

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
10 MARCH 2005**

5 RIVERS ANNUAL REPORT

**COUNCILLOR PAUL THOMPSON
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS**

**COUNCILLOR JAN BRUNTON
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**TERRY REDMAYNE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES & LEARNING**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide the Corporate Parenting Board with the Annual Report of 5 Rivers (Project) who manage and operate children's residential provision within Middlesbrough.

BACKGROUND

2. 5 Rivers and Middlesbrough Council have an established Partnership which provides 11 residential places for young people, in three houses.
3. A Partnership Board meets quarterly to oversee the operational activity, service quality and financial aspects of that Partnership.
4. The attached report provides a summary of activity and provision.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS

5. Not applicable to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6. That Corporate Parenting Board is asked to advise the Executive to note the contents of the 5 Rivers Annual Report.

REASONS

7. The Council is responsible in their role as Corporate Parents, for ensuring children and young people in their care, receive a high quality service. The 5 Rivers residential provision is a significant component of this service.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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Five Rivers Project
Middlesbrough

Report for Corporate Parenting Board

January 2005

Report Compiled by:
Carol Perkins Regional Manager

Introduction

This report has been produced to give the Corporate Parenting Board an overview of the progress of the last year. This is in addition to the regular Partnership Board meetings that take place quarterly throughout the year.

The Current Situation

Children, Family Learning and Five Rivers continue to work together to provide a residential service to the young people of Middlesbrough.

We are currently operating three homes, which consist of:

Holly Lodge (Cambridge Road)

Offers placements to four young people aged between 11-16yrs on admission.

Rosecroft (Croft Avenue)

Offers placements to four young people aged 11-16 on admission.

Fir Tree (Marton Avenue)

Offers placements to three young people aged between 9-14yrs on admission.

All of these placements will be on a medium to long-term basis.

Rosecroft, Fir Tree and Holly Lodge have been fully occupied throughout the year, apart from awaiting the confirmation from CSCI about the move of one young person from Fir tree to Holly Lodge.

There are no plans at present to increase the residential homes.

There have been delays in the refurbishment of Rosecroft; however, this work is due to start imminently.

The CSCI (Commission for Social Care Inspection) continue to keep us under close scrutiny. We have jointly begun to challenge some of their decisions, which would have impacted on the care of the young people.

The homes continue to be maintained, ensuring they remain at a high standard. The living environment that has been created is warm, caring and provides structured

boundaries which ensures that the young people feel safe. It also provides a stable base for further work with young people to be undertaken.

Young People

There are eleven young people living in the three homes - three of these young people are in full-time mainstream education. One currently attends Ashdale fulltime, one attends the Princess Trust and one attends part-time education in a mainstream school awaiting a progression to full-time.

Two young people have complementary education ranging from 2hrs to 3 days per week. We are actively seeking education for the one young person and one young person is attending college.

During the year we have continued to act in a parental way challenging any exclusion if we feel the young person has not been treated fairly. We continue to challenge and address issues where the young people in our care do not have appropriate education packages. This is done in partnership with Social Workers.

In the last year we have seen a marked improvement in the behaviour of several young people - one young person has returned home and another is in the transition process of a possible return home. Other young people have been supported enabling them to make the necessary changes to become independent young adults.

There have been no formal complaints made by young people during this year. Any issues that the young people had were dealt with in home.

Staffing

We currently have 32 permanent staff working for us; this includes Management, Administration and staffing of the units. There have been no Senior Management changes.

The current Structure of Management is:

Chairman/Chief Executive	Bill Davison
Regional Manager	Carol Perkins
Office Manager	Shirley Teall

All the Registered Managers are qualified at NVQ Level 4 in Social Care Management. Two Managers now have the Certificate in Management Studies and the third is due to finish in June.

All 3 Deputy Managers are currently working towards NVQ level 4.

The staff within the homes have all been registered for NVQ Level 3 - fifteen staff have completed this, whilst 7 are still working towards completion. These qualifications are all in line with the requirements of Commission for Social Care Inspection.

We continue to have an intensive year of training that has ensured staff felt valued and equipped to respond to the needs of the young people. Training has covered areas in Health and Safety, CSCI, Legislative requirements and staff development. All new staff continue to have Induction Training meeting the standards set by TOPPS (Training Organisational for the Personal Social Services). Future training will continue to build on the existing skills of our staff. We are now looking at joining the Tees Valley Assessment Board.

We have continued to provide firm and appropriate management in relation to any staffing issues. We have not had to address any poor attendance this year.

Overall we have had stability from the staff group and morale remains high.

In addition to the above permanent staff, two independent therapists continue to be employed to provide staff development activities; support and consultation for staff; and to undertake individual work with young people as required.

As from the 1st of April 2005 in line with CETSU, staff can no longer be called Residential Social Workers unless qualified. Therefore, we will call our staff Residential Support Workers.

Feedback from Inspections

The National Care Standards Commission ceased this year and became the Commission for Social Care Inspection. Each home has had one announced and one unannounced inspection. There have been no significant issues arising from these inspections, and the overall view is that the quality of childcare is excellent. We are now looking at ways to increase our scores in the inspection process.

In addition, Regulation 33 Inspections are carried out by independent social work consultants on behalf of Five Rivers. These take place every month in each home, and again, no significant issues have arisen. Overall standards of care are felt to be very good. A training programme for Elected Members has now taken place and

Elected Members have become involved in rota visits to the homes, supported by the independent social workers

Any minor issues that have been highlighted in inspection reports have all been dealt with within required time scales.

Community Relationships

Community complaints have reduced and any issues that are raised are dealt with swiftly, keeping community relations good.

One young person has been helping a neighbour to complete some work on his drive, another neighbour has informed us that they have not experienced any problems, and if we needed him to speak on our behalf he would only be too pleased.

During the year there have been fewer complaints from neighbours relating to Fir Tree House, two relating to Holly Lodge and several relating to Rosecroft, which is usually to do with damage to vehicles.

Neighbours continue to offer gifts to the young people, and one young person was rewarded at Marton Avenue after handing in a lost pager to a neighbour.

Partnership Board

This continues to be a useful meeting to raise any issues, and provides a venue to be open to ideas and suggestions, ensuring that both the Council and Five Rivers can be specific about what they want to achieve for the young people of Middlesbrough.

Summary

Once again this has been a challenging year. The service continues to grow in both consistency and quality. This has enabled us as a team to ensure we are motivated in creating a safe and caring environment for the young people of Middlesbrough. The Middlesbrough Region continues to set standards within the Five Rivers Group.

The most important aspect is that through the spirit of the Partnership we continue to provide a 'happy' experience within residential child care for the young people of Middlesbrough.

We are looking forward to continuing within this ethos.