiting managers. We see parents as partners in improving our services. We also encourage children, families and staff to feedback compliments. This is important in celebrating quality.

Although we continually strive to provide care and support of the highest quality, we acknowledge that you may, on occasions, want to make a complaint about the service.

If you wish to make a complaint please contact the Manager or any of the Assistant Managers of Oaks and Acorns, giving details of your concerns. You may do this by talking to the Manager or writing/emailing them at [oamanagers@roseroad.org.uk](mailto:oamanagers@roseroad.org.uk)

Tina Fullbrook      Registered Manager of Oaks and Acorns: 023 8072 1219

Chief Executive of Rose Road Association:

Juno Hollyhock

023 8072 1234

If you have complained to the Association about your treatment here, or about any aspect of the running of the Home which is causing you concern, and are dissatisfied with the response from the Association, then it is open to you to complain to Ofsted, which is the authority responsible for inspecting this Home under the provisions of the Children's Homes Regulations 2014

You may do this by contacting:

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

You can also complain to the local authority which funds your child to receive the service. If you are still dissatisfied at the response of the local authority, then the Ombudsman may be able to help you. They may investigate complaints from members of the public who think that they have suffered injustice as a result of misadministration by a local authority. You can contact the Local Government Ombudsman by calling 0300 061 0614.

## **PART TWO**

### **2.1 Health**

It is the aim of The Acorns to recognise and respond to your child as an individual, promoting a healthy lifestyle which will include food choices, identified support and information to achieve a healthy outcome for them.

We have links with health professionals to ensure accurate support is agreed and documented on care plans.

Staff will be trained to meet the individual health needs of your child. This training will be provided by a competent practitioner.

Your child should be well enough to stay for their short break. We will not be able to accept children for their short break if they are suffering from any illness that may be contagious. We have to ensure the wellbeing of all children /young people in our care.

If your child becomes ill during their stay we will contact you to advice of their symptoms and our concerns. We may request your child is collected and returned home.

If your child becomes severely ill and needs immediate medical attention we will contact the emergency services and notify you, or your emergency contact, of our actions. If no one is available and your child needs hospital admission we will ensure they are supported by a member of staff and all relevant information is provided to the medical services.

Protocols for health related issues i.e. epilepsy, diabetes and oxygen levels will be included in the care plan. These will be developed in consultation with you and any relevant professionals.

## Medication

*Please refer to the Medication Handling Policy for the Rose Road Association.*

The Rose Road Association medication policy which covers:

- Staff training
- Safe keeping
- Administration and recording
- Managing drug errors
- Controlled medication
- Covert Medication
- PRN medication
- Homely remedies
- Drugs on admission and discharge

Staff in Acorns all receive training on all medication protocols, on specific conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy, and administration of medication. Staff are not able to administer medication until this training is completed and they have been deemed competent.

Prescribed medication can only be administered if the medication label is exactly the same as the signed consent or the prescription form and should clearly state

- Name
- Name of medication
- Strength of dose
- Amount and frequency of dose
- Date of prescription

The medication must be in its original container and in date. We will accept blister packs that have been prepared by the pharmacy.

If medication is incorrect on admission or consent is not available you will be contacted and may be asked to come in to administer the medication. We will do our best to contact your GP to obtain consent so your short break will not be disturbed.

## **2.2 Education**

If your child stays at The Acorns in term time, they will continue their education at whichever School/College they regularly attend. If they require transporting to and from their School/College, it will be the responsibility of you or your social workers, to ensure that the appropriate transport is arranged. If your child's funders have made agreement for the Rose Road Association to undertake transport this will be by MiDAS trained and approved driver and suitable escort.

Your child will be encouraged to complete their homework when staying for their short break and will be provided with a suitable space to work in. Outcomes for the children are identified in conjunction with you and schools and may include some of their educational targets. It is recognised that all children learn and develop through play and participation and this is actively encouraged.

## **2.3 Activities**

We will provide a positive experience for your child through having a good understanding of their needs, likes and dislikes whilst ensuring their religious and cultural needs are met. Through the care planning process we will gain knowledge of your child which enables us to meet their needs. Children will also have opportunities to try new experiences, which broadens their choices and develops additional skills.

Your child will have the opportunity to participate in in-house activities including:

- Arts and crafts
- Music and karaoke
- Cooking
- Games, puzzles and reading
- TV and DVDs
- Wii
- Soft play
- Sensory experiences
- Garden play
- Swimming

We encourage all children to develop their independence skills by supporting them with making drinks, assisting with meal preparation, tidying up, packing and unpacking bags, and with personal care.

We will also provide opportunities to access community activities including:

- Bowling
- Cinema
- Theme parks
- Shopping trips
- Boat trips
- Restaurants

Children are always offered opportunities to participate in activities and choices are given using their preferred method of communication.

We would ask you to contribute to the expenses of activities and outings on offer. These contributions will contribute to refreshments and admittance to any facilities. Payment of expenses should not provide a barrier to accessing the service, if you feel you are likely to have trouble meeting these expenses you can approach your keyworker or manager.

## **2.4 Behaviour**

We will ensure your child remains safe and is treated with dignity and respect whilst in our care. Some children may rely on their behaviour to communicate their needs and emotions. We recognise that children may become upset, confused and anxious at times and this may result in their behaviour becoming difficult. Staff will be encouraged to take time to get to know individual children and identify strategies that will encourage positive behaviour and to support your child at all times.

Children and young people benefit from a consistent approach from all staff and in all settings. We will work closely with you, psychology services, social workers, and schools to ensure any behavioural programmes or expectations that are implemented are continued within the overnight short break. The care plan will include any behavioural plans and recommendations or strategies used to reduce your child's behaviours and your child's keyworker will liaise with you regarding the plan. If your child has specific health or behavioural needs and staff require additional training this will be organised prior to your child's first stay. If we are unable to provide the training in-house we will source it from an external provider.

We will agree what must be the minimum standards of behaviour; where there is persistent challenging of these standards an individual approach to addressing the issue will be taken.

Positive behaviour will be encouraged in all settings and your child will be encouraged to behave appropriately and be respectful of others.

## **2.5 Restorative Measures**

Any Restorative Measure imposed during your Child's stay in Acorns will be discussed with you prior to your child attending. Staff are encouraged at all times to adopt positive behaviour strategies but will follow a plan that has restorative measure as part of the plan if these are used in other settings. This ensures a consistent approach to your child.

## **2.6 Safeguarding Children**

Our priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of all children who use our service. The Rose Road Association has a full Safeguarding policy that all staff are aware of through training and expected to adhere to in practice. *Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.*

Other policies linked to safety include our Mobile Phone and Camera Policy, Adult Safeguarding Policy, and Recording Policy. See also section 2.7 Missing Person Policy.

All serious incidents are reported to Ofsted and our Commissioners.

## **2.7 Missing Children**

Every care is taken to ensure your child will be safe and well cared for whilst staying at Rose Road. They will be appropriately supervised at all times whilst respecting their need for privacy.

If your child goes missing whilst in the care of Rose Road staff all appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the safe return of your child. The manager on duty will immediately notify yourself, police and the senior manager on call. *Please refer to the Missing Person Policy.*

Ofsted would be notified of this as a significant event. Following the incident an incident investigation will be conducted to identify the circumstances and any preventative measures to ensure there is not a re-occurrence. If following the investigation the cause is identified as a result of negligent staff the disciplinary policy will be instigated.

## **2.8 Surveillance**

We use security codes on doors and only employees of the Rose Road Association are given the codes. We have no fixed surveillance cameras within Acorns. We have available monitors which can be used to monitor activity at night including seizures, sleep patterns and any safety concerns that may occur overnight. If you feel your child may need this please discuss with your keyworker. If these are used we would ensure your child's dignity and privacy is respected at all times.

## **2.9 Fire**

During induction all staff are made aware of the procedures in the event of a fire. This includes knowing where fire exits and fire assembly points are. Regular fire awareness training is provided by an accredited fire training provider.

In the event of a fire breaking out during the hours the Short Break Service is operational, evacuation procedure will be adopted, as set out in the *Fire Evacuation Policy*. The aim is to ensure a safe, speedy and secure evacuation from the area of the fire whilst ensuring that your child remains safe at all times.

If a fire occurs whilst your child is staying with us you will be informed of the event and advised on any action you need to take.

A fire drill is held at a minimum of 4 times a year. Times of the drills vary to ensure all staff are able to take part and various scenarios are tested.

## **2.10 Religion**

We will ensure your child's religious and cultural beliefs are met during their stay. This will include specific dietary or other requirements necessary to meet any cultural or religious beliefs.

If your child requests attendance at a religious service during their stay we will endeavour to support this if practical and appropriate. Assistance to enable children to practise their religion will be given.

## **2.11 Contact with Parents**

We recognise it may be an anxious time for you when your child stays at Rose Road and would encourage you to contact us at any time of the day or night to enquire on the well-being of your child.

You are able to visit your child at any time during their stay but would encourage you to phone beforehand to ensure you do not have a wasted journey if your child has gone out.

Your keyworker will be in regular contact with you to ensure your child's care plan is up to date and we are meeting your child's needs. We will inform you of any activities your child has done and share photographs of the events with you.

We will ensure you are notified of any accident, incident or near miss that may have involved your child. Our priority will be to ensure the safety and well-being of your child at all times. Following an accident, incident or near miss an investigation will be carried out so we can identify the cause and look at prevention of a future occurrence.

**Finally: if you have any queries at all we welcome contact and discussion with you. Do not hesitate to get in touch.**