



**The Loddon School**

**Statement of Purpose**

**November 2023**



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**According to The Children's Home (England) Regulations 2015**

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## 1. Caring for Children

“The Loddon School’s purpose is to provide value in the education and care of children with autism, severe learning disabilities and associated complex restrictive behaviours, by giving each child an enhanced quality of life in partnership with parents and through creative design, development and delivery of positive working methods by an excellent team”.

This statement of purpose sets out our aims and objectives, philosophy of education and care, and the range of facilities and the services we offer to the children at The Loddon School.

The Loddon School is registered for children from the ages of 8-19 and provides a service wholly or mainly for children under the age of 18.

Referrals and admissions occur throughout the year and at any age. Referrals are made by local authority placement officers, social workers or education officers. Parents may initially lead enquiries when there are differences of opinions in the needs of their child. Parents and families are invited to visit the home if the leadership team consider The Loddon School may be an appropriate placement for the child.

The Loddon School admits children who use challenging behaviour. At Loddon, we prefer the term restrictive behaviour (to recognise that it is the behaviour that restricts the individual’s opportunities to learn, develop or enjoy life), severe and complex learning difficulties and usually autism.

Most children will have been excluded from their local special school or will have been separated from the rest of the class or assigned extra staff. Children will have used their restrictive behaviours to avoid class-based activities and will find formal classroom teaching aversive. They are often resistant to perceived demands and lack motivation to learn new skills. For some children residential respite provision may have broken down or the family’s living situation will most often have become too difficult to sustain.

Children are assessed against the home’s “Essential Criteria for Admission” which includes a wide list of restrictive behaviours. To be considered for admission to The Loddon School, children will use a range of these behaviours.

All students have Education, Health and Care Plan and many have additional diagnoses of epilepsy, ADHD or other health needs. All students need high levels of adult support both day and night to keep them safe.

Children enrolled to The Loddon School will continue to need a high level of individual support into adulthood and throughout their lives. The home has a Transition Coordinator who supports families through the process of admission into and transition out of the home.

Most children are non-verbal and on admission have few strategies for making their needs known beyond using a range of restrictive behaviours. Those who have some speech or single words may use these in social situations but often without meaning or understanding. Often children need time to process information.

Many children experience extreme anxiety that manifests itself in a variety of behaviours such as aggression, flopping to the ground, running off, laughing inappropriately, perceived non-cooperation, making loud noises, inappropriate removal of clothing, incontinence or sleep difficulties.

The children have difficulties making sense of their world and have little awareness of events beyond their own experiences. They have few social skills. They struggle to understand concepts or respond appropriately to the consequences of their behaviours.

Although the Loddon School is registered as a single home for 30 children, it is organised into seven smaller living and learning houses each for four or five children. The home has previously used its ability to quickly reconfigure a living space to create a self-contained flat; we will retain this option to enable us to respond to a child's needs should the requirement arise. This would be suitable for a young person who might need more space from their peers in either the short, or long term.

Each young person has their own bedroom, decorated to their preference and needs. All houses have been either purpose built or adapted to meet the needs of the children who live there.

The Loddon School is set in a rural location, with expansive grounds that provide the young people with necessary space. The home has an on-site indoor swimming pool, leisure barn, paddocks and vegetable gardens and designated outside spaces for play and relaxation.

The Loddon School is committed to providing a positive, nurturing and enabling environment in which all children and young people can make progress.

The home does not accept emergency admissions.

### **Family arrangements**

Children who are able, usually go home for an overnight stay approximately every other weekend; there is, however, no insistence on the part of The Loddon School for this to occur. Children can stay at The Loddon School each and every day of the year if needed. If family are unable to transport their child, we can provide supported day home visits as part of the plan to support the relationship between the child and their family.

Children who go home for weekends or short home visits can come back to The Loddon school at any time if the visit is proving too difficult or stressful for the child or family.

The Loddon School does not allow visitors on Christmas Day; we ask that no one comes into the home to visit their child on The Loddon School site. Families are welcome to collect their child and take them home or out for the day on Christmas Day. They may also be brought back to Loddon throughout Christmas day. Seeing families visit other children can cause some of our children to become upset and distressed. So, these measures ensure children that remain at Loddon on Christmas day can have an enjoyable day. It also takes staff focus away from making the day special for the children.

Parents are welcome to visit during the day and at weekends, it is necessary for families to let us know if a visit is anticipated so that we can ensure the child is not offsite and, if necessary, is prepared for the visit.

Families can make use of the facilities the home has to offer or take their child off site for an outing. The home can offer staff support for these visits if requested, in advance.

The home also supports positive relationships between children and families through regular phone/video calls home and weekly letters from the children and family events.

The driving force of The Loddon School ethos is to set children on a positive pathway to a fulfilling life.

### **Pathway to a Fulfilling Life**

Every child, however disabled, is entitled to develop in an environment which is conducive to learning. This environment should be one that is safe, caring and enjoyable and where children may grow in confidence, independence and towards personal fulfilment.

The Loddon School offers opportunities to children who have the most severe learning disabilities and autism, in addition to other difficulties and medical conditions, to relate, communicate and participate in everyday life as fully as possible.

The environment should be one in which each child feels secure, enjoys learning and is always rewarded for effort. This can be realised only when all staff are relating to each child in a positive way and all aspects of the child's needs are being met through the integration of school, home and leisure activities and community experience.

Staff will preserve and maintain the dignity, individuality and privacy of all students within a warm and caring atmosphere, and in so doing will be sensitive to the individual's changing needs. Such needs may be medical/therapeutic (for physical and emotional well-being), cultural, psychological, spiritual, and social.

Staff will support children to discover their likes and dislikes and develop strategies for self-determination by concentrating on the key areas of decision-making and communication. To develop these skills, staff support students to make choices which may involve an element of risk, to encourage an awareness of danger and the recognition of natural consequences.

Due to their severe learning and communication difficulties our children are not able to be consulted in the usual ways.

Personalised resources are provided which reflect their preferred communication methods. These include photographs, communication books, picture exchange, real objects, objects of reference, symbols (for concepts) and staff trained in the use of Makaton signing.

## 1.1 Approaches and Outcomes

### 1.1.1 Approach

The below aims and objectives are designed to achieve a consistent approach to meeting the children and young people's needs – an approach in which the children and young people, the staff and the parents/advocates work together to achieve a common goal. Loddon's approach is enshrined in the philosophy of PROACT-SCIPr-UK® and delivered through PLLUSS.

The Loddon School aims to:

- Provide consistent education and support throughout the waking day with a fully integrated and multi-disciplinary staff team, fully trained, and with DBS clearance.
- To ensure all staff are committed to the philosophy of the home, which was founded to provide a personalised, positive environment using only proactive approaches.
- Provide access for all students to the school's approach to teaching and learning - Personalised Learning for Life Using Supportive Strategies (PLLUSS). This is a functional curriculum that develops personalised programmes of learning to meet the needs of the students.
- Monitor and record progress through the PLLUSS curriculum assessments, externally accredited AQA Unit Award Scheme certificates, ASDAN and teacher assessment.
- Meet student's needs in all aspects of daily living and independence and set achievable goals to ensure positive progress.
- Meet each student's spiritual, emotional and physical needs.
- Ensure that each student has access to music, communication skills teaching, positive interaction, and sensory opportunities.
- Use the most appropriate positive teaching styles suited to each student.
- Work in collaboration with parents and placing authorities to ensure the highest standard of service is provided at all times.
- Ensure that parents can share fully in the life of the school and home, through regular communication, joint goal setting, planning, reporting and reviews, case conferences and other planned parents' events.
- Collate and analyse data regularly to provide information for measuring progress and evaluating the methods used in the school.

- Jointly plan post-Loddon School placement and offer training and support for staff who will work with the children and young people after they leave the school.

### 1.1.2 Outcomes for Children

- Develop students' communication skills by offering a wide range of communication experiences and opportunities in their natural setting. Students have access to photographs, objects of reference, signing and electronic communicators.
- Develop the student's awareness of his or her own surroundings and increase their ability to use everyday objects and resources, and to enhance social skills.
- Teach life skills that improve self-esteem, respect for others, and enhance the quality of life in future placements and in adulthood.
- Provide opportunities for the students to make informed choices to enhance their quality of life.
- Design individual educational programmes to reduce or replace restrictive behaviours through the use of functional analysis of the most restrictive behaviours and the teaching of replacement skills.
- Teach students ways to manage their own behaviours and develop coping strategies.
- Students have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum that provides learning opportunities for developing core skills and includes dignity, respect, community presence, communication and choice, accessed through activities of daily living, independence, relationships and managing emotions.
- Loddon School is fully committed to meeting the specific communication needs of our children and providing the appropriate individualised support to enable them to take control over as much of their own lives as possible.
- Children are encouraged and supported to make choices throughout their daily lives. The focus of choice is often food or drink, activities, toys, books, or clothing.

### **Recreation and Leisure**

Children have after school clubs within and outside school and planned theme events are held on site at weekends.

There are 8 vehicles available to enable children to access local community facilities such as shops, bowling and leisure complexes and the cinema.

## **Making Friendships**

Children who come to Loddon often find spending time with other peers difficult and normally prefer the more predictable company of staff. Children are encouraged to tolerate their peers and to interact with each other through shared preferred activities. If children are engaged in a strongly motivating activity, they may be less anxious about the presence of others. Opportunities are created to enable children to build trusting relationships with their peers in situations in which they feel safe and relaxed.

Children are given opportunities to attend clubs and social events in the community, transferring the skills they have learned at Loddon into a community setting.

## **Cultural and Celebration Events**

Many major cultural or religious festivals are celebrated throughout the year.

Children typically celebrate their birthday with a cake and a party. A variety of other days are celebrated throughout the year, following multi-cultural themes and occasionally to fund raise for other charities e.g., Red Nose Day. There are a variety of fun days organised throughout the year.

## **Sharing with Families**

Parents and families are invited to family events throughout the year. Families together with the local community are invited to an annual celebration concert in December. Parents and families are welcome to visit at any time and enjoy the on-site facilities with their child.

## **1.2 Anti-Discriminatory Practice and Children's Rights**

### **1.2.1 Sexuality**

Young people at Loddon will experience day to day life at a very early cognitive level while experiencing the emotions and feelings typical of someone of their chronological age. While upholding each young person's right to express their sexuality in private, it is important to recognise the very real challenges associated with developing an understanding of sex and relationships experienced by young people in the school. The subject must always be approached with sensitivity.

Education in this area will focus on body awareness, understanding the need to keep parts of the body covered and tolerance of wearing clothing to maintain one's dignity, appropriate touch including appropriate greetings, and the need for privacy.

Staff may sensitively redirect young people to their bedroom, remodel inappropriate physical contact into a more positive gesture or offer clothing or blanket to maintain dignity. All staff are expected to adhere to the Dress Code policy and Staff Code of Conduct which supports the children's understanding of positive appropriate relationships and behaviour.



## 1.2.2 Children's Rights

### **Independence**

Children should be encouraged and assisted to do things for themselves, no matter how minimal their contribution may be, so the work we do helps to prepare them for living as independent as possible. It is important that children are given time to process information and do things for themselves.

### **Inclusion**

Children should be encouraged to enjoy opportunities available to non-disabled children, enabling them to lead as full and active life as possible.

### **Privacy**

Children have the right to privacy. The degree of privacy must be weighed against the risk factors involved for the individual child but staff's potential invasion of that privacy must be kept as minimal as possible.

### **Dignity**

Dignity is the response the individual feels, when other people show respect. All experiences should provide dignity for the child.

### **Rights**

Children's rights, under the UN Convention Article 23, affirm the rights of children with disabilities and learning difficulties to special care, education and training designed to help them achieve the greatest possible self-reliance and to lead to a full and active life in society.

### **Choice**

Every effort is made to enable children to participate in decision-making, to influence what happens to them and the care they receive, e.g., the clothes they wear, menu choice at mealtimes or leisure activities.

### **Fulfilment**

The Loddon School believes that every child, however disabled, is equally entitled to develop in an environment that is conducive to relevant learning.

### **Security**

Children are kept safe from harm, self-harm and abuse.

### **Respect**

Being respectful shows the individual child that he/she is valued as a person and important as an individual.

### **Equality**

The Loddon School endeavours to ensure genuine equality of opportunity.

## **Religion**

The Loddon School recognises the rights of the individual child to live the lifestyle of his/her choosing, subject to an appropriate health and safety risk assessment of the individual. Children may attend religious services either within or outside the home as far as they are able to participate. Family preference is obviously considered important in the support of a child's access to their religion.

Children have the right to meet the clergy of their chosen denomination at any time. Family members within specific cultures and religions are encouraged to come to school and share their experiences with the whole school.

## **1.3 Views Wishes and Feelings**

Owing to the nature of their communication difficulties, a great amount of staff support and interpretation is needed for children to be able to give feedback on the quality of their care.

Children are encouraged to communicate their feelings using communication resources, including the Children's Guide and the child friendly Complaints Policy. Both of these resources are pitched at an appropriate level of understanding, and staff support the children to use these to give feedback.

More strongly, we also understand behaviour as a form of communication for our young people, and so place importance in understanding the message that behaviour shares.

## **1.4 Safeguarding and Keeping Children Safe**

### **1.4.1 Children Running Off**

At the Loddon School high staffing ratios ensure that children are supervised at all times to keep them safe. Children at The Loddon School typically have little idea of their own personal safety and in some instances will attempt to leave the site. The Loddon School has a procedure which summarises the arrangements in place to find a child who has run off and is lost. We conduct major incident drills so that staff are familiar with the procedure to be followed when a child is missing off site.

The home and its staff minimise this risk by carefully locking gates, locking doors that are meant to be locked, setting door and other alarms. All external doors can be accessed only through an electronic keypad or magnetic fobs which can be overridden in the event of fire.

The main entrance to the school site has automatic gates that operate as a vehicle approaches.

### **1.4.2 Electronic Surveillance**

We have CCTV in the living areas of several children's house. This captures children displaying their restrictive behaviours and staff's response to these. This is used for the purposes of

safeguarding the children's welfare and wellbeing, and informing improvements to the children's support. Additionally, when appropriate, we intend to use this resource with other professionals for the benefit of our children. This may include allowing other professionals to view the footage to show them the characteristics of behaviour. This aids professional's understanding of behaviours which can be useful in determining future health care, behavioural support or care provision. The use of the CCTV footage must always be for safeguarding purposes.

Examples of professionals that may view this resource include children's social workers, medical professionals or potential future care provider assessors.

The positioning and angling of the cameras is respectful of the children's privacy and dignity; it does not view into bedrooms or bathrooms.

Loddon uses a fob entry system. When staff enter the houses with their fobs, it acknowledges that they have entered. These safeguard both children and staff.

We have waking night staff in each house throughout the night, this safeguards the children's safety and welfare throughout the night. The night staff check the children regularly throughout the night as specified in their individual care plan and risk assessment. A member of night staff is always present in the house throughout the night.

Light switches for some children's bedrooms are fitted to the outside of the room. In some accommodation variable settings allow staff to check the welfare of a child using low light levels to avoid disturbing a child's sleep. Some children prefer to sleep with a light on; this preference is respected.

The above systems are used in accordance with data protection law and in line with The Loddon School Privacy notices.

### **1.4.3 Fire and Emergency Procedures**

In order to provide a safe place of work with safe access and egress, where fire safety risks are minimised, with safe systems and a safe workforce, all staff receive information, instruction, training and supervision.

The home conducts an annual fire risk assessment and regular checks which cover its evacuation procedures, testing and maintenance of all safety and firefighting equipment.

### **1.4.4 Bullying Policy**

#### **Supporting our children with restrictive behaviour and children who hurt each other**

The Loddon School provides care and education for children with very special needs usually associated with autism. This means they are likely to hurt themselves (through SIB), be destructive, put themselves at risk or hurt other people. Staff are prepared for this through PROACT-SCIPr-UK®, to minimise incidents and protect themselves and others.

Children may be aggressive towards each other. Staff must be aware of this potential and attempt all strategies to avoid injury to the children. Staff should position themselves between a distressed child and other children. Space pads may be used for passive protection – as a barrier. Triggers to such behaviour include noise, change of plan in the timetable, transitions, wanting the activity of another child, not wanting other children in proximity or perceived demands.

In such situations staff should plan to give the child space and be proactive about this so that injury does not occur. It is important to plan the detail of every activity to avoid known risks (especially where children are less compatible with others), and every staff member should be familiar with the Risk Assessment and Behaviour Support Guidelines for the children with whom they are working.

If staff feel that a child is likely to display aggression it is important to give the child space immediately. For example, they may like to run around in the outside play areas, spend time in their bedroom or go to another area/space. It is accepted that staff's duty of care towards the child, other children or members of the public may take precedence over this and prevent providing this space. Staff knowing a child well and anticipating the escalation towards aggression is valuable in providing this space in a timely manner.

If a child injures another child, the children should be separated and the focus of overt attention being on the child who has been hurt. In the action plan, following the incident, staff should consider the need to review and plan to reduce such incidents with amendments or additions to the child's Risk Assessment and Behaviour Support Guidelines.

If any child is injured, it is important to give the child maximum levels of care and attention as the child is likely to be upset and need reassurance. It may be that they will need time and space away from other children.

After such an incident it is important to record the Incident and Accident Books, to seek advice from the nurse/first aider and to report to the G.P. if there is broken skin. Parents and social workers (when involved) will be informed as soon as possible, in most cases by a Children's Services Manager, TC or STC.

All staff should be aware that injuries to children are always serious and all steps should be taken to protect all the children from such incidents.

## **Safeguarding and Bullying**

Safeguarding children and young people at Loddon School is an integral part of our proactive approach as the safety of our children is paramount.

Designated Safeguarding Lead  
(Vice Principal – Care, Registered Manager)

Tim Clark

Designated Deputies

Jo Emerson  
Kelly Simpson  
Maciej Okolotowicz

## **Before staff are employed**

Safer recruitment processes are in place at The Loddon School. Prospective employees are questioned at interview on safeguarding and child protection matters. Potential recruits are employed only on receipt of satisfactory references with authorship confirmed. They are not allowed to start regulated activity work until their DBS check has been completed and cleared. Any convictions are risk assessed before employment is confirmed.

## **Training**

New staff will be mentored by experienced staff during their first month. All staff working directly with the children receive four sessions of safeguarding training.

- Orientation - first day
- Induction training - within the first month
- Team training – a least two annual refreshers often relating specifically to the children in that house.

Staff practice is monitored and reflected on during supervisions with line managers when any identified additional training needs will be discussed.

## **Information available for staff**

Staff are given the Safeguarding Policy and training information in verbal and written format. The abridged version of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* is available on the Loddon online Hub. A copy of *Working Together to Safeguard Children* is also available in the staff room. The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Positive Behaviour Policy are also available for staff and other relevant persons to access on the school website. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Principal, and the Leadership Team have an ‘open door’ policy for staff to talk to at any time. Phone numbers are also available, on safeguarding notices, for the Chair of Trustees, the trustee responsible for safeguarding and Hampshire Children’s Services.

## **Risk Assessment and Behaviour Support Guidelines**

The children at Loddon School each have individual support guidelines – these are titled *Risk Assessment and Behaviour Support Guidelines*. These give instruction and information for staff to

follow when working with the children, particularly when supporting children who may engage in restrictive behaviours to get their needs met. These guidelines may include information on the use of physical interventions as a last resort. These are agreed by parents and social workers.

As part of the PROACT-SCIPr-UK<sup>®</sup> training curriculum staff are taught relevant physical interventions to enable them to use these safely when the need arises for their use. Staff are refreshed and assessed on these annually through annual refresher training.

## 2. Children's Behaviour

### 2.1 Approaches and Outcomes

#### 2.1.1 Positive Behaviour Support

The Loddon School's philosophy is founded in PROACT-SCIPr-UK<sup>®</sup> and the PLLUSS school curriculum. These approaches emphasise learning and opportunities to enhance the quality of life of each child and young person in the school using the following non-aversive methods:

- Positive approaches and personalised learning which achieve an enhanced quality of life for the children and young people.
- A truly personalised individual timetable based on a functional curriculum which reduces stress and anxiety and prepares the children and young people for as independent a life as possible.
- Positive reinforcement, which rewards every attempt the children and young people make to learn.
- Inclusive communication which includes body language, photographs, speech, signs and some symbols.
- Photographic communication aids which enable the children and young people to take some control over their choices and decision making and help with transitions and understanding of routines.
- Massage and other therapies, which encourage trust, self-awareness, and reciprocity.
- Multi-sensory activities which offer opportunities to explore and re-create the experiences of typical early development and addresses sensory needs.
- Physical exercise which improves health, reduces excess uncontrolled energy and can be extended to participation in community-based activities.

- Community experience and inclusion which ensure as full a life as possible in the least restrictive environment.
- Music, performing arts and visual arts which extend emotional growth, leisure skills and sharing, without the limitations of speech.
- Spiritual education, including multi-sensory assemblies, which encourages the children and young people to enjoy relationships and develop a sense of awareness of self and others and a sense of awe and wonder.
- Celebration days which provide children and young people with experiences from their own and other cultures.
- Visiting musicians and other artists that extend the experiences of children and young people within the safe school environment.
- Personal and social education which equips the children and young people with skills for life as a child and, for the future, as an adult.
- Risk Assessment and Behaviour Support Guidelines for each child and young person. These are written by staff for staff, approved by the parents and local authorities and provide guidance in non-aversive proactive, active and reactive supportive strategies.
- Continuous professional development which ensures that all staff possess the appropriate knowledge and up-to –date skills needed to effectively meet the needs of the children and young people including professional qualifications and accreditation.
- Parent support and training, which in turn enables parents to support their own child successfully during home visits, and to ensure consistent and safe methods,

## 3. Education

### 3.1 Approaches & Outcomes

#### 3.1.1 PLLUSS

##### **Approaches**

Personalised Learning for Life Using Supportive Strategies is an approach developed by staff at The Loddon School, within the philosophy of PROACT-SCIPr-UK®, to engage students in activities which both meet their learning needs and motivates them enough to want to repeat experiences.

The whole approach involves a structured process of assessment, analysis and the planning of positive learning opportunities for the individual. PLLUSS is essentially person-centred but “teacher”-led. Chosen activities focus on those the student finds highly motivating but have clearly defined learning outcomes, identified by the “teacher”. At The Loddon School all staff working directly with the children are responsible for the children’s education.

All experiences are provided within a positive, communication-centred environment, designed to maximise the student’s quality of life by teaching the most useful skills for life throughout the waking day, some of which will focus on replacing unwanted or restrictive (challenging) behaviours.

This positive approach will benefit students who are apparently “non-cooperative” or demotivated, particularly those who use their behaviour to escape from or avoid situations.

Essentially it is intended for children and young people working at pre-national curriculum levels, but the approach has wider potential applications.

Such students will have significant communication difficulties both in understanding language and in expressing themselves through language. They may experience confusion and high levels of anxiety because of their difficulties with making sense of the world around them.

Typically, they may have a history of negative experiences – of “failure” – or of being excluded from settings, possibly because of their apparent incompatibility with a group but most often because of their behaviour. They may withdraw from situations or become hyperactive or use aggression.

Many children find relating and interacting with other people difficult or even unimportant and will look for predictability, support and security through routines.

## **Outcomes**

PLLUSS aims to reduce a student’s need to use restrictive behaviours through teaching alternative, replacement or coping skills that enable them to satisfy their needs in a more successful, appropriate, and socially acceptable way.

PLLUSS is essentially designed to teach functional learning skills which will help students to maximise their potential and achieve a positive quality of life. Through positive experiences, successes, and achievements the person will develop a sense of self-worth and recognise that people want to spend time with them.

Within a positive, structured environment a student can be calm and relaxed enough to respond to experiences and opportunities offered. Anxiety, confusion and the need to use restrictive behaviours will be reduced while communication and understanding are enhanced.



## **PLLUSS in practice at The Loddon School**

The assessment of students' learning needs and the analysis of the reasons for restrictive behaviour are designed to enable the development of targets that help the students learn alternative strategies to meet their needs, thus reducing restrictive behaviour and increasing lifestyle opportunities. This is often through communication, choice making or independent living skills.

The Personalised Learning for Life Using Supportive Strategies (PLLUSS) approach focuses on developing skills in six key areas: -

- Communication
- Independence
- Relating and Interacting
- Transitions
- Leisure and Wellbeing
- Access to Learning

## **The Aims of PLLUSS**

PLLUSS aims to develop a student's participation in planned activities, awareness and positive control of their surroundings, attention, cooperation and task completion.

Students should be given access to experience as many activities and community-based opportunities as any child would in their own home thus ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum.

The students need to repeat activities so that they feel secure in understanding expectations and can begin to learn. They have difficulties generalising skills or applying skills to new situations and learning opportunities, so the same skills are taught in a variety of settings and with a range of staff. Most students are not able to occupy themselves and need adult support to engage in appropriate tasks safely.

The students at The Loddon School need a long-term, flexible approach to learning where small steps and achievements are celebrated and built upon, and the maintenance of skills is seen as important as learning new skills.

## **Measuring Progress**

Progress and improvement in learning and behaviour is regularly reviewed and evaluated. Information is collected through regular recording by all staff. Progress is reported at the student's review meetings and appropriate targets set in agreement with parents and professionals.

## **Using Supportive Strategies**

Students are dependent on the support provided by the staff and the environment to help them reduce anxiety and restrictive behaviour and thus feel secure enough to learn new skills.

Staff are trained to be proactive in their approach to students' restrictive behaviour, to avoid known situations where it might occur, to recognise early warning signs and to respond according to individual support guidelines. Many students need space and time when becoming upset in order to avoid an escalation, others respond to a change of staff or setting. Some behaviours might seemingly be ignored or not get a response from staff because to do so might increase aggression, anxiety or the likelihood that the behaviours will be repeated.

Many students have cyclical behaviours that recur at particular times of the month or year and do not seem to be affected by any external factors. When these recur, students are supported through them, but no new learning is attempted until the behaviour reduces again. Skills are maintained through this time and new learning is introduced when the phase has passed.

Some students have high levels of anxiety and need tasks to be presented in such a way that they do not feel pressurised. At times an extra request can cause a child to become distressed and unable to cope with an activity. Some might need to observe activities for a length of time – up to a month - before they feel confident enough or can be encouraged to join in.

See also the 'Therapies' section below.

## **Reviews**

Reviews are held 5-6 monthly at The Loddon School to consider progress and plan the work of the next 5 months. These dates are planned a year in advance for the convenience of parents and professionals and to ensure the programme is updated regularly and consistently. These meetings are an opportunity to celebrate progress and plan the next steps in every area of development. The prepared reports are sent out to invitees in advance of the meeting. Key staff are happy to meet with parents and professional colleagues before the meeting if requested.

Children at The Loddon School often have input from multiple local authority departments and professionals. So, in an effort to produce thorough, high-quality review documentation that encompasses the whole of a child's well-being and development, we encourage professionals to engage with the 5-6 monthly programme. The Independent Reviewing Officer from the commissioning authority will normally be present at these meetings. Parents and professional colleagues are invited to comment. Parents and social workers are asked to sign in agreement of the Risk Assessment and Support Guidelines for each individual.

## 4. Health

### 4.1 Approaches and Outcomes

#### 4.1.1 Therapies

Many of our young students find everyday activities a struggle and need the delivery of a 'diet' of communication strategies and sensory programmes to encourage interaction with people and the environment, to slowly reduce their fear, anxiety or stress and to provide the opportunity for long-term positive change. The Loddon School has a whole school approach to a student-centred therapeutic lifestyle and school timetable, providing training for staff and weekly visits from professionals.

Our Speech and Language Therapist work supports the development of communication and understanding with individual students using Makaton sign language, photographs, and PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), in addition to delivering structured language and social skill sessions, often within a functional setting. Using Makaton and photographs of locations, activities, people and tangible items as a means of communicating a schedule, needs and preferences, works successfully across the school.

Our Occupational Therapist uses assessment methods to identify a student's difficulties in performing occupations; that is, routines, tasks or sub-tasks, and the information processing operations required for that performance. At The Loddon School, the children's independence in daily activities ranging from self-care to leisure is a priority. The assessment breaks down the skills and steps required, allows any areas of difficulty to be noted, and develops appropriate intervention strategies to be implemented by support staff, with direct support from the Occupational Therapist. The Occupational Therapist also explores and assesses the individual sensory processing needs of children, providing critical information about any sensory sensitivity or under arousal, which can often present with behavioural implications that are important to understand. The outcome of the assessment is the development of a Sensory Profile or Sensory Diet with the purpose of structuring sensory experiences as part of the child's day, so they are less likely to seek these experiences in inappropriate or harmful ways.

A music therapist visits to see children who find music particularly calming. This is a child-centred intervention, with communication at its core, enabling the child to feel at all times heard and understood. It is a form of personal therapy using music as the medium.

Our Aromatherapist uses massage to relax, calm and reduce tactile defensiveness.

Our Osteopath works on this tactile defensiveness and seeks to prevent ill-health through manipulation and massaging of muscles and joints. Our Osteopath also promotes healthy eating through a successful vegetable and fruit juicing project.

Our Art, Music and Drama team support the students' confidence and creativity; all have the opportunity to perform in our excellent end of year productions. In addition to our qualified therapists, we have a team of staff who support the students individually and in groups.

The therapies department offers play and sensory exploration through toys and objects. We have a sensory room which children can access regularly. The paddocks, is our small 'farm' where the students enjoy animal therapy in the form of animal care, riding and carting.

These sessions are motivational and low in demand, giving students the opportunity to experience a range of therapeutic activities, to participate, explore and interact, allowing them to grow, emerge and express themselves in a relaxed and fun way.

#### 4.1.2 Health Care

##### **Approaches**

To encourage a fit and healthy lifestyle whereby a nutritional balanced diet is offered and access to physical activities is available.

The Loddon School has a School Nurse and two Health Care Assistants.

Each child is registered with the local GP practice where there are male and female GPs available. The children have access to the GP through the normal appointment system when they are unwell but on most occasions the GP will visit the school.

Any child taking prescribed medication will do so to enhance their health and well-being and will have frequent reviews by health professionals.

In line with the statutory care regulations for Looked After Children the children have regular dental and eye check-ups which take place at the school and any treatment required is accessed locally.

A Consultant Paediatrician frequently visits school to conduct Looked-After Child health reviews.

The School Nurse along with the Children's Services Managers and Department for Behavioural Analysis and Support ensure that a child's health needs are identified and met and are detailed in the child's individual review plans by working together with all school staff to promote healthy lifestyle programmes.

The Health team, Children's Services Managers and Team Coordinators ensure all aspects of the child's health are monitored and that the child's family and all involved professionals are kept up to date.

The School Nurse, Health Care Assistants and Children's Service Managers also provide training for staff in health matters. This includes general training in administration of medications and management of conditions such as epilepsy and anaphylactic reactions.

## **Outcomes**

- All children will be offered hepatitis A and B vaccinations (if they have not already received them) with the aim of completing this within six months of arriving at school.
- The school aim to have all children reviewed by the GP every six months, whereby medication, height and weight and general well-being would be discussed along with any concerns parents and other medical professionals may have raised.
- All Looked After Children will have an annual medical completed by the visiting paediatrician from Basingstoke Hospital or the 'home' LA's professional. The exception to this rule being those who have reached the age of 18 years when this is no longer mandated.
- The School aims to have all children reviewed by the dentist every six months.
- The School aims to have all children reviewed by the optician every two years unless at that review, the optician suggests more frequent check-ups.
- The School aims to accommodate, where possible, any health-related appointments to hospitals out of placement area.

## 5. Staffing Matters

### 5.1 Care Structure

The care team at The Loddon School is lead and managed by the Vice Principal – Care. As well as being the Registered Manager of The Loddon School, this role also includes the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Vice Principal – Care has two deputies, Assistant Principals – Care, that support the leadership and management of the care provision.

When fully staffed each of school's seven house teams are comprised of one Children's Services Manager, one Senior Team Coordinator, two Team Coordinators, one Learning and Care Coordinator and a number of Learning and Care Assistants.

The care team are supported by leaders and colleagues from other departments include Therapies, Department for Behaviour Analysis and Support, Welfare, HR, Finance, Kitchen, Domestic and Administration teams

### 5.2 Management

The Loddon School was established in 1988 by Marion and Tim Cornick.

The Loddon Foundation is a registered charity, established to provide education and care for children with autism and learning disabilities and to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities by training the people who work with them.

The principal has overall responsibility for the running of the school. The principal is supported by the Leadership Team, (LT) who represent each core function.

The Loddon School has a board of trustees. Their role is to oversee and guide the strategy of The Loddon School and to ensure the best interests of the children and the charity.

Each trustee is linked to a member of the Leadership Team to offer individual support and to focus on one area of the school's work, providing feedback to the board.

#### Staff Professional Development

The Loddon School is fully committed to the development and training of staff, to ensure a continued positive quality of life for the children and young people who attend the school, particularly with reference to autism, positive approaches and personalised learning.

Staff are provided with the relevant training and development opportunities to enable them to become confident, competent and informed members of staff. The school ensures that staff attend the courses outlined in the Loddon School's internal training programme.

Learning events are classified into several categories:

- Orientation Day and a 4-day (theory-based) Induction training for all staff members, plus 4 weeks shadowing and supervision for each new member of staff by an experienced member of the team.
- A mandatory training path for new staff members to undertake including relevant vocational qualifications for job roles.
- Team learning events where teams who work together learn together, so ensuring a consistent approach for children across the school. Team learning events focus on the needs of specific children and the expertise required by staff to best meet those needs. Staff also attend additional learning events to update their skills to ensure legal requirements are met.
- Specific learning support generated by career path or personal development profile and requirements

## 5.3 Regular Supervision of Staff

### 5.3.1 Supervision of staff - Care Education and Health

All staff 'hands-on' staff must have regular supervision and are supported and guided to fulfil their roles, providing a high-quality service for the children. Supervisions are provided by line managers who are appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Supervision, training and support is available for newly appointed line managers. Records of supervision are kept by managers and all staff have their performance individually and formally appraised annually.

The Loddon School is committed to the personal development of all staff and regularly support staff to further themselves by undertaking external training opportunities.

The Loddon School's internal rolling learning programme for staff is constantly under review and development to increase the staff's knowledge and skill, which ultimately benefits the children and young people.

Each employee has their own record of learning and the responsibility for maintaining these will be with the employee and the training department.

The Loddon Foundation offers training to external agencies through the Loddon Training and Consultancy department.

### Experience

The ten longest standing members of staff have worked at Loddon for over 20 years. Twenty further staff have worked at the school for between 10-20 years spread across all departments and many of these are also senior managers.

All teachers have the necessary qualifications (QTS, Cert Ed) in addition to receiving a variety of training in a diverse range of subjects relevant to students' needs.

Children's Services Managers hold a variety of care qualifications, predominantly the Level 5 diploma in Leadership and Management in Care.

Some newer staff may not have previous relevant experience but our comprehensive training and development programme that focuses on meeting the children's very special needs enables them to rapidly become competent.

### **Range of Qualifications**

The school has an accredited vocational qualification (NVQ Centre) and onsite team of assessors and internal verifiers. Staff are supported to undertake and achieve the following qualifications:

Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (DRC)

Level 3 Certificate in Management/Level 2 Team Leading

Level 3 Award in Education and Training

Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools

Level 5 Diploma in Leadership of Health and Social Care – Children and Young People's Services

Other opportunities include Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Qualification and learning and development qualifications.

In accordance with regulatory requirements, staff commence on the DRC on completing their probationary induction period.

## **5.4 Contact Details**

### **5.4.1 Complaints, Concerns and Worries**

The School operates a formal complaints procedure, which ensures that any formal complaint or issue of concern raised externally is dealt with promptly and with full investigation. All such complaints are managed by the Leadership Team of the school and are responded to in full within 20 working days. A full report of all complaints is presented to the Board of trustees.

Parents are asked to contact the school and to speak with any of the senior staff if they have any concerns or worries about their child's health, learning, care or well-being.

We aim to provide a positive and open working environment where professionals and families can raise, discuss and action solutions to concerns.

Similarly, The School has a robust procedure in place which enables staff to raise any concerns or worries they might have about any aspect of school life and the care of the children. Again, this



procedure is managed by the leadership team. The school's Complaints and Compliments Policy and procedure are available to access via the school's website.

The Loddon School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and four DSL Deputies.

All complaints are reported to the trustees for comment and to ensure positive improvements in policy and procedure within The School as applicable.

<b>Registered Provider</b>	The Loddon Foundation Ltd
<b>Responsible Individual</b>	Dr Gillian Barrett
<b>Registered Manager</b>	Tim Clark
	email: <a href="mailto:t.clark@loddonschool.co.uk">t.clark@loddonschool.co.uk</a>

## 5.4.2 Staffing

### Charity Leadership Team

Job Role	Name	Contact
Principal	Dr Gill Barrett PHD, MEd, BA(Hons), NPQH,PGCE	g.barrett@loddonschool.co.uk
Registered Manager (Vice-principal – Care)	Tim Clark MA, LMA	t.clark@loddonschool.co.uk
Finance Manager	Elizabeth Fairhead	e.fairhead@loddonschool.co.uk
Head of HR	Sarah Jeffrey CIPD	s.jeffrey@loddonschool.co.uk

### The Leadership Team

Job Role	Name	Contact
Assistant principal – Support Services	Kelly Simpson, STLS Level 3, L5 LMA	k.simpson@loddonschool.co.uk
Assistant principal – Monitoring and Compliance	Maciej Okolotowicz HSC Level 3, L5 LMA	m.okolotowicz @loddonschool.co.uk
Head of Staff Professional Development	Helen Wood BSc (Psychology), MA QTLS	h.wood@loddonschool.co.uk
Assistant principal - Transitions	Jorge Garcia RMA	j.garcia@loddonschool.co.uk
Head of therapies	Elizabeth Penman	e.penman@loddonschool.co.uk
Assistant principal - Education	Jo Emerson BA (Hons)	j.emerson@loddonschool.co.uk
Senior H.R. Advisor	Pam Dobson	p.dobson@loddonschool.co.uk
Head of DBAS	Lea Garcia BSc (Hons)	l.garcia@loddonschool.co.uk

### Children's Services Managers

Rowan Williams	L5 LMA, CWD Level 3
Americo Lobo	CWD Level 3
Elias Henriquez	CWD Level 3
Hollie McGreevy	CWD Level 3
Rafael Alvarez	CWD Level 3
Susan Marchmont	School Nurse (RGN)

### Teachers

Kestrels	Rachel Rockell QTS
Falcons	Laura Martinez QTS
Kingfishers	Kamila Bien QTS
Robins	Laura Walsh QTS
Ravens	Kayleigh Herzog QTS
Penguins	Lorena Marin Polo QTS
Eagles	Nnenna Nwosu QTS

### Heads of Department

Communication & Sensory Development	Elizabeth Penman Diagnostic & Therapeutic Support Level 3
Music & Drama	David Anderson HND / Katy Rado BA (Hons)

**Therapies**

Aromatherapy	Sarah Nunan Dip Aromatherapy Support Level 3
Osteopathy	Howard Beardmore
Music Therapy	Beccy Read BA Music, Dip Music Therapy
Speech and Language Therapy	Eyraina Barkat BSc
Occupational Therapy	Carolyne Oates BSc

**Facilities**

Office Manager	Lucy Andrews
Site Manager	Arkadiusz Kaczmarek
Housekeeping	Wendy Little
Catering	Nico De Peco

## School Information

Address:	The Loddon School Wildmoor Lane Sherfield-on-Loddon Hook Hampshire RG27 0JD
Telephone Number	01256 884600
Email	info@loddonschool.co.uk
Website	<a href="http://loddonschool.org">http://loddonschool.org</a>
Chair of Trustees	Steve Fussey
Principal	Dr Gill Barrett

## Status

The Loddon Foundation Ltd is registered as a Charity	
Patron	Her Grace The Duchess of Wellington
Company Registration No.	2448785
Charity Registration No.	802188
Department for Education No.	850/6005
Ofsted Children's Home Registration No.	SC012021
The School is accredited to ISO 9001:2015 for Quality Management Registration: 94/3418	

## Glossary of Terms

PLLUSS	Personalised Learning for Life Using Supportive Strategies
PROACT SCIPr-UK®	Positive Range of Options to Avoid Crisis and use Therapy - Strategies for Crisis Intervention and Prevention (revised in the UK) (Registered Trademark)
SEN	Special Educational Needs
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
SIB	Self-Injurious Behaviour
LMA	Leadership and Management Award
RMA	Registered Managers Award
HSC	Health and Social Care
DRC	Level 3 Diploma in Residential Childcare
CWD	Children's Workforce Diploma
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Signature (Chairman of Committee)</b>	<b>Date of next review</b>
February 2022	Updated staff tables	pp Tim Clark	September 2022
1st November 2022	Full review	pp Tim Clark	November 2023
12th November 2023	Full review	pp Tim Clark	November 2024