



## Private Children's Homes Strategy

### Our Vision

*Children and young people in Lincolnshire are effectively safeguarded, properly supported and their lives improved by all agencies working together.*

### Our Principles for Working as an LSCP

- Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility.
- To focus our work on safeguarding the needs of vulnerable children and young people and improving their outcomes.
- To promote the idea; that children and young people's behaviours, levels of vulnerability and levels of resilience, are all informed by their surroundings and the contexts in which they spend their time.
- To have a culture of continuous review and learning with evidence based practice.
- To be open to constructive professional challenge.

### Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to set out the strategic objectives of the LSCPs approach to supporting, engaging with and gaining assurance from Private Children's Homes in Lincolnshire. This strategy also identifies the key objectives and outcome measures. This strategy has been developed with the input of:

- Children's Services including representatives from Education, Quality and Standards and the Secure Unit.
- Children's Services Commissioning
- OFSTED
- Lincolnshire Police
- Lincolnshire CCG

### National, Regional, and Local Context

Within the East Midlands OFSTED expect to get 50 or less applications to register new homes per financial year; of these they would expect at least 40 applications to be successful. The applicants must meet a set criterion to [register as a provider of children's social care services](#). A successful application has been deemed 'complete' if it has, amongst other things, the following:

- planning permission,
- a realistic business plan, and

- a positive location risk assessment following consultation with the local authority and specialist services.

Ofsted's assessment process determines whether the applicant is going to be able to operate in line with the children's home regulations and associated guidance, see [Children's Homes \(England\) Regulations 2015](#) for more information. Where applications are unsuccessful this has been noted to be due to a lack of thorough research and consultation within the proposed locality.

Local data, for the 2018/19 financial year, noted that within Lincolnshire there were 108 referrals to the LADO team in relation to private residential units. The data notes that this is a significant increase in the 2017/18 financial year which totalled 45 referrals. Information shared by OFTED on 20.09.2019 identified that there are 20 private residential units located in Lincolnshire.

*Each home should work with their local safeguarding partners to agree how they will work together, and with the placing authority, to make sure that the needs of the individual children are met (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).*

## **Objectives**

- For Private Children's Homes managers to know their staff;
- For Private Children's Homes managers and staff to achieve an improved understanding of the minimum standards required within Lincolnshire to effectively safeguard and support children;
- For Private Children's Homes managers to achieve Safer Recruitment Standards; appropriate training prior to & whilst employed;
- Ensure that looked after children are effectively safeguarded and supported;
- Improved engagement and communication between District Councils, the LSCP, Lincolnshire LADO's and Private Children's Homes applicants;
- Appropriate and clearly defined LSCP members noted as mandatory consultees in the Ofsted application. To ensure that access to universal and where applicable statutory service provision for LAC children placed in Lincolnshire is available.

## **Local Arrangements**

At present Lincolnshire requires a fully co-ordinated approach to working with, supporting and gaining assurance from private children's homes. A new strategy would seek to engage with applicants during the OFSTED application process and following OFSTED registration.

The LSCP seeks to address this through the implementation of the following:

- Publication of the strategy on the LSCP procedures manual;
- Advertising the LSCP multi-agency training

- Integrating the views of children and young people via the "Good Guide to Children's Homes – Children's Guide" produced by Maria Cowan, Lincolnshire County Council.
- Production of an information pack to be provided to all private residential homes in Lincolnshire outlining useful contacts and outlining expectations.
- Production of an information leaflet to be utilised by districts planning departments. This seeks to signpost private homes applicants to organisations within Lincolnshire as part of their consultation process.
- Mechanism of notification to Lincolnshire LADO's from district planning departments of approved applications.
- LSCP to be informed of a single point of contact for private children's homes in Lincolnshire to be included on the [LSCP online procedure manual](#) update distribution
- For private homes to provide assurance that they are utilising the LSCP Safer Recruitment Guidance available in section 6.1 of the LSCP online procedure manual.

#### **Outcome and success measures**

- Uptake of LSCP 6yr training pathway by Private Children's Homes Staff, to be measured through training updates and reports;
- Improved engagement between District Councils, the LSCP and Private Children's Homes applicants prior to and during the OFSTED registration process- to be monitored by LADO team being notified of planning permission being granted;
- Private homes access, and are familiar with and use the [LSCP online procedure manual](#);
- Ongoing improved information sharing between Private Homes, Local Authority and LSCP partners to safeguard and promote the well-being of LAC placed in Lincolnshire;
- LADO to visit all private homes in 12 months.