**West Sussex – Practice Guidance**

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years’ experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

**Staffing Levels, Rotas and Handovers (High Trees)**

**Staffing levels**

* Staffing levels are dictated by the needs of the children in the home on each shift and are worked out on a variety of factors:
* The environment where the child will be (in the home or local community)
* The child’s individual assessed needs and skills
* The group of children they will be with and their needs (as necessary)
* The activity that is planned
* The time and day of the activity
* For this reason, it is difficult to confirm staffing levels at any given time within the home. However, a basic rule that is applied is that there will be sufficient numbers of staff to support the number of children in the home plus some additional staffing capacity to enable outings or planned activities.
* Each shift will be risk assessed according to the known needs of the children who will be present and the level of staffing assigned will reflect this.
* There will always be a manager on call and an on call rota is in place for staff to refer to should this be needed.
* There may be times when additional staffing is required at short notice, and managers will identify the most effective route to addressing any staffing shortages. This may be through offering Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) /overtime to current staff, or requesting support from temporary, casual or agency staff if all other avenues are exhausted.
* Staff are expected to review the rota and planned staffing levels for individual shifts and raise any issues they foresee with the person responsible for completing the rota.
* Staffing levels will always take into account the need for each shift to have a trained first aider, staff with relevant Fire Safety training, someone trained to administer medication, and any other specific needs of the children.

**Rotas**

* The rota covers a 6 week period, within which weekends are on a fixed pattern, which enables staff and the home to plan ahead. Rotas are displayed at least one month in advance.
* Weekday shifts are not fixed, and may change from rota to rota based on the needs of the home.
* All staff up to Assistant Team Manager work 6 out a possible 12 weekend days over the 6 week rota. The Registered Manager also works on a proportion of the weekends.
* Every shift will be led by a designated shift leader who takes responsibility for allocation of staff to children, and delegating other tasks such as medication, various daily checks, household tasks and any planned activities.

**Handovers**

* Handovers are regular meetings that take place throughout the day where all staff on shift come together to find out what has happened on the previous shift and to share any information as needed.
* Handovers take place at the following times:
* 07:00
* 14:00
* 21:30
* Handovers are led by the outgoing Shift Leader and will include information on the following areas, as needed:
* Any incidents / concerns
* Any planned events (visits, meetings)
* Run through of children and any key developments
* Staffing levels
* Finance issues (petty cash)
* Changes in support plan / medication / safety plan
* Premises issues – repairs
* Household tasks from night shift
* Any rewards or sanctions in place
* Handovers will be attended by all incoming direct support staff on shift, including sleep-in staff on the Night care handover. The outgoing Shift Leader will gather any relevant information from the outgoing staff on shift, before leading the handover meeting.
* Each shift has a written shift plan, which includes space to record any specific notes needed for the handover meeting.

**Links to related documents:**

Sleep-ins and Night Security (High Trees)

Daily Routines and House Rules (High Trees)

On Call Arrangements