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| <b>Policy No:</b><br>SJD/ORG/24                 | <b>Authorised by:</b><br>Davina Powell | <b>Review Date:</b><br>2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2022 |
| <b>Policy Date:</b><br>12th April 2021          |  | <b>Date of Next Review:</b><br>1st November 2024     |
| <b>MANAGING REFERRALS POLICY AND PROCEDURES</b> |  |  |

## **Introduction**

It is SJD Homes' policy that in considering referrals SJD Homes will always give the highest priority to meeting both the needs of the children referred and to those already in placement.

## **Good Practice Aims**

All referrals will be dealt with promptly efficiently and courteously. Every effort will be made to obtain the maximum information possible to enable informed, good decision making.

Usually this will be done by obtaining the information contained in the referral, copies of the most recent relevant plans and review report if the child has been 'looked after' previously and through discussion with any relevant persons involved in the child's life if it is safe and appropriate to do so.

A balance will be drawn between the needs of the young person referred and the needs of the current residents in any potential project. A match must be made with the young person and with the most appropriate package of care and the most appropriate accommodation.

Any placement should occur as part of a process of planning and meeting the needs of the young person. Wherever possible, young people and their families should be involved in the decision making, if it safe and appropriate for them to do so.

It is good practice to visit young people before a placement is made. Even where the placement is being negotiated on a same day basis, attempts should always be made to interview the young person and to discuss the placement with them.

## **Referrals Procedure**

Referrals will generally be received via the dedicated email address which is managed and maintained by Head Office. However, in the event of an emergency placement being required or a placement outside of normal working hours the requesting authority may contact the Operational Manager or Senior Care Manager direct. Part of the referral process is to establish the needs of the young person and the expectations of the social worker regarding the placement and to have at least an outline plan for the length of placement and the degree of involvement required of SJD Homes. Questions should be asked in order to clarify any particular needs of the young person, behaviour patterns, contact arrangements, particular issues etc.

The referral will be forwarded to the Manager/s of any establishments where there is a vacancy, and which would meet the criteria requested by the requesting placing authority. An initial decision will then be made, either that SJD Homes is unable to offer a service or that further information needs to be sought. It is essential that the referrers be phoned back with this decision within 30 minutes.

It is important to get as full a picture as possible and whilst there may be reasons why this information is unavailable, this in itself needs to be checked out. As an absolute minimum, a care or pathway plan and copies of any previous reviews/other relevant reports must be provided.

## **Risk Assessment**

## **Good Practice Aims**

It is good practice for all young people to be visited and to visit the project. This process is to enable both sides to make informed decisions about a possible placement. It is important during this process that all known challenging behaviours that a young person has been known to exhibit are examined and the best methods of addressing these explored.

## **Procedure**

Where a decision has been made to further explore the possibility of placement the young person should then be visited where they currently reside. The worker doing the visit should discuss the possibility of placement with the young person; discuss the aims and aspirations of the young person and the expectations of SJD Homes in regard to providing positive care.

Where a worker who is not a member of the management team carries out this visit, they should report back to the Manager after the visit. An assessment on the appropriateness of the referral and on which site they may be placed will then take place.

When determining the appropriateness of a referral, the level of care required by young people currently in the home and the likely impact of the proposed new resident on the group, will be a prime factor in the decision to offer a placement.

It is clear that a successful outcome for a residential placement is largely determined by the way in which the admission is managed. It is more likely to be successful if the young person is involved in the decision. A critical aspect of the interview will be the young person's response to the expectations surrounding their conduct, behaviour, and general willingness to follow the agreed care plan.

We will not accept a placement unless it is in accordance with the young person's wishes. A decision on admission to individual establishments is the responsibility of the management team.

