



# Pebbles

Care | Education | Therapy



## STORMONT COTTAGE

### Statement of Purpose

February 2026

# Contents

- 3 Introduction**
- 4 Description of Stormont Cottage**
- 7 Continuing Care**
- 8 Health & Well-being**
- 9 Therapeutic Care**
- 11 Upholding Children & Young People’s Rights**
- 12 Safeguarding**
- 13 Child Protection**
- 14 Reducing Restrictive Practices**
- 17 Leadership, Management & Care Team**
- 19 Psychological Support**
- 21 Supporting Educational Progress**

## Introduction

Stormont Cottage is part of Pebbles Care Ltd, a private provider specialising in residential child-care across Scotland and England for children and young people up to 21 years of age. Pebbles Care Ltd is the name of the parent company of which Radical Services Ltd, Partners in Care Ltd, and BDT Care Solutions Ltd are subsidiaries.

Stormont Cottage provides care for children with complex needs who are unable to remain at home, in line with The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the Children Act 1989.

Stormont Cottage believes that all children and young people have potential for growth and change. In line with the core principles of The Promise, we aim to nurture and develop, so that any child or young person welcomed into our care will have the opportunity to feel safe, loved, and flourish. We are aware that our placements are temporary, and that residential child-care rarely offers a route to permanence via a court order, however, we welcome the opportunity to be part of a child's journey for however long or short it may be.

Stormont Cottage provides a familial environment where children and young people who cannot remain at home can be cared for in a way that allows them to experience a strong sense of nurture matched by clear boundaries and routines, in a way that fulfils their need to feel safe and nurtured.



# Description of Stormont Cottage

Stormont Cottage is registered with the Care Inspectorate and is situated in Auchterarder, Perth. The layout of the home has been designed to provide a healthy balance between safety, security, and privacy.

The home is situated along a quiet country lane with views across beautiful Perthshire countryside including forest, fields and an abundance of wildlife. From our kitchen window we have viewed buzzards, deer, stoats, pheasants, foxes, rabbits, hares, horses and sheep. The road has no traffic nearby adding to the serene nature and privacy of our location. The home is situated near Auchterarder village, which provides amenities including shops, cafés and many varied places to eat. We are close to Perth City which again offers an abundance of activities including swimming pool, museums, walks, go-karting, ice skating, fishing and much more.

The home environment at Stormont Cottage is clean, tidy, well-equipped, and decorated.

Stormont Cottage offers:

- Large entrance space with reading nook
- Living room with multimedia use and space for games
- Kitchen/dining area
- Four bedrooms: two bedrooms designated for staff and two bedrooms for young people
- Individual bathrooms for each young people; one en-suite and one bathroom both with a shower and bath
- A therapeutic chill room with a projector, low lights, bubble lamps and sensory lights
- Staff office

External:

- Back garden with outdoor seating area
- Large front garden
- Front parking area
- Flower beds and vegetable patch
- Local walking routes
- Large garage space

Stormont Cottage provides adequate space for two young people to live supported by two adults at one time in a small group living environment.

The home environment is warm and nurturing. Health and Safety measures are in place and regular checks and audits are conducted to ensure the home's safety including those relating to e.g., health and safety; fire safety; food hygiene; infection control; vehicle safety, and the management of medication.

Young people have access to a telephone and TV. Secured internet and wi-fi access also exist. For any additional information please see Pebbles Care's internal policies and procedures (updated 2025). These are stored centrally online via Microsoft Teams and are easily accessible to care teams.

Pebbles Care are committed to forming meaningful connections and congruent relationships to support children and young people to feel safe. To achieve this, we use Dan Hughes' PACE Model as

part of our approach to repairing attachment. Active listening promotes opportunities for individuals to talk about deeply rooted pain and situations that have and are impacting on how they feel. Such dialogue along with any therapeutic work will be child-led as carers work sensitively to receive such expressions of emotion with empathy and understanding.

We are dedicated to supporting children and young people to have positive and meaningful experiences as well as having opportunities to discover more about the things they are good at and enjoy. We will promote opportunities for living-learning experiences through a range of daily activities. We are committed to contributing to the social, cultural, and economic capital of the community since we are reliant upon community resources to provide opportunities for our young people to participate in activities which evoke a sense of achievement and pleasure.

Creating opportunities for creativity, activity, social engagement, and learning allows for personal growth, and a sense of achievement and pride. Stormont Cottage consults with several groups, organisations, and activities within the home and the local community to engage young people and ensure their participation in things that they might enjoy doing.

This may include:

- The provision of safe outdoor activities linked to achievable awards
- Involvement in physical activity
- Being part of community and voluntary activities, which involve taking care of the environment and caring for animals and nature
- Raising awareness of the outdoors and environmental issues
- Arts, crafts, cookery, pottery, music, discussion groups, animal care, and the performing arts
- Self-care and well-being including massage, mindfulness, beauty therapy

These examples are just some ways in which we can support children and young people to try new things, discover what they are good at and enjoy doing, and hopefully learn to feel better about themselves.

We respect diversity and ensure that as part of the care planning process individual needs of each child or young person are supported in relation to their cultural identity, age, background, gender identity, sexual orientation and language or faith, and will draw upon local community and other groups to support these.

At the point of referral Pebbles Care's Central Commissioning Team follow a robust process to ensure that any young person is safely matched to a home where they have potential to thrive. Where a cross-border placement occurs, we ensure that Care Inspectorate guidance is followed in relation to seeking the consent of the young person, parent(s), and the court. To ensure that we are compliant we obtain copies of:

- The young person's Care Order with evidence from the court order as to why the young person would be best placed in Scotland
- Confirmation from the social worker of parent(s) and young person's consent unless the judge supersedes in the best interests of the child or young person

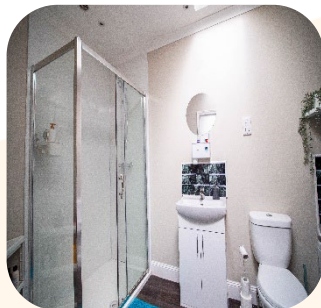
The initial planning meeting will consider the views, wishes and feelings of those we care for.

The children and young people at Stormont Cottage will be cared for by a care team offering twenty-four-hour wrap around care based upon the assessed need of each child or young person.

Adverse childhood experiences are likely to have informed the beliefs and attitudes of these children and young people. These can often result in maladaptive coping strategies which manifest in harmful behaviours toward self and others. Stormont Cottage aims to support young people to make sense of these past experiences and how they influence current behaviours, whilst ensuring a positive nurturing environment where children can feel safe, have fun, and experience attuned, positive, and loving positive relationships.

This serves as a pretext for growth and development and enables individuals to develop and flourish. The Stormont Cottage team respect equality and diversity and ensure that as part of the care planning process, the individual needs of each child or young person are supported.

Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy (PACE) reflect the therapeutic parenting approach to care we offer.



## Continuing Care

The Children and Young Peoples (Scotland) Act 2014, Part 11 states that a young person may be eligible for suitable accommodation until the eve of their twenty first birthday. This 'Continuing Care' provision enables young people to remain in care and to be better equipped for an eventual transition. Where Continuing Care is not made available, this should only be in cases where it is considered that it would have an adverse impact on the welfare of an individual and must be evidenced, via a Welfare Assessment, which the local authority has a legal responsibility to complete within a reasonable timescale before a young person leaves care. This falls in line with The Continuing Care (Scotland) Order 2015.

Continuing Care in Scotland enables, in some circumstances, looked after young people to remain in their care setting to better prepare for a transition from care. For many, Stormont Cottage is seen as their home and should allow them to remain there into adulthood, where required. Pebbles Care will encourage this provision and ensure that advocacy services are used to promote the rights of young people in this regard, where appropriate. In such cases it is the responsibility of Pebbles Care to work with the local authority social worker and other agencies to ensure that such planning considers young people's needs and rights, and that appropriate personalised support is made available by the local authority and other partner agencies to ensure that Continuing Care, and where appropriate, 'Staying Close' arrangements for cross-border placements are considered and seamless for a young person.

# Health & Well-being

All young people are registered within seven days with a General Practitioner, Dentist, and Optician.

The Doctors surgery for Stormont Cottage is based at the following address: St Margaret' Health Centre, St Margaret's Drive, Auchterarder. PH3 1JH

GP appointments and any subsequent actions are recorded in the young person's file. In the event of a serious illness, the young person's social worker, those with parental responsibility and any significant others are notified at the earliest opportunity.

Stormont Cottage operates a no smoking policy, for carers, residents, and visitors to the home. We acknowledge that whilst young people may smoke, it is our aim to help them reduce or stop smoking by actively discouraging it. We do this by making them aware of the dangers, ensuring that carers function as positive role models in this regard, and by seeking support from local smoking cessation services.

Stormont Cottage actively promotes good health and well-being. Health promotion materials are made available on matters including diet; smoking; alcohol and substance use; sexual relationships and sexually transmitted infections; relationships; general health; hygiene, and emotional well-being.

The care team observe high levels of hygiene and are robust in this regard when dealing with spillage of body fluids and open wounds. Additionally, all carers receive training in health and safety; emergency first aid at work, and food preparation and hygiene as part of their mandatory training.

Parents/Guardians may be consulted on the treatment of young people in emergencies, and a medical consent form is completed as part of the admission process.

Medication is kept in a locked cabinet in the home's office. Where appropriate, young people are supported to take responsibility for regularly taking any prescribed medication; the records of which are robustly maintained.

In the event of an accident occurring involving a young person or member of the care team, an 'Accident Form' is completed and filled accordingly, and appropriate agencies are notified. Should there be any dubiety regarding the notification process, the company's Health and Safety Officer will be consulted.

# Therapeutic Care

Our therapeutic practice is based upon a belief that those we care for should experience a sense of belonging underpinned by an approach we refer to as ‘Therapeutic Parenting.’

In our journey toward providing the following, we aspire to create a healthy healing environment through which we seek to fulfil Key Question 7 by:

- Promoting a belief in the potential for each person to recover from past harm
- Developing meaningful and compassionate human relationships as a conduit for development of trust and personal growth
- Creating high levels of nurture combined with structure and predictable patterns of care
- Ensuring a warm, clean, and homely environment in which children and young people can feel a sense of safety, nurture and belonging
- Providing opportunities for fun through which to create positive childhood memories. Promoting self-confidence and removing the sense of shame many young people feel by enabling them to make sense of past experiences
- Actively listening and valuing what children and young people have to say as we help them to understand their rights
- Showing compassion, respect, and love
- Responding to the underlying need beneath an individual’s behaviour, which they need to process and make sense of before they can affect change
- Caring at the developmental or cognitive age of the child and not their chronological age
- Accepting presenting behaviour as a reflection of learned behaviours rooted in previously learned maladaptive coping strategies

Our care is enhanced through an understanding, from the outset, of the needs of those children and young people who come to live with us. Staff are trained to look beyond behaviours to identify the unmet need that lies behind it. The detail outlined in every individual’s formulation helps us make better sense of how we can best care for a child and by focussing on human connection, nurture, and warmth we hope to create trust and safety through an approach underpinned by the principles of therapeutic parenting and the PACE model.

We know that there are no magical solutions for those who are unable to live at home. Therefore, we never underestimate the importance of human connection, ensuring that children and young people are being listened to and included, and are feeling a sense of nurture and acceptance. In an environment that is calm and embracing we recognise that connection is the conduit for change.

We also work closely with local authority social workers and other partner agencies to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of those we care for. Stormont Cottage also has full access to our ‘in-house’ psychology team led by Dr Faye McLean. They support both our carers and children and young people.

## Working with the Wider Network of Support

Stormont Cottage actively welcomes the involvement of family and encourages their involvement in activities within the home, under the direction of the Social Worker, and at planning and review

meetings. Any decision making will reflect compassion and care and is based upon what the child or young person needs and wants whilst considering the child or young person's best interests. To achieve this, we recognise the importance of inter and intra-agency involvement.

We actively encourage the relationships with family and the individual's wider network of support and welcome their participation in the life of the child or family member.

We encourage their involvement in significant events including celebrations. Continuity of relationships is important, and Stormont Cottage aims to support these for those children and young people living with us.

We encourage the development and strengthening of long-term relationships between family and friends. We seek to keep families involved regarding any changes, developments and care plan arrangements and encourage visits home to be with family wherever possible unless specified by the social worker that this would not be in the individual's best interest.

## Promoting and Role Modelling Positive Relationships

Adults at Stormont Cottage demonstrate these during their daily interactions with children, and one another. They promote healthy interaction through communication which is informed by active listening, curiosity, and empathy. They also use reflection, summarising, and the use of open questions to engage with children and young people, whilst remaining mindful of the significance of non-verbal communication skills and their importance in creating safety and building trust. Adults within the care team will always seek connection before having to address unhelpful behaviours and as part of a restorative approach will also apologise and seek to repair any relationship where they feel their responses have been unhelpful.

Attuned therapeutic parenting leading to safe healthy relationships will create opportunities for warmth, affection, and love, underpinned by healthy and educative discussions about the meaning of these words.

# Upholding Children & Young People's Rights

The views of children and young people living at Stormont Cottage are sought in relation to their care experience during discussions with many adults including carers; advocates; IRO; social worker, and health professionals. Young people are also encouraged to speak with external visitors (including senior managers) to the home and at our schools, with members of the psychology team, as well as during the inspection process. Ensuring that their voices are heard is the responsibility of all agencies who visit the home.

Stormont Cottage will offer a safe and nurturing environment where acceptance and empathy are practised, and empowerment and a sense of agency are promoted through relationships that are equal and reflect compassion and love. These relationships will always aim to ensure that the young person feels involved and has their needs met by seeking their views and agreement in line with their UNCRC rights. All children and young people are offered advocacy support from the outset.

We acknowledge the unique strengths and needs of each child or young person whose opinions about present and future will always be sought in line with The Promise, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989 and The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024. We monitor and review practice to ensure that it is respectful, child-centred, therapeutic, and compliant with the requirements of legislation and standards set by regulatory bodies.

We want our homes to be responsive to their views and seek to genuinely embrace these. Stormont Cottage also seeks the views of its young people in relation to service improvement and encourages individuals to feel safe and empowered to share both complaints and compliments. This promotes a sense of citizenship and communicates the value and regard we have for them. In addition, we also seek the views of friends, family, and partner agencies to promote a partnered approach to ensuring best outcomes for those children and young people who live with us.

Our entirely child-centred Mii Plan approach ensures that care planning focuses on the views, wishes and feelings of those who matter. Known as 'Mii Plan' (pronounced My Plan) Rickter Scale software is used to ensure that the voice of the child is always heard, and outcomes are measured in line with their views, reflections and thoughts. Through attuned parenting and the development of trust, we use Mii Plan to facilitate a meaningful conversation and support individuals to make sense of past experiences. Creating safety is foundational if we are to support children and young people to affect positive change in line with G.I.R.F.E.C, SHANARRI Indicators of well-being. Mii Plan uses scaling questions and provides an opportunity for the young person to navigate their way through these well-being indicators, consider where they are at, where would they like to be and what action they plan to take to make progress.

Empowerment promotes opportunities for the growth of resilience, confidence, and competence, and allows a young person to develop a stronger sense of self and their place in the world.

# Safeguarding

As part of an organisational approach to safeguarding, Pebbles Care have policies and procedures which offer guidance in relation to bullying and whistleblowing.

Bullying is taken seriously at Stormont Cottage. Carer teams receive training in how to address bullying, and an educative approach provides a pro-active way for Stormont Cottage to address issues of bullying. It is discussed within the home and clear message are communicated as part of the daily life of the home.

Mediation approaches promote empathy and is one of the main ways we address bullying, by promoting the non-violent resolution of conflict. All Pebbles Care policies and procedures are stored centrally on our Information Management System and are easily accessible. The company's policy on Whistleblowing is made known to all employees who sign to confirm that they have read and understand its content.

We are committed to ensuring that where any matter occurs that compromises the safety of children, young people, and carers, that appropriate action is taken to ensure a prompt response to re-establish safety.

Stormont Cottage understands its responsibility to keep children and young people as safe as possible. Whilst doing this they are also mindful of the need to ensure that the environment feels homely and can help foster a sense of belonging for each young person.

# Child Protection

Child Protection training is introduced as part of the induction and is further embedded during the probationary period and via enhanced training. Child Protection involves protecting a child from abuse or neglect. Neither need to have taken place since it is sufficient for an assessment of risk to identify a likelihood or risk of harm from abuse or neglect (National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, 2021 – updated 2023).

Stormont Cottage ensures that a child-centred approach is taken in relation to child protection, in line with the principles of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and National Guidance on Child Protection (Scotland) 2021 – updated 2023. Carers understand the importance of listening to what each child has to say and taking their views seriously.

The effective sharing of information is crucial in identifying and responding promptly to keep children safe. Stormont Cottage works closely with: Police; Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB) or Area Child Protection Committees (Scotland); Social Worker; Emergency Duty Team (EDT) to raise a child protection concern. Child Protection Plans will highlight risk and the ways in which it can be best managed, and Stormont Cottage’s own risk assessment and risk management plans will address the measures taken to keep the child safe. These will be reviewed as risks and needs change.

Contextual child protection can include addressing a range of concerns outside of the home environment including e.g., Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation, trafficking and the influence of extremism leading to radicalisation.

The care team are trained to understand signs and symptoms of harm and abuse and know how to act appropriately. They fully understand the need to tell a line manager and record accurately when they have a child protection concern.

All Pebbles Care policies and procedures are stored centrally online via Microsoft Teams and are easily accessible. In addition, Safeguarding and Child Protection are an integral part of supervision and are raised during team meetings and hand-over meetings. All managers are trained in Child Protection and have completed the NSPCC Child Protection training, as well as having received Safer Recruitment training.

Stormont Cottage’s Designated Child Protection Leads are as follows:

- **Maureen Cassidy, Area Manager and Operational Designated Child Protection Lead**
- **Joy Wakenshaw, Head of Care and Strategic Lead on Child Protection**

# Reducing Restrictive Practices

Stormont Cottage aims to provide positive daily experiences for children and young people. In doing so we seek to develop positive authentic relationships that support growth. Adults are trained to understand that at times when a young person feels overwhelmed, they may choose to either express their feelings through dysregulated behaviour or suppress them by internalising feelings and by managing the pain through e.g., substance misuse, alcohol, or self-harm.

We aim to support individuals to replace both self-harming behaviours with actions that promote self-care and healthier ways of coping and managing the complex mix of emotions they feel. However, this takes time and there are occasions when the presenting behaviours of a child or young person can pose a serious risk or threat to themselves or others.

Pebbles Care Ltd are committed to eliminating unnecessary restrictive practices. We aim to follow Care Inspectorate guidance in this regard and ensure that staff understand what restrictive practices are, and the ways in which we must seek to eliminate them. We understand that 'The Promise' is a response to the views of children and young people who were subject to e.g. physical restraint and its harmful impact, and we therefore use the Care Inspectorate's Restrictive Practice Tool to enable reflection and planning.

The Stormont Cottage team have all been trained in +Proactive approaches; an approved intervention model aimed at enabling carers to hold children and young people in the safest way possible, with a clear focus on de-escalation strategies to avoid the need for physical intervention. It offers a more therapeutic approach to behaviours aimed at increasing understanding of potential causes of behaviour, along with respectful, supportive, and practical strategies for de-escalation and crisis intervention. This training will be refreshed on a yearly basis to ensure that knowledge of evidence-based theories is reinforced and therapeutic, and that competence in implementing any intervention is evident.

Stormont Cottage aims to provide positive daily experiences for children and young people. In doing so we aim to develop positive authentic relationships that support growth and the reduction of restrictive practices.

## +Proactive

+Proactive provides a therapeutic approach to managing behaviours that are challenging. It provides an opportunity to re-assert values, encourage negotiation, and stresses the importance of compromise by helping broaden children and young people's understanding of themselves and others. This approach complements Pebbles Care's commitment to a therapeutic approach. In confronting behaviour, staff will attempt to be proactive rather than reactive. With the combination of therapeutic parenting training and +Proactive physical intervention training, staff are equipped with the tools to manage aggressive and threatening behaviour. +Proactive focuses on the use of therapeutic approaches to situations and use of de-escalation techniques as well as safe ways to physically intervene where necessary, however, only as a last resort. Staff will use a range of interventions to diffuse a potentially violent and risky situation to reduce further escalation. These include strategies such as diversion, calming techniques, negotiation, problem solving techniques, consideration of alternatives and attention to non-threatening body language.

+Proactive aims for zero use of physical interventions and to promote the least intrusive strategy and technique through an emphasis on therapeutic approaches. +Proactive and encourages the use of verbal and non-verbal de-escalation strategies, so that restraint is only used on occasions where there is significant risk to self.

+Proactive physical intervention training will be delivered by a +Proactive ‘Train the Trainer’ qualified practitioner as part of care team’s induction, dependant on role. This includes four, full days of training, which incorporates key theories of attachment, child development, and developmental trauma, as well as practical interventions. Staff are observed during the training regarding their understanding and demonstration of competence of the physical interventions required to pass the course. This training for adults who care for our young people must be completed within two months of joining Pebbles Care.

Training for the +Proactive trainers is refreshed every year to ensure they are competent at the delivery of the training. Care team members will also be required to attend a yearly refresher course to ensure their understanding and competence in applying +Proactive interventions.

There is also on-going training as part of embedding learning which is delivered during team meetings and supervision discussions with staff. Managers can also access support and guidance sheets via the +Proactive website which they will all have access to.

Should concerns arise pertaining to the approach of a member of staff, they would be prohibited from using physical intervention within the home in which they work until the situation had been investigated and where necessary the individual has undergone further development and training along with further observational practices to ensure the correct use of the physical interventions. Wherever possible and in line with restrictive practice guidance set by the Care Inspectorate, physical intervention should be avoided.

It is the role of the manager, along with the allocated homes +Proactive trainer to review any incidents involving physical intervention to ensure that the correct actions were taken, and to identify further training needs. The home’s manager will debrief the young people and staff if an incident occurs and aims to identify learning to avoid such incidents in future. This involves the review of the Restrictive Practice Reduction Action Plan which is updated to reflect any change in support needs within the service, along with any further review of organisational policies, if required.

We aim to intervene in this way as a very last resort and only when there is significant risk to the individual or others. We will actively seek to avoid the use of any restraint by using other techniques to support children and young people at such times, and are clear in the following guidance we give:

- Restraint should never be used to force a young person to comply with requests made by carers, or as a form of punishment.
- Restraint should only be used when a child or young person is behaving in an unsafe and dangerous way that threatens the safety of the individual or others, and only when all other strategies to de-escalate the situation have been tried.
- Carers must never restrain in a manner that intentionally causes pain or is dangerous in any way.
- If it is necessary to implement a restraint, then it will be done for the shortest time possible.
- Should a form of restraint be necessary, then discussion will always take place at an appropriate time afterwards, allowing an opportunity for the young person to share their views and ask questions. It is important that where restraint is necessary, there is always an

opportunity for the young person to understand the reasons why it was necessary, and for relationship repair and learning to occur.

The Stormont Cottage care team have all been trained in ‘+Proactive Approaches,’ an approved model of therapeutic intervention which focuses on restraint reduction.

# Leadership & Management

## Registered Provider

### **Pebbles Care Ltd**

*(Incorporating Radical Services Ltd, Partners in Care Ltd, and BDT Care Solutions Ltd)*

**Sovereign House, Crossgates Road,**

**Halbeath, Dunfermline KY11 7EG**

Tel: 0330 170 0111

[www.pebblescure.com](http://www.pebblescure.com)

Stormont Cottage is registered with the Care Inspectorate at:

Care Inspectorate, Compass House,

11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY

Tel: 0345 6009257

# The Adults who Provide Care at Stormont Cottage

## Care Team Structure

1x **Registered Manager**

1x **Deputy Manager**

6x **Residential Childcare Workers**

Team members' qualifications and experiences are contained within a separate appendix, which can be shared with appropriate parties on request.

Registered Manager at Stormont Cottage:

Sian Reville

[sian.reville@pebblescure.com](mailto:sian.reville@pebblescure.com)

07481368370

Area Manager at Stormont Cottage:

Maureen Cassidy

Maureen has over 25 years' experience working within residential child care in both Scotland and England. She is a qualified Social Worker and Registered Manager who has extensive knowledge and experience of trauma informed care.

[maureen.cassidy@pebblescure.com](mailto:maureen.cassidy@pebblescure.com)

## Learning & Development

Alongside obtaining the relevant vocational SCQF level qualifications, all members of the care team are required to complete the company's mandatory training and are enrolled onto the Training Hub,

Your Hippo, and the CSCP websites to complete further online learning. Each team member is trained in many areas as part of their role including:

- Safeguarding
- Therapeutic Parenting
- Emergency First Aid at Work
- CSE/ CCE
- Self-harm awareness
- +Proactive de-escalation and physical Intervention
- Health and hygiene
- Medication
- Infection Control
- Drug and Alcohol
- Fire Awareness
- GDPR

Needs-led training will also be sourced, where required and when it would enhance the care we are able to provide e.g., sensory processing difficulties.

## Supporting Staff through Performance Management

Performance management is achieved through supervision, an annual appraisal, and a six-monthly appraisal review. This ensures a minimum of ten face to face meetings each year between the line manager and employee.

Supervision at Stormont Cottage provides a safe space and regular contact between the manager and an employee. It is a supportive process of reflection and bi-directional communication allowing for critical reflection pertaining to practice issues; personal and professional development; role expectations; well-being, and training needs.

Supervision topics are agreed in advance between the supervisor and supervisee, and supervision notes are completed and agreed by the supervisee before they are safely stored.

# Psychological Support

The children and young people at Stormont Cottage have access to psychological support from Pebbles Care's Psychology team, the work of which abides by professional codes of conduct.

The in-house Psychology Team provides a fully embedded and integrated psychological therapy service that is informed by an understanding of the impact of developmental trauma on the functioning and wellbeing of children and young people.

A member of the team will complete a psychological assessment with each young person placed with Pebbles Care and, when there are specific areas of need, the Psychology team will develop support packages to guide staff in meeting this need. The Psychology team supports the home to understand more fully those they care for from a trauma-informed perspective.

Direct input to support care teams via consultations is regularly undertaken to provide support to the managers and care teams. This support enhances the care team's understanding of the needs of the child using a trauma-informed lens, leading to more effective application of therapeutic parenting skills. Advice and guidance can also be offered to carers regarding specific issues of concern, such as a diagnosis or crisis. How to best maximise the use of therapeutic activities in such cases is also addressed.

The Psychology team support Stormont Cottage with the creation of a Therapeutic Formulation for each child, which is specific to the child's individual needs and risks.

Psychological assessment and formulation inform both the Care Plan and Risk Management Plan for each young person. This ensures a clear evidence base underpins our care planning and risk management practice. The assessment process relies heavily upon accurate and up-to-date information about the child or young person. Through the application of therapeutic parenting approaches, we work closely with the care teams to enable the child to build effective emotional and social skills.

Areas of involvement include the following:

- Providing support to registered managers and care teams with assessment and formulation for children and young people.
- Support for teams through regular consultation or reflective practice sessions
- Delivering training and professional development sessions to teams
- Support to understand and implement intervention techniques to teams, such as therapeutic activities for specific skills building.
- Specialised psychological assessments for individuals who may require this, for example, cognitive assessment or trauma assessment.
- Forensic psychological risk assessment where concerns exist regarding the high risk of harm to self or others.
- Direct therapy with the children and young people can be provided additionally. This is informed by a psychological assessment to help identify potential goals of therapy, the readiness of the child to undertake therapy and the evidence-based therapy which could be offered to meet these assessed needs.

The Psychology team consists of several specialist and experienced practitioners who are trained in a range of therapeutic disciplines and modalities:

### **Head of Psychology - Dr Faye McLean**

The Head of Psychology is a HCPC Registered Clinical Psychologist with over 30 years' experience working in health and social care. Academic qualifications include a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology, MSc Applied Psychology with Children and Young People and an MSW Social Work.

### **Psychologists/Therapists**

Our qualified psychologists and therapists are experienced in working with children who have experienced trauma. All registered with the relevant governing body (e.g. UKCP, BACP) and receive regular supervision from a suitably qualified senior psychologist/psychotherapist.

### **Forensic Psychologists in Training**

Forensic Psychologists in Training have commenced their professional practice diplomas, with an expected completion date of 2025.

### **Assistant Psychologists**

Assistant Psychologists have completed a BSc (Hons) Psychology degree. Many also have completed a master's degree in psychology.

### **Therapeutic Practitioners**

Therapeutic Practitioners have a range of relevant qualifications, skills and experience which may include counselling skills or psychology degrees.

Weekly supervision is provided for the Psychology Trainees and Assistant Psychologists. Other members of the team are supervised monthly by the Head of Psychology and receive supervision from an external provider if required, to meet the requirements of their registrations.

The Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Ethics and Conduct, and the Health Care Professional Council (HCPC) Standards of Proficiency (SOP) which ensure that they practice within their knowledge base, and skills and experience lawfully, safely, and effectively. This encompasses the processes of assessment, formulation, intervention, and evaluation, which is dependent upon the needs of each child. Sessions are recorded in line with the HCPC Standards of Proficiency which evidences their processes and ensures professional accountability.

A 'Progress in Therapy' report can be provided to local authorities in cases where it has been requested. Notes of progress and therapeutic sessions are always recorded. Our work with children and young people is confidential as is the case with adults. Where information is to be shared, consent is always sought before any therapeutic engagement, even for psychoeducation, so the child is aware of the information we may need to share.

# Supporting Educational Progress

All children and young people have an entitlement to 25 hours of education per week. This may be at school full time, at either a mainstream or alternative education provision which meets their complex needs, via structured learning at home as part of a personalised education package, or a combination of school learning, home learning, and access to alternative provision. It could include work-based learning, college, or community activities.

Registered Managers and adults in the home have a responsibility for ensuring children and young people in their care access the appropriate education for them, and advocate for them to ensure they have opportunities to learn and grow. To do this, care teams will be supported by our school education staff who will liaise, where necessary, and work in partnership with local authority Virtual Schools for looked after children, SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities) Teams in local authorities and ASN (Additional Support Needs) coordinators and other agencies where appropriate.

To maximise the significance of learning and development Registered Manager and the team of adults who care for children and young people at Stormont Cottage will work closely with Pebbles Care's teaching staff and external educational establishments to:

- Consider educational needs early in the admissions process so a plan can be made to engage in education at the earliest appropriate time.
- At the start of the placement ascertain the educational needs of the young person and enrol them in an appropriate setting in partnership with their social worker informed and supported by the Virtual School for children who are cared for away from home (England) and the Social Worker.
- Contribute to the planning process and maintain plans for engagement in education. All young people should have a plan in place for their education provision.
- Support the young person with their education at home; whether supporting homework, facilitating home learning, or recognising skills development during everyday activities in the home.
- Facilitate conflict resolution to the best of their ability to reach the most suitable outcome for young people regarding education provision.
- Work collaboratively with the Head of Education and other agencies to support the individual's participation in education that meets their needs.
- Ensure young peoples' Additional Support Needs (ASN) are met in line with legislation proportional to the reasonable expectations of the duties of all parents. This is particularly important if the young person has an EHCP (Education, Health, and Care Plan) (young people from England) or Coordinated Support Plan (Scotland). This could mean the young person should attend a special school and/or have enhanced support. The EHCP is a legally binding document, reviewed annually, to ensure young people have their needs met. The meeting of needs detailed in any local authority plan should be supported and advocated for by the home's manager and their team. The SENCO (Head of Education)/ASN Coordinator will be consulted where there is any doubt over the provision being offered and the level of need detailed ASN plans (including EHCPs).
- Support full attendance at school (or other provision), employing appropriate strategies.
- Update stakeholders (Social Worker, Virtual School, SEND Team, ASN Coordinators) on progress in education as required. Usually this will be through multi-agency meetings such as

LAAC (LAC/CLA) reviews, PEP meetings (for young people from English local authorities), TAC meetings, EHCP reviews, Person Centred Reviews, and other planning meetings. Pebbles Care's schools will prepare reports for these meetings.

- Attend parents' evenings, school events, and information meetings, in line with school calendars to ensure effective monitoring of progress at school. Effectively administer communications with school to manage the educational experience of the young person.
- Where there is no education provision for a young person in our care, the Head of Education will be notified immediately so that steps can be taken to consult with the home local authority to devise a plan for inclusion in education.
- Where necessary we will creatively and innovatively provide educational experiences for young people at home to ensure the entitlement to 25 hours of education per week is met.
- Contribute to the '24-hour curriculum' by monitoring and recording skills development in the home.
- Manage educational workload and expectations (of the young people and school/provider) to safeguard the mental health of young people while ensuring they reach their potential.
- Communicate effectively with education providers to ensure they are aware of any circumstances affecting educational progress.
- Maintain plans for engagement in education in partnership with stakeholders and update these as they progress over time.