

The Meadows

27 Main Street
Ratcliffe-on-the Wreake
Leicestershire
LE7 4SN

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

September 2025

Registered Manager

Sam Watts

Responsible Individual

Tom Ellison

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1. Quality and purpose of care

The Meadows is a Children's Home operated by Cedars Childcare Ltd and Registered with Ofsted to accommodate up to 3 children aged 5 to 17 on admission.

The purpose of the home is to meet the needs of children who have been identified as being suitable for foster care and where either a foster family is not immediately available or where work needs to be undertaken to prepare the child for foster care. Equally, the home will work to support children bridge into an adoptive family or, where circumstances allow, to be reunified with their birth families.

The age range of the home is to enable the care of sibling groups who may otherwise be separated. Careful matching will be carried out to ensure that the needs of all children can be met appropriately, with particular care being taken when considering the needs of any children whose placements in the home are longer than others.

Hence, it is the ultimate goal of The Meadows that children move from the home and into a family setting.

2. Ethos

The purpose of The Meadows is to care for children who have been identified as suitable for a family setting but for whom a foster or adoptive placement is not available or where work needs to be done either with the child or with the future carers to ensure that the later placement will be more likely to succeed.

Care planning seeks to address any obstacle to long term life in a family and the ultimate outcome sought by the home is that of children moving successfully to families. The environment, culture and the work undertaken with the children in the home is in support of this goal.

There is an emphasis on positive relationship building at The Meadows, and particularly the keyworker relationship with the child. The home will work with the Leicester based organisation Placement Support to build reflective practice that supports individualised care plans with the aim of moving on to a family setting. Moreover, the management of the home will maintain a network of relationships with IFAs and other bodies that work in the field of placing children in families. A positive, therapeutic approach is integrated into the home. The wellbeing of children is the homes' main objective with mutual respect for each other so that the home environment is a happy experience for everyone who lives and works there.

We have also formed a partnership with Reconnect who co-design and deliver targeted intervention programmes that enable children to transition from residential care into families. Working with our partners will enable us to undertake the necessary work to give our children the best opportunity to have an experience of living in a family at the earliest opportunity.

3. Accommodation

The home is furnished to reflect a family home for up to a maximum of three children aged 5 to 17 years on admission and of any gender. The age range is deliberately wide to enable the placement of sibling groups. The home is decorated and furnished to a high standard.

The ground floor of the home consists of an entrance hall with cloakroom, kitchen/utility room with pantry and patio doors into the garden, living/dining room with a store cupboard and a staff sleep in room. The living room also has large patio doors out onto the garden.

The first floor consists of a second staff sleep in room with en-suite bathroom, 2 smaller children's bedrooms and a large children's bedroom with ensuite bathroom. There is a family bathroom and an office with patio doors and a balcony. There is an airing cupboard and loft access.

The home has a driveway which accesses the rear of the home, and there is a garage and electric car charging point. There is a large fully enclosed garden with a shed. At the rear of the house there is a fence with gate which separates the car parking/drive from the garden.

Every child will have their own bedroom which their keyworker will help them to individualise to their tastes and interests. Restricted access to some parts of the property is planned as a matter of routine to minimise health and safety risks for the children living at the home. This will include some cupboards where cleaning materials and medication are stored, the staff bedrooms and the office where confidential materials are stored and the balcony may be a hazard to children.

All children share the home's bathroom, utility room, kitchen, lounge and dining room. All children's bedrooms are well furnished, clean and the children are encouraged to personalise their rooms with the support of staff. The home has ample living space and a large, enclosed garden for children to play in.

The home will not be registered for children with disabilities. However, if a referral is received for a child with a disability that can be accommodated in the home, then reasonable adaptations may be made to the environment to accommodate this.

4. Location

The home is a detached modern property in the village of Ratcliffe-on-the- Wreake in Leicestershire. The home is in a beautiful rural location, but with easy access to the resources and activities that both Leicester and Nottingham have to offer. Derby is also within easy reach and there are good road and train links between all cities.

There are neighbours on one side of the home, the other side is fields and there are fields to the back of the property. The village itself is small, with local amenities such as shops and schools being located in neighbouring villages.

5. How we support children's cultural, linguistic and religious needs

Children's linguistic, religious and cultural needs are discussed at the referral stage and considered as part of the pre-admission assessment. Where language is a barrier to communication, the home will consider whether additional resources can be introduced to overcome that barrier. Careful thought will be given to this as the child must be able to fully engage with the relationships in the home to achieve a successful move to a family at a later date.

The home will maintain resource of local cultural and religious centres (churches, mosques, etc). The initial care plan will make clear to staff what the cultural and religious needs of the children are and how these needs will be met.

We encourage the children to attend their place of worship and observe any religious festivals, and we help them to identify friends and community groups which will help them to maintain ethnic and cultural links and strengthen their sense of identity.

Leicester and Nottingham are both multi racial cities with extensive resources that the home will access as required.

6. How we respond to comments, compliments and complaints

We recognise the rights of children and their families and value their compliments, comments and complaints. Details of how to make a complaint will be detailed in the Children's Guide in a child friendly manner. The child's keyworker will also conduct direct work within the first 48 hours following admission to ensure the child understands how to make a complaint.

Many complaints are of a relatively trivial or routine nature and can be sorted out quickly by the workers on duty. Responding to a complaint of this nature simply means listening to what the child has to say, deciding what needs to be done and feeding that back.

Some complaints are more serious and need to be discussed with other people before they can be resolved. They will be clearly recorded in the electronic Record of Complaints and will be dealt with by the senior person on duty. If a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved by the home, it will be investigated by an external manager. Children are told how to take their complaint further if they wish to and helped to do so. This is done by contacting:

The Responsible Individual:	Tom Ellison	07741 289588
The Registered Manager:	Sam Watts	07399 395843
Childline:		0800 1111

Each child will have details of how to contact their social worker issued to them as part of their welcome process.

All of the home's procedures, including Complaints, Child Protection and Behaviour Support, are stored on a regularly updated website and accessed electronically by a link familiar to all staff. Procedures can be made available to any appropriate body or person by printing a paper copy or providing them with the web address.

7. Child Protection Procedure

The Meadows is committed to the safety of the children and their ongoing protection from harm. Staff are trained in noticing the signs of abuse and understanding to respond when they believe a child may be at risk of or subject to abuse.

In addition to this, Sam Watts, the Registered Manager is a qualified Social Worker and acts as the home Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The home maintains a child protection procedure which can be obtained on request from the home. As the home is located in Leicestershire it falls under the auspices of Leicestershire's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy which can be found at:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/child-protection-and-safeguarding>

VIEWS, WISHES AND FEELINGS

8. How we consult children

We try to be flexible and creative about how we involve children in the running of the home through house meetings, day-to-day conversation and fun activities involving all the children together as well as individual consultations. We aim to give children the opportunity to have their views, opinions and ideas about the running of the home

listened to and acted upon. Children and staff talk about what is going well, what isn't and how we can improve the way we work together.

Children will be actively involved in their care planning, and we will seek every opportunity to support their views in the forums where decisions are made about their lives (LAC Reviews, etc).

9. Our approach to anti-discriminatory practice

The home is committed to promoting equal opportunities, valuing diversity and tackling social exclusion. We take positive action to prevent any discrimination or disadvantage a child may suffer because of their race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation or disability. We are sensitive to the ways that Looked After Children can experience discrimination unique to their circumstances and will work hard to challenge this as and when it occurs.

We have a strong anti-bullying policy and work with both the victim and the perpetrator to ensure that any unacceptable behaviour or treatment of a child is tackled early and not allowed to continue.

10. Our approach to children's rights

We believe that Looked After Children can be particularly vulnerable to having their rights overlooked or ignored. To this end, we ensure that our staff are particularly attuned to the rights of our children which include the right to:

- Express what they think and feel
- To be consulted
- To have access to information
- To not be unjustly punished
- To be protected from abuse
- To have personal privacy
- Access to health care
- Access to education
- Access to leisure activities
- Make a complaint
- Have or refuse family time/visits

EDUCATION

11. How we will support children's educational needs.

Education problems can play a significant role in the breakdown of fostering and adoption placements in the UK, as they intersect with the emotional, behavioural, and developmental challenges that many looked-after children face. While education itself is not always the primary cause of placement disruption, difficulties in this area can exacerbate existing vulnerabilities, strain relationships between children and carers, and contribute to instability. Hence, at The Meadows we regard children enjoying stable, full-time education as key to a successful move to a family at a later date.

To this end, we have good links with local schools and will go out of our way to support our children in enjoying appropriate, full-time education.

The Meadows is aimed primarily as a service for Leicestershire and neighbouring authorities. Hence, when a child is admitted to the home, serious consideration will be given to whether their current school placement can be maintained. Where this is possible, staff at The Meadows will work with the school to maintain continuity of that educational arrangement. In some cases, maintaining the prior school may not be possible. In anticipation of this, The Meadows has good links with local school and will work with the Local Authority and the school to support a transition that can lead to a successful and appropriate plan for education.

Whenever appropriate we keep parents involved in the education of their child and tell them about any developments. Staff attend as many school events as possible, especially parent's evenings and sports days.

If a child is excluded from their educational placement, we will offer additional support to the school and attempt to maintain the placement. Where an exclusion is permanent, we will work with the Placing Authority to find suitable alternative education at the earliest opportunity.

12. The Meadows is not registered as a provider of education.

13. How we will support children with special educational needs.

Where a child has or is thought to have special educational needs, we will work with others to ensure that these needs are properly assessed, and the child receives the correct support to maximise their educational experience and outcomes.

The principles of support in education, above, will be the same if a child accesses specialist education to meet their SEND needs.

ENJOY AND ACHIEVEMENT

14. Events & Activities

Staff at the home encourage and help the children follow existing interests, activities and hobbies. Moreover, the home will provide opportunities for children to try new experiences both in the home and in the community. The home will link with sporting groups, scouts and other bodies that the children will be invited to engage with.

Additionally, the home will provide numerous opportunities throughout the year to engage in celebrations and will host small scale events to celebrate different cultural holidays and events.

The home is within a small community who are keen for the children to be involved in community events and national celebrations that are held in the local Church and Village Hall.

HEALTH

15. Details of health and therapy

The home will make every effort to support the healthy growth and development of the children. To this end, children will be registered with a GP, dentist and optician as part of the admission process.

Direct work with the children will be undertaken by the staff to prepare them for life in a family and to support them through the transition that will accompany this change. To this end, the team will access training and consultancy from www.placementsupport.co.uk A specialist in this area, Placement Support has access to a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians who can work with the staff at The Meadows to ensure that the practice in the home is correctly oriented to the psychological, emotional and relationship needs of the children.

The home will not deliver any specific therapeutic work with the children. However, if a child is assessed as requiring any specific therapeutic support over and above the care in the home, such support will be sourced and commissioned.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

16. How we will support children's relationships

Subject to any restrictions which may be on the Care Plan, we encourage contact with family.

There is a strong anti-bullying ethos within the home and staff are trained in positive behaviour support. The team are also aware of contextual safeguarding, so we will reflect on any issues or incidents between the children to consider what support they may need.

There is a phone provided for the children to use, and assistance will be given for each individual's ability. If a child is able to use the phone unassisted, the phone can be taken into an area of their choice so they can use it in privacy. All requests and assistance given will be recorded.

Children are welcome to have visitors at the home. However, this needs to be planned and arranged with staff. This is to ensure that all children at the home are supported appropriately during the visit.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

17. Monitoring and surveillance

We respect children's right to privacy and dignity and do not constantly watch children, having due regard to their age and vulnerability, without good reason. However, many of the children we care for are vulnerable and require a very high level of supervision to keep them and others safe. This is always risk assessed and is a part of their agreed care plan. Along with the need for one-to-one staffing, these arrangements are kept under regular review.

On occasions, for children who may wander at night and put themselves or others at risk, we may use a buzzer to alert staff if they leave the bedroom. We will only do this when other methods have failed.

There are no electronic or mechanical means in the home for the surveillance of children. Some children may need audio surveillance in the night due to epilepsy or other medical conditions, however any additional levels of surveillance are in place with the agreement of the Social Worker, risk assessed and regularly reviewed.

18. The Support and Management of Behaviour

Staff at the home are trained to understand children's emotional and developmental needs and provide good, positive care within boundaries. We adopt a positive behaviour support strategy, where the team will endeavour to understand what a child may be communicating to us through their behaviour. Moreover, we understand the impact of trauma on children and how this may mean that children struggle to regulate their emotions leading to behaviour that may be challenging or destructive.

At The Meadows, we place an emphasis on positives, building predictable structures, rituals and routines in the home. Moreover, we also understand that authentic, meaningful relationships between carers and children reduce the need for aggressive or destructive acting out. However, there may be times when it becomes necessary for a member of staff to place hands on a child to keep them from harming themselves, someone else or creating significant damage to property. To ensure that these rare events are managed safely, our staff are trained in a BILD approved model of de-escalation and physical intervention.

When such events take place, there is a process of reporting, reflection and management review. Plans are put into effect to reduce the recurrence of such events in the future. We regard the need to hold a child as a last resort and will always strive to eliminate the need for physical intervention in the practice at The Meadows.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

19. Provider

The Meadows is a part of Cedars Childcare Ltd. Cedars Childcare was founded in 2024 to support the increasing number of children identified as requiring foster care but who could not be matched with a carer resulting in a residential care placement. Cedars Childcare wish to create services that can support the gap between a child coming into care and a foster family being found.

Our contact details are:

Cedars Childcare Ltd
Mercury Place
3rd Floor
11 St. George Street
Leicester
England
LE1 1QG

T: 0116 461 0100

20. Responsible Individual

A former RCW and Registered Manager, Tom Ellison has over 30 years' experience of specialist residential childcare. He has held board level positions with a number of leading providers and has a number of undergraduate and post graduate qualifications in Psychology, Management and Strategic management.

21. Registered Manager

Sam Watts is a qualified Social Worker and Registered Manager with over 30 years experience of working in Local Authorities. She brings significant experience to the role, having also worked within a Local Authority as a Supervising Social Worker and Fostering and Adoption Team Manager. This experience means that she brings a unique set of skills in leading a home specifically designed to support children into foster care.

22. Staffing Matters

All the staff at the home have had an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check to comply with regulatory standards and safe recruitment practice. In addition, there are identity checks and DVLA checks carried out which provide a high level of identity scrutiny of the team.

Staffing ratios are adjusted to meet the needs of the children. However, a minimum of 2 staff with three children will be maintained with additional staff being deployed in response to matters of need and risk management. There will be consistency of care offered to the children as staff work a pattern of an afternoon shift, sleep in, then an early shift.

During the night, two members of staff will be present to perform “sleep-in” duties. They will be present to support the children if there is an issue in the night. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to provide waking night staff to offer specific support throughout the night. The need for such additional support will be assessed by the home’s manager in consultation with the child’s social worker.

Staff at the home have monthly, planned and structured reflective supervision so that they can discuss their keyworking responsibilities, their achievements, problems and personal development needs. There will be yearly appraisals for all staff.

All staff have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge by attending relevant in-house training programmes, external short courses and relevant vocational courses. All our staff hold a Level 3 Diploma or are working towards this.

All staff will follow a structured induction programme on commencement of employment that ensures that they receive the mandatory training required to work in a children’s home, but which also gives them the skills and knowledge required to support the primary task of the home, preparing children to move to families.

All staff will have a Cedars Childcare Training Passport that tracks their training and ensure that they remain up to date in all areas of their practice.

23.Staffing Structure

See Appendix 1 for details.

The staffing structure for the home consists of a Registered Manager, Deputy Manager, 4 Senior Children’s Residential Practitioners and 4 Residential Children’s Practitioners.

CARE PLANNING

23. Referrals and admissions

The home is intended for children who have a long-term plan to enter foster care. Hence this will be the key criteria considered within the pre-admission assessment. Other criteria to be considered will be the mix of children in the home and any matching considerations along with the skills, ability and mix of the staff in meeting the needs of the child.

The home will be for children aged 5 to 17 on admission.

Most of the admission will be planned to afford the opportunity for visits, potentially an overnight stay and time to build relationship, particularly between the keyworker and the child.

Following admission, a care plan will be developed, and the focus of that plan will be to identify what work needs to be undertaken to give a subsequent foster placement a greater chance of success. Work will be progressed primarily by a keyworker under the supervision and with the support of the home's management. The evolving care plan will be shared with the social worker to ensure that work undertaken within the home is closely aligned to the Local Authority's Care Plan.

A successful transition from The Meadows will be one which results in a placement with a family be that a foster family, an adoptive placement or even when circumstances permit a return to a birth family. The staff and management at The Meadows will work closely and cooperatively with all agencies involved to ensure that transition plans are managed carefully and sensitively to ensure that the child can be successfully bridged into permanence with a family.

24. Urgent Admissions

Most admissions to The Meadows will be planned with time to allow visits and even overnight stays prior to admission. However, there may be circumstances where the Local Authority need to find an urgent placement for younger or more vulnerable children and where an emergency foster placement is not available. In such circumstance, the management may consider making an accelerated assessment and admission. However, the key criteria for admission will remain that the child has been identified as suitable for foster care and the management at The Meadows are in agreement with this assessment. Consideration will also be given to the potential impact of an accelerated admission on children living at The Meadows at the time of the proposed admission.

Only when these criteria have been satisfied will an accelerated admission process be utilised.

Appendix 1

The structure of the team is as follows:

POST	INITIALS	QUALIFICATION	EXPERIENCE	HOURS	START DATE
Registered Manager	SW	Level 5 diploma, Diploma in Social Work	Over 30 years in children's social care, 12 years RM. Social worker, Supervising Social Worker, Team Manager. Experience of recruiting, training and supervising foster carers. Management of learning disability home and residential short breaks.	Full time 40 hrs	14.04.2025
Deputy Manager	LB	Level 5 diploma	Children's residential care for over 5 years, 3 years as a RM in ebd homes, with experience of caring for children with health needs. Supervision and development of staff, compliance and building management. Care planning, risk assessments and behaviour support of children. Prior to this, 2 years in Prison service with vulnerable adults.	Full time 40 hrs	14.07.2025
Senior RCP	J HO	Advanced apprenticeship, Level 3 diploma	6 years children's residential care, 2 years Deputy Manager involved in Ofsted inspections, supervising staff. Caring for children with ebd/emotional attachment disorders. Further experience, 6 years RAF.	Full time 37 hrs	18.08.2025
Senior RCP	J HA	Level 3 diploma	10 years' experience working with children in both secure and non-secure residential settings. Held senior post for last 3 years, primarily with ebd children.	Full time 37 hrs	18.08.2025
Senior RCP	K HT	Level 3 diploma	Over 8 years' experience of working in children's homes, including Deputy post. Compliance, supervision of staff and behaviour support. 10 years experience of working with	Full time 37 hrs	18.08.2025

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			children in their own homes with learning disabilities and health issues. Further extensive experience of working with adults and other caring roles.		
Senior RCP	MM	Level 3 diploma	36 years experience of working in children's residential care, primarily with disabled children. Held a senior post, including supervision of staff, care planning and clinical tasks.	Full time 37 hrs	15.09.2025
RCP	KN			Full time 37 hrs	06.10.2025
RCP	TP			Part time 32 hrs	06.10.2025
RCP	Vacant			Full time 37 hrs	
RCP	Vacant			Part time 32 hours	