



**IMPACT REPORT**

**FOR NEW FOREST CARE LTD**

**2018 - 2019**

# New Forest Care

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## **IMPACT REPORT 2018 – 2019**

### **Company Overview**

New Forest Care has been operating since June 2001 and provides residential care to children and young people between the ages of 7 – 18 years, with social, emotional behavioural and educational difficulties. The majority of our placements are considered complex cases, with historic abuse, breakdown of placement and attachment difficulties being common factors. We are passionate about making a difference and ‘changing children’s futures’.

Our primary care expertise lies in providing long term placements that offer a safe, stable and nurturing environment where children and young people are supported to build trusting relationships with staff, through positive role modelling and unconditional care. This is used as a platform to nurture and guide young people towards meeting their potential and equipping them with the necessary skills for their future lives. We take a holistic approach to care and thus all placements include education and therapy as well as mental health monitoring and support. Average length of placement is 2.5 years.

Over the last ten years in particular, our registered school has developed into an outstanding service that has expanded to include an Outdoor Learning Centre (OLC), which includes a Forest School. The school farm has also developed to include designated, on-site classrooms for pupils and post 16 learners, the introduction of larger livestock, and an increased range of enterprise opportunities such as the ‘Pop up farm Shop’. This kind of leaning experience is particularly helpful for transitioning highly school-phobic children back into a school environment, whether our own or an appropriate provision local to the child.

In order to operate our provision across the Company, we employ a staff team of approximately 280. This includes staff in Care, Education, Therapy, Administration, Finance, Training, I.T., Human Resources, Recruitment and Maintenance. Consultancy and outsourcing are used where necessary for other specialist services to meet wider business needs. By request we have provided specialist packages to Key Stage 2/3 children to prepare them for school.

## Demand for Social Care

As at 31 March 2018: 404,710 children were assessed as being in need; 53,790 children had a child protection plan in place; and 75,420 children were being looked after.

DfE data on local authority social care activity between 31 March 2010 and 2018 showed an increase in activity across a range of measures: children in need (+8%), child protection enquiries (+122%), child protection plans (+38%) and looked after children (+17%). The number of referrals made to children's social care services per year also increased by 7% from around 615,000 in 2010/11 to 665,000 in 2017/18.

Multiple factors have been attributed as potentially contributing to the increase in demand for children's social care services.

## Funding for Social Care

Local authority children's services are funded primarily through grant funding from central government. Funding is not ring-fenced; it is for local authorities to decide how to prioritise their spending.

In addition to the core funding allocated through the current local government finance settlement, the Government announced additional funding for children's social care at the Autumn Budget 2018:

- an **additional £410 million in 2019/20** for adults and children's social care; and
- **£84 million over 5 years from April 2019** to support up to 20 local authorities to improve their social work practice and decision-making.

The increase in demand for children's social care services, combined with reductions in central government funding to local authorities and increases in care costs, has increasingly put local authorities' finances under pressure. According to the Local Government Association (LGA), spending on children's social care has increased at a faster rate than any other area of council business.

Local authorities in England spent £8.84 billion on children's social care in 2017/18; nine out of ten authorities exceeded their spending budgets. Whilst local authorities overall have protected funding for children's social care, they have significantly reduced spending on non-statutory preventative and early intervention children's services.

## **Demand for Special Education**

The number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) has increased for a third consecutive year to 1,318,300 in January 2019, representing 14.9% of the total pupil population. This is driven by increases in both the number of pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan and with SEN support.

271,200 pupils (3.1%) of the total pupil population, have an (EHC) plan and a further 1,047,200 pupils (11.9%) receive SEN support.

Of those with an EHCP, when broken down into primary need, the top 3 needs are identified as Autism 29%, Speech Language and Communication needs 15%, Social, Emotional and Mental Health 13.3%

South West & South Central Flexible Framework for Independent/ Non-Maintained Special Schools, a consortium of 12 local authorities has seen all member authorities identify little or no provision to support young people with; social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, Autism and associated challenging behaviour (risk of child exploitation, gang exploitation, anxiety levels that prevent attendance, high levels of physical violence and self-harm).

Whilst this shortfall has been identified, the gap between government funding and overspend will not see Authorities have the resources to develop their own provision to bridge this shortfall, despite a pledge by the Department for Education of a further £250 million of funding.

Government data has shown that over the past five years, the number of children with an education, health and care (EHC) plan or statement has increased by 441 per cent, from 749 children in 2012.

The education department estimates the number of children being home educated in England has risen to 60,000, in 2017/18 an average of 42 students every day were permanently excluded. A further 4,000 – 6,000 young people have fallen out of education and cannot be located, a figure which could be significantly greater due to the lack of robust recording and tracking.

Local Authorities are increasingly turning to Alternative Provision, with those providers taking a holistic approach being recognised for rehabilitating some of the most vulnerable people in Britain.



## Market Spread

The figures below show the number of local authorities we have worked with for each discipline:

- Education placements - 9
- Care placements – 15
- ARC placements – 13

## Our Fiscal Responsibility

As a Company we need to be ever mindful that along with providing quality care and education for the children and young people we look after, we have a duty to use resources carefully and responsibly and be able to demonstrate to placing authorities that we provide good value for money.

Income and expenditure forecasts are produced each year along with budgets for each department, which are closely monitored and areas of potential concern highlighted in monthly directors' meetings. There is more that we can do to effect further efficiencies and this is in hand, targeting the areas of spending with the greatest impact.

## Service Provision

We have eight registered children's homes in and around the waterside area of the New Forest, which provided care for 27 children in long-term placements with bespoke care packages. All placements are underpinned by therapeutic support and intervention through our Therapy Centre which is based in the same locale. We have always firmly believed that to make a real long-term difference therapy is essential; to enable children to understand and make some sense of their traumatic experiences and to give them the best chance of building resilience to better manage in their future life.

Affiliated with our care service, we also have a crisis provision more recently renamed ARC (Activity Residential Care), which provides short-term placements of up to 90 days; the main aim of these placements is to stabilise young people, develop trusting relationships through shared challenges, and targeted support to use such experiences to increase self-esteem and prepare for long term placement, or return to previous placement or carer. Through short term support of young people, such placements also provide the local authority with time to seek an alternative provision, or a valuable break to facilitate the repair and rebuild of an existing placement that has suffered crisis of some sort. The short length of placement is not conducive to regular therapy, though the Therapy



Centre is available to support with any specific issues that may arise. Over the last year we provided 25 short-term placements, which we aim to improve upon next year.

In early 2018 our registered school expanded to encompass a third site. The last inspection in September 2016, graded all areas as Outstanding. We are working hard to maintain this standard at the next inspection which is due anytime in the next two years. During the last year pupil numbers increased from 48 to 73. The target for this academic year has already been met and any further increase will be considered alongside capacity. This year will see a particularly large Year 11 leavers group and work is already underway to backfill the expected vacancies with Key Stage 2 learners. This will provide stable, long-term school places, whilst also ensuring an ongoing income stream.

We are increasingly aware of our corporate and social responsibilities and continue to sponsor various community and charity activities and events, with many good results over the past year.

## **The main challenges**

### **Staff Recruitment & Retention**

Employee numbers are fast approaching 300 and across all sectors of the Company we recognise that our most important resource is our staff, as well as our greatest expense. We invest heavily in our staff, with significant probation training, annual refreshers, enrolment for Level 3 Diploma via our registered Training & Assessment Centre, as well as other training which falls outside of the aforementioned. Aside from the impact on young people, it is wasted money if we are unable to retain staff. The Company strives to develop and maintain a dedicated, highly skilled child care team. As part of the process to recruit and retain quality staff and in light of a significant increase in staff turnover particularly within Residential Care and the ARC service, various internal (anonymous) questionnaires were conducted to obtain staff feedback alongside review of staffing needs, whilst also ensuring that the high quality of provision to our children and young people is maintained. Various recruitment strategies and incentives have also been trialled.

Following this process we have looked hard at ways to improve pay and support for staff, particularly within the care team, where unsociable hours and lower pay are evidently key issues for care staff and thus, make it more difficult to attract and retain quality staff; especially when taking into account the intensity of the work and the general dislike of split shifts. Staff with younger families find it particularly difficult to achieve a satisfactory home/work life balance and of course we, more than many employers are aware of how important this is. In response to findings, proposals have been put to staff for consultation with the aim of putting an end to split shifts; in order to achieve this, basic contractual hours would need to increase however, it would also result in a significant increase in basic pay, increase the amount of non-contact time during the day to cover the many other work aspects

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such as supervision, record keeping, mentoring, practical tasks, staff meetings etc. Alongside this fee levels would be restructured; bespoke fee levels to be replaced with three costing formats. The benefit to the staff working environment will be to provide more 'relaxed' time during the day where staff can meet and talk over various issues and development staff working relationships thus promoting smaller, more close-knit teams. Senior Cover staffing would increase facilitating increased support for homes and young people and to allow greater opportunities for workplace learning.

A new role of Senior Residential Care Worker would be introduced, with the role focussing on high quality behaviour management, fostering positive attachment, re-energising the staff mentoring system and developing and maintaining home ethos. The position would attract an extended pay-scale potential.

We are in the process of looking into other potential benefits for staff such as some level of healthcare, which would be an incentive for staff linked to length of service.

A percentage of profit share is declared each year to be shared amongst all staff, in recognition of their contribution to the success of the Company. It is paid as part of the December payroll, when staff are appreciative of the extra money.

We recognise that we have a dedicated and committed staff team who regularly give above and beyond. Our first 'Ridgestock' weekend was trialled this year towards the end of the summer. This involved the Outdoor Learning Centre site being used for three days of children's activities, food, drink and music, fully hosted by the Company. Staff and their families were invited to come for as little or as much time as they wished and the farm field was also available for those who wished to camp overnight. The weekend included animal petting, tractor rides, a hog roast, archery, climbing and live music. Feedback received was very positive and based on this we plan to make it an annual event for staff and their families'.

## **Ofsted**

Over the past couple of years, we have noticed a change in the attitude of inspectors to physical intervention and particularly ground holds as well as a marked inconsistency between the South-West region and the South-East region. To put some context around this, we train all our child contact staff in the principles and practices of Team Teach, which is a nationally recognised system. Many of our placements have histories including violence, aggression, self-harm, absconding to name but a few. Given the traumas they have experienced it is unsurprising that there are occasions when despite attempts by staff to avoid such situations, a child or young person is unable to maintain self-control and pose a risk to the safety of themselves, others or significant damage to property. Staff are trained to employ, wherever possible, de-escalation strategies in a given situation however, when these are



not successful it may be necessary to intervene physically until the child is able to take back control for themselves. Often the apparent trigger (such as saying 'No' to something) is not the real reason for a behaviour outburst; the child/young person is worrying about something in their life past or present and is overwhelmed by the feelings it invokes leading to deterioration in self-control, which is often very rapid. Training is in place so that staff can use known methods and work together to support a child/young person as safely as possible. Following any such event a written incident report is produced and circulated to relevant parties including the placing authority. The young person is routinely offered a post incident debrief and the option to be seen by a medical practitioner. Thus, when intervention is necessary, we endeavour to be as transparent about the event as possible and cover this with a written report.

## **Placement Outcomes**

The Company was founded upon a genuine desire and passion to make a difference to the lives of some of the most damaged and vulnerable children and young people. This has continued to drive the work that we do and our aim is always to have their best interests at the heart of decision making. In many respects it is difficult to quantify and compare the impact we have on the lives of these children because they are all unique and so there is no 'results' table that we can produce. However, the crucial starting point is in developing safe and trusting relationships with adults (care and education staff and confidential therapeutic relationships with their therapist), where many have early life experience of rejection, abuse, lack of stability and neglect. These are the building blocks to move forward with all other aspects of their EHCP (Education, Health & Care Plan); without a safe environment and trusting relationships there can be no care plan. Individual progress and focus on agreed areas of need.

In school many make achievements that would never have been believed possible prior to placement. For many just attending school is a remarkable step forward.

The next section of this report provides some examples of (real) case studies to provide some context around what we do, how we do it and what the outcomes are.

## **Case Studies – Residential Care**

*(names and any other identifying information have been changed to protect the identity of individuals)*

### **Millie – ‘from failure to family’**

A 14-year-old girl, placed with New Forest Care, after a long list of failed placements, and much involvement with both the CAMHS services and the criminal justice system. She was adopted at 4 years of age, after prolonged neglect and sexual and physical abuse perpetrated by her birth family. From the age of 11 years negative behaviours escalated to include violence to self and others, theft, repeated and prolonged (up to months) living “on the street” absconding, and any number of diagnoses – ranging from borderline personality disorder, through autistic disorder to early onset psychosis.

Millie had a placement history of accelerating exclusion from residential schools, care agencies and placements – some lasting only a matter of days.

A bespoke placement with NFC was set up with the objective of preparing Millie for independent living, which objective was achieved after a placement of two years, when she moved into sharing a house with the family of her long-term boyfriend – following negotiation with Social Services, at the age of 17 years.

Input to this case was negotiated through the assessment process, and included family therapy (with Millie and her adoptive family), individual psychotherapy (both formal and pastoral), a programme of work looking specifically at personal and sexual safety, and liaison work with adoption agencies, probation services, and the criminal justice system. At discharge, Millie had no outstanding criminal justice involvement. She still telephones people who worked with her at NFC on a regular basis.

### **Tom**

Tom began his placement in 2017 and came to us direct from a Mental Health facility where he had been admitted approximately a year before. Initially he presented as very withdrawn; rarely engaging in conversation and barely even speaking single words, with limited communication of any kind. Access to education had at best been fragmented in previous years and therefore, his placement at New Forest School was a very important part of his care plan. Tom’s transition went well and his new care base provided a safe and secure environment to begin the process of positive attachment, nurturing and support to encourage development of social skills. Attendance at school, regular therapy, alongside a safe and stable care base and the persistence and dedication of staff supported him to develop the self-confidence to become increasingly responsive and aware of his own needs and abilities. Over a few months Tom gradually learned to trust staff and became more responsive, beginning to engage in conversations and becoming increasingly willing and able to share his thoughts, feelings and wishes. At the time of placement Tom’s relationship with his parents was estranged and there had been no contact with them for some two years or more; Tom insisted that he did not want

contact. However, as his confidence grew, so he became increasingly able to express that he wished to re-establishment contact. With the support of his Therapist and all others at NFC involved in his care as well as working closely with the Local Authority, communication with parents was successfully re-established. A plan was subsequently agreed for Tom to gradually increase his contact with them. Ultimately, the outcome for Tom was that he was able to return home permanently.

Some examples of life skill targets achieved by Tom included:

- Free time away from the care home
- Enrolment at college following successful GCSE exams
- Independent travel to and from a local college
- Increased use of public transport and free time to attend appointments
- Use of public transport to travel home for family contact
- Arranging own medical appointments
- Taking responsibility for own medication and administration
- Independently attending other agreed appointments such as with his Therapists

## **Rachel – ‘the path to independence’**

Having been placed with NFC early in 2014 at 12 years of age, Rachel engaged positively in her placement following a string of successfully transitioned from NFC outreach after 12 months into her own tenancy at the age of 18 years. This process focussed on the gradual reduction of staff support and on independence and self-management. Rachel secured various employment opportunities independently and developed a greater level of resilience. This was an enormous achievement for R, who over the previous 5 years had received high levels of staff support having experienced early life trauma. During this time Rachel was also supported to manage the news of her brother being in prison, and the emergence of extended family following the sudden death of her mother.

The level of attachment seen by Rachel towards NFC is an indication of the sustained efforts of a positive long-term placement. She continues to regard NFC as her “family” and as such, though she is no longer in our care there is still regular contact which is a credit to the work that has been achieved.

## **Peter – ‘from crisis to supported independence’**

A 17-year-old boy admitted to NFC, following on from a number of failed placements including, notably, a well-known Therapeutic Community. Peter had displayed a number of dangerous behaviours, including swallowing metal objects such as batteries and knives, which had resulted in at least three (3) surgical procedures (laparotomies) in the previous three (3) years. He had also shown

violence to others, destruction of property, attempts to use ligatures on himself, and been involved in sexually predatory

behaviours. He had been involved in contact with a number of CAMHS services, and concerns were raised about possible diagnoses of conduct disorder, Munchausen's syndrome, depression, and ADHD.

There had been a number of attempts to find medications that might alleviate some of his symptoms, with little effect.

Peter stayed with NFC for 18 months, during which time he maintained a work experience placement with a local mechanic for some nine (9) months. He was supported to move from a children's home to a flat in a nearby town, and semi-independent living - with intensive support from NFC. He had psychological oversight of his case, which necessitated pulling together a network of mental health professionals (some from local provisions – such as Adult mental health teams, local hospitals, etc.). In the 18-month period, Peter's more worrying behaviours were kept within limits (still in evidence, but with less catastrophic results) and he began to show some self-care skills – making relationships with care staff and the local community.

He also maintained regular contact with a therapist retained by NFC – both in direct sessions, and in terms of a mental health overview of his care planning.

Peter was with NFC until review of his placement by the Adult Social Services team in his area of origin, when it was seen that they felt many of the services Peter required could be provided locally to his family home.

## **Rosie – 'Back Where I Belong'**

Rosie came to New Forest Care in 2014, after a traumatic early childhood, leading to complex mental health problems, which resulted in several admittances to mental health hospital provision prior to the start of her placement.

Rosie formed relationships with the adults around her and started to trust and grow in confidence. This in turn led to her being able to access school and she started to work towards GCSEs and vocational qualifications at the school farm.

"I believe animals are a great form of therapy and going to the farm helped me when I wasn't feeling my best. It also gave me structure to my days and routine, which has helped me later in life." Rosie

Rosie always loved animals and the school farm helped therapeutically as well as providing an environment to learn and develop new skills.

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'I learned many new skills beyond basic animal care such as building animal accommodation and helping sick or injured animals. It helped me find my passion in life.' Rosie

After leaving New Forest Care in 2016, Rosie returned home and gained employment at a large supermarket, while continuing to work with animals on a voluntary basis.

In 2019 she arranged a visit to the farm at New Forest Care to catch up with staff, including the Head of Education. After listening to Rosie and her continued passion to work with animals, it was suggested she apply for a position on the farm. Rosie was successful in her application and was overjoyed to join the team.

Rosie continues to be successfully employed by New Forest Care on a fulltime basis. She works across the school farm sites and is studying for her Level 3 qualification in Animal Care.

Her passion continues to shine through in her enthusiasm and dedication to her work and studies.

## **Luke – 'Office of National Statistics'**

Luke has complex emotional and behaviour needs, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Conduct Disorder and attachment difficulties, all of which resulted in poor experiences at previous schools due to his individual needs not being met. He was initially placed at NFC following a number of placement breakdowns; it was evident that getting him to engage again in school would be a significant task.

Luke's attendance at New Forest School is very positive and he has progressed significantly, not only academically but more importantly for Luke, socially. He previously struggled in social situations due to his poor social understanding which resulted in negative situations and experiences. Luke is now showing a vast improvement in his ability to self-reflect and self-regulate, the result of hard and dedicated work from the staff supporting him.

Due to the progress Luke has made at New Forest School and his keen interest in programming, he was put forward for an amazing opportunity to work through PALS (People with Alternative Learning Styles) at the Office of National Statistics. The work experience that he was a part of involved web scraping for Hampshire County Council's planning department which included working as part of a team and weekly meetings where Luke had to report on what he had done.

The staff who supported Luke during his work experience were very impressed with how he conducted himself in the meetings and how he articulated what he had worked on. One of the managers at PALS expressed his delight at how well Luke had worked with the team and said that he would certainly be happy to use him for future projects.

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The same manager contacted the school to say that they had an augmented reality project coming up that they would like Luke to be a part of. The work involved working with a company in Kent which would necessitate overnight stays during the work. The projects would run over a 12-week period with the first 4 – 6 weeks training starting mid-November with Luke working on a web application project that would involve CSS HTML and JavaScript / Python. Luke is keen to be involved and at the time of writing confirmation is awaited that funding is in place.

## **Jacob - 'Rise to Governor'**

Jacob joined New Forest School in 2013 as one of our first day students. He was a high functioning autistic student who was struggling with the social interactions and sensory overload of a mainstream school environment. Although he had been moved to the autistic unit at a local school (an inclusive unit based within a large mainstream setting), Jacob continued to struggle and by the time he was referred to New Forest School he was only following a heavily reduced timetable after normal school hours.

Initially, New Forest School was approached to provide some respite education for Jacob on a short-term basis, however this quickly developed into a full-time placement. Jacob's mother voiced concerns around the school's ability to deliver an appropriate curriculum due to Jacob's high academic potential and long-term aspirations to attend college and then university. However, we were clear to his mother that the primary need for Jacob was to develop his ability to cope within social situations and manage his anxiety levels, if he was to be able to access mainstream environments like 6<sup>th</sup> Form College/University and fulfil his educational and employment ambitions and potential. This caused significant tension in our initial relationship with parents though despite this a strong, professional working relationship was established.

By the time Jacob completed Year 11, he was president of the school council and achieved an impressive range of GCSE results (predominantly A & B grades). He was subsequently supported by New Forest Care in his transition to a Southampton Sixth Form College. A highly positive ongoing relationship with Jacob and his parents was maintained, providing access to ad hoc therapy and meetings at school when he encountered difficulties or found college a struggle; sometimes simply being on the end of the phone to chat to either Jacob or his Mother when times were tough.

Jacob went on to complete Sixth Form College and gain a place at a University in Hampshire to study Psychology where he is currently in his second year. At the same time, Jacob has maintained evening/weekend work at both a well-known supermarket and a well-known home and furniture store where he is able to cope with the busy environments, levels of sensory overload and the need to communicate and deal with constant social situations (customers/staff team) that used to cause him such anxiety and distress.

Our relationship with both Jacob and his parents has continued, initially with Jacob working with ACORNS, an autism research group started by Southampton University and of which New Forest School is a founding member. This has included Jacob presenting a keynote speech at an Acorns Launch Event when he described his journey through the education system as an Autist. Latterly, Jacob, now a young adult, has joined the school as a School Governor. He will continue to maintain a strong relationship with the school as part of an external team providing challenge and support to the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team, and bringing a unique perspective as an ex-student.

## **Harry – ‘one step at a time’**

Prior to his placement with us Harry had had a negative experience of therapy. Coupled with his lack of basic trust in adults he made it clear that he would not attend his sessions. For the first two months he followed this through by refusing to attend. His Therapist however, was not to be put off and patiently visited Harry each week at his (care) home, at the allotted therapy time. Harry was eventually persuaded to go to the Therapy Centre. The gentle persistence and commitment of the Therapist was rewarded and the first visit to the Therapy Centre ‘turned the corner’ for Harry and resulted in the gradual development of a trusting therapeutic relationship. By showing patience, commitment and working at the pace of the child and what he could manage, Harry eventually felt safe enough to engage and therapy is ongoing; Harry values his sessions and uses them to explore and come to terms with his past traumatic experiences, to recognise the impact they have had and to begin to build positive coping strategies and a degree of resilience. Whilst adhering strictly to the bounds of confidentiality the Therapist is able to guide the care and education staff teams towards more helpful and therapeutic ways of communicating with Harry so that the overall effectiveness of support can be consistent and is maximised.

A clear indication of the positive relationships and outcomes we achieve are the very many ex-placements who continue with some level of contact. Some visit when times are particularly difficult to seek advice, some come when they have something special they want to share, some stop by for a visit just to let us know that they are doing ok. All are keen to see specific staff who have been a key part of their care.

One former placement has a good job as a mechanic in a large company and together with his partner they saved to purchase their first house and later to finance their wedding at a New Forest hotel, to which several staff were invited. In the early years following the end of placement, visits were mostly arranged at times of crisis to discuss concerns, and ways to resolve issues. Living locally, they continue to visit regularly and though like any family they have their ups and downs, they are pleased to share their successes and proud for us to see their two thriving children.



## **Community & Charitable Activities**

At New Forest Care we continue to be aware of our place in and our responsibility to, our local community.

We are proud to have been involved in a number of community and charitable events which has demonstrated clearly the positive impact we can have:

### **Blackfield & Langley Football Club**

The Company has sponsored and supported Blackfield & Langley FC for the last 11 years. Many of the original Directors had a strong passion for football, and felt that supporting the local semi-professional team, was indeed support for the local community.

During this time Blackfield & Langley FC has gained 3 promotions. They now compete in the Southern League Premier Division, which involves competing with teams from all over Southern England.

The ethos of the club revolves around developing young players; the average age of the first team being no more than 21-22 years of age.

### **Hythe & Dibden Youth Football Club**

We have supported/sponsored this coaching company for the past 3-4 years and are the major sponsor; the club runs 36 teams for boys and girls between the ages of 7 to 18 years of age. The club motto is 'We can all play'. This encapsulates our own attitude to sport, and our commitment to develop sport for all children in the waterside area.

Hampshire FC has recognised the club as 'Grassroots Club of the Year - 2018-19' in recognition of their high standard both on and off the pitch, and their contribution to the local community. They also hosted the England DNA Roadshow; a masterclass for coaches of other coaching clubs. Over 200 coaches attended to learn about new ways to develop young players.

### **Fawley Cricket Club – Inclusive Cricket for Children**

This year has seen a new 3-year sponsorship agreed with Fawley Cricket Club, to support inclusive children's cricket and we are pleased that some of our young people have already been joining in the junior training sessions.

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As part of this initiative the Company has sponsored an award to recognise anyone in the cricket club – player, coach or club member, junior or adult, who demonstrates their commitment to being an inclusive individual by:

- Being a role model for equality and acceptance
- Promoting access to the game
- Actively encouraging participation for all
- Showing dedication/commitment to playing or coaching
- Removing or over coming barriers or supporting others to participate
- Has made a significant achievement within inclusive cricket

The first person to receive the award is Andy Wood who after working to support inclusive cricket at Hampshire Cricket, has led the initiative at the cricket club. Andy is also an ex-employee of the school.

## **Rugby**

In Totton we have developed a good working relationship with the Tottonians Rugby Club - our neighbours at our Totton school site and have discussed how we can work together in the future for mutual benefit. This has seen the younger club members using our all-weather playground surface.

## **SEN Morning**

In May we held our first SEN morning for professionals, which provided a morning of talks and interactive demonstrations for colleagues from Local Authorities, Education Providers and Social Care all against the backdrop of the Outdoor Learning Centre. Guest speakers included our Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, and Sarah Parsons, Professor for Autism and Inclusion.

## **Touch Rugby Tournament**

Working with Barclays Bank and Fiander Tovell Accountants in Southampton, we held a 6-a-side touch rugby tournament at our Totton school site. This included teams from our school and local schools as well as some adult teams including two teams from our staff. Our chosen charity was Autism Wessex with Barclays Bank providing match funding; a total of £3,202 was raised. The tournament was fully inclusive of all types of schools in the area and for some competitors it was the first time they were able to compete in such an event (our own students included).

## **Friends of St James' Park in Southampton**

After meetings with the volunteers at Friends of St James' Park in Shirley, opportunities to work together were identified, which included work experience placements for our students in addition to several events that our POST-16 students can attend for their enterprise studies. In return, we provided our marquee and ran a quiet area at their summer fayre in July, as well as providing and

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installing specialised lighting and blue tooth sound specifically with their Autism group in mind, and at the same time providing improved facilities for their function room.

## **Raft Race**

Later in July, we entered a raft in the Great Waterside Raft Race in support of the local RNLI and were pleased to come away with most of the trophies!

## **ACoRNS**

We continue to have a strong presence as founding members of the Autism, Community, Research Network. This provides us with opportunities to collaborate with education providers and specialists across the area, in addition to informing the research that will be of most benefit in real life. As a network, we have been able to drive this process to deliver tangible benefits within our own school and in the overall processes that support young people with autism. We continue to advocate for the benefits of researchers working with education providers and have presented our experiences at various conferences and exhibitions.

## **Totton College**

New Forest care education has continued to build on the positive relationship with the college. This has led to Science equipment being donated to the school, leasing more classroom space and working collaboratively with students.

## **The Environment – our responsibility to the next generations**

We strive to demonstrate great care towards the children and young people we look after on a day to day basis, however, we are increasingly aware that there is much more we could do to care for their future environment and that of our own children and grandchildren.

We have for some years engaged in common initiatives such as recycling and promoting staff awareness to take care of resources and avoid unnecessary waste. A large part of our leased vehicle fleet is hybrid and we're working towards a fully hybrid fleet by 2021. We are conscious of energy efficiency when renovating or upgrading buildings. However, we aim to increase our focus and action to increase what we do to reduce our carbon footprint and preserve the world heritage for future generations.



## **Finally – What People Say About Us**

Please note that where necessary information has been amended to ensure anonymity. The rest speaks for itself and attests to the fact that we really are 'Changing Children's Futures'.

*"Wow what a lovely email to receive!*

*We will pass the message on to R! We are exceptionally proud of him too!*

*If you had told me 18 months ago, he would be doing performing in front of a crowd I would have told you it wasn't possible!*

*Please pass all our love and thanks on to all staff for their continued support of our R and thank you all so much for giving us back "our son" we lost him for a while but with the incredible efforts of all staff (and of course R!)*

*We are finally able to have him back x*

*Have a great summer and thank you again"*

**Parents, 24 July 2019**

*"To the New Forest Care Team,*

*We want to express our gratitude for everything that you've helped us achieve for the Summer Festival at St James' Park on the 6 July 2019!*

*With love, Friends of St James' Park"*

**Friends of St James' Park Charity, July 2019**

*"I wanted to get in touch to wish you all a very happy summer and thank you for everything you've helped ACoRNS [the Autism Community Research Network @Southampton] to achieve over the past year. We've seen one of our students win a University prize for the impact of her work, been awarded some more money from the University to continue our innovative Digital Stories work next year, put in place some excellent projects at New Forest School focusing on student voice, and seen our first ACoRNS Doctorate by Chantelle Zilli. We congratulate Dr C for all her hard work, and the New Forest Care team for supporting her so brilliantly. We are very much looking forward to continuing our partnership next year.*

**Sarah Parsons, July 2019**

**Professor of Autism and Inclusion**

**Southampton Education School, University of Southampton**

# New Forest Care

**Ref: our dear daughter**

*"We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the staff members at New Forest Care for their professionalism and humanity in providing care to our dear daughter R.*

*Naturally, as R's parents, we were profoundly concerned for her welfare and sick with worry that she was placed so far away from us in an area and with people that neither she nor we knew.*

*The staff and her therapist have respected R's wishes and feelings to have contact with us and also recognised that this was of fundamental importance to R's welfare, the paramount consideration of the Children's Act 1989.*

*The staff and her therapist undertook tremendous efforts to arrange, supervise and facilitate contact between R and us, and from the outset the staff were respectful to us as R's parents, warm, friendly and welcoming to us and very hospitable to us and clearly dedicated to building a relationship with us, all of which has contributed immensely to R making a speedy recovery from the suffering caused to her by being forced into care by the County Council.*

*After our first visit to the Home and meeting with staff members, it gave us peace of mind to know that until R could return home that at least she was cared for by the staff members who have clearly helped and restored R to fulfil her wishes and feelings to be reunited with us back in her life-long family home.*

*In addition to successfully reuniting R with us (with outstanding contribution by her therapist) and properly planning out her transition back to her family home, New Forest care and its staff at the Home have provided an excellent care and support package to R in respect of her education, medical treatment, emotional needs and independence.*

*We will always be grateful to the staff at the Home for their outstanding help, support and care provided to R and for their excellent working relationship with us, all of which was centred entirely on R's welfare".*

**Parents, 20 June 2019**

*"Hi J, I just wanted to thank you for earlier. I really appreciate you being so kind, understanding and caring. It really does mean a lot. I'm ever so grateful to you and D for everything you are doing. It will be two years next month that P has been with you and he's a different child. I know my emotions are high but I just really wanted to put that aside for a moment to stress to you both how wonderful you all are and to give you complete credit for all that's gone in to getting P where he is today. That's solely down to the knowledge, passion and dedication of the school. You, ..... absolutely everyone. I really can't thank you all enough".*

**Parent, June 2019**

# New Forest Care

*My son K has been in the care of NFC for approximately six years, four of which he has spent at the same home. We have seen K go through many trials and tribulations mainly related to his condition which at times has been very challenging but at all times during his tenure he has had the best support and care that we could have hoped for. K has blossomed from a frightened little boy on medication when he arrived to a relatively confident, able and likeable young man. He still has a way to go but with continued guidance, he has as good a chance to make it in life as most. This in part is attributable to the care of the NFC staff and its nurturing environment.*

*At the present time, K himself would probably have a very different opinion but I do believe in later years that he will look back and realise just how lucky he was compared to others in his position and to have had the opportunities he has.*

*We have always felt that NFC was the best placement for K. Although there has been many staff changes over the years we have always had good relationships with all that have been involved with K. They have shown great professionalism and often gone the extra mile because they care and clearly get a lot out of the often difficult jobs they do.*

*Leadership and example comes from the top and I would like to thank the Manager in particular for all the hard work and support he has given all of us in what at times have been extremely challenging situations where it would have been easy to give up and accept defeat. He has always been there to fight K's corner on our behalf and we will certainly remind him of this in the coming years.*

*We have high hopes for K's future and I think that NFC have given him a good springboard to start his new life outside of the care environment. It wouldn't surprise me to see him in a few years, giving something back, working with young people with similar difficulties.*

*Many thanks to you all, it has been an eventful journey.*

**Parents, 29 May 2019**

*"Sorry for such a late reply, as you're aware we have quite a stressful situation at home at the moment..."*

*I am really grateful for the support the care and the school have given C recently with her being worried about her older brother. It is certainly not an easy situation with her brother's mental health being so bad and a pending court case. I cannot fault the care and support that C has always been given. There's been the occasional issue whereby a particular member of staff has dealt with situations with C. It could have been handled differently with a little bit more thought on how C reacts. Also, certain comments said to her regarding how she will progress once she moves back home. The comments were not needed as it wasn't positive for her and certainly hasn't helped C's confidence or self-esteem. She was told that she will no doubt return to old habits by not leaving the house and end up refusing to go to college or drop out. I would have appreciated more positive comments to boost her confidence in moving forward. Perhaps it was just a lapse of judgment by the staff member and a passing comment but it obviously did upset her as she wouldn't have told me otherwise.*

*Activities or outings have always been fabulous from the Home, with what is on offer or available to C. She's really enjoyed them all even ones that have pushed her out of her comfort zone. I was always concerned about the way the Home staff had pushed C when she first joined because I was worried about her getting upset & struggling but saw it helped her in the long run. The difference in not being*

# New Forest Care

*able to do such a thing at home is I'm the only one that's supporting her whereas at the Home there's at least two members of staff available to deal with any fall out. They also aren't as emotionally attached.*

*C has grown into an amazing mature, kind and considerate young person and I will always be truly grateful to NFC for all the help and support and time they have given C to help her become such a person.*

*I'm so proud of how C has dealt with her exams recently. Knowing how anxious she was and how she's always struggled with school work let alone sitting in exam conditions and the pressure of completing them.*

*Again I believe this is down to the support the care staff and the school have given her and how she has been encouraged to do her best regardless. I cannot ask any more of her!*

*The accommodation that the RC offers is outstanding. I have always been very impressed how the setting is made as homely as possible like a family home. I love the pictures around the property of the children there and staff it gives a wonderful sense of a big family.*

*I know C has always been a picky eater but the majority of the time an alternative has been offered if she really doesn't like it and I believe C has tried a few dishes that she wouldn't normally have eaten and surprised herself that she enjoys it. She is more aware now of some foods she shouldn't over indulge in especially her addiction to mayonnaise which has reduced dramatically. She doesn't try and help herself to food at home now either she limits herself to dinner times etc with the occasional treat.*

*The RC staff have always been really accommodating whenever there has been an issue with Cs trains for her return journey to RC. They have gone out of their way to ensure she gets back safely and timely for school the following day.*

*C is really looking forward to coming home for good next month though I am sure she will really miss all the staff some whom have been with her during her whole journey at NFC. She doesn't have any friends outside NFC and I know that will cause some uncertainty until she starts college as to how she will react once home. I do have some concerns that she will spend too much time shut away in her room or the house. Though we encourage her constantly. Hopefully she will make new friends that help her continue to be such an amazing young lady.*

*I would like to thank everyone at NFC especially at the Home for all that you have done whether it be push her boundaries, give her a talking to or just a hug! She wouldn't be who she is without you.*

*Thank you!!*

*Best wishes for all the future adventures you all pursue and the lucky children that get an opportunity like C has over the last few years".*

**Mother, 28 May 2019**

# New Forest Care

*I am writing to speak about the amazing experience I had at New Forest School Farm. I attended New Forest School Farm between the years of 2014 and 2016. I already loved animals (and still do!) so it was brilliant that I got the opportunity to help out on the farm, plus gain a qualification from it. I am now able to put this on my CV as work experience which is helpful when applying to jobs. There was a variety of activities I could get involved in. I learned many new skills beyond basic animal care such as building animal accommodation and helping sick or injured animals. It helped me find my passion in life. I gained a lot of knowledge on animal care which is still what I would like to pursue as a long-term career.*

*The farm was beneficial to me in lots of different ways. I believe animals are a great form of therapy and going to the farm helped me when I wasn't feeling my best. It also gave me structure to my days and routine, which has helped me later in life. Furthermore, I was able to complete my BTEC Animal Care certificate which I am very pleased to have received a distinction in. The staff working on the farm were fantastic in all aspects and highly knowledgeable on animal care.*

*When I moved away, the farm was definitely the one thing I missed the most. After leaving New Forest School I continued working on a farm closer to home as a volunteer. I did this for almost two years and still help out now in my free time. I also went on to complete a dog grooming course at Kingston Maurward College. I don't believe I would have continued with my passion for animal care had I not gained prior skills, enthusiasm and confidence at New Forest School Farm.*

*I have been back to visit New Forest School Farm and their newly built second farm, which looks incredible. New Forest Care will continue to support me in completing my Level 3 BTEC.*

*Overall, going to New Forest School Farm has had a massive positive impact on my current life. It gave me motivation and helped determine what I want to do with my future. I think every school should have a farm because it has so many benefits to children and young people. The fact that they are expanding the farm and incorporating a wider variety of animals and activities is amazing.*

*I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to attend New Forest School Farm.*

**Ex-student, 13 May 2019**

*"My son W started at New Forest School in 2017. He has extremely high levels of anxiety and it's incredibly difficult to get him to engage with anyone. His anxiety can be crippling at times. W did not have a healthy relationship with his mainstream school so we knew the transition to New Forest would be incredibly difficult for him. After many discussion with the school about W prior to him starting, a plan was put in place for him to start his sessions at the Farm. It was a very slow process to begin with. Just an hour once a week. This very slowly increased. The staff were phenomenal in going at a pace that was comfortable for W and building strong relationships at the same time. To begin with all of his negativity was directed at the farm. This was understandable, he did not have any trust in teachers. But the staff got to know W. They were amazing in communicating with me how W sessions were going, asking questions on W's likes and dislikes. What they could do to make him feel comfortable and engage with him. They didn't push him, they took it at a slow pace that he could cope with but at the same time implementing a routine and structure which is what he desperately needed....even though he fought against it for a while. The school recognised the importance of routine and that W needed to continue it, so they continued his sessions during half term. I was truly touched that they were so committed to forming a positive relationship with him, that they knew by having a couple of*

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*weeks break during half term, that W would struggle even more to re-engage after having a break. And for me personally it was amazing. I felt very isolated and alone. No one in my life understood what I was going through but MF organised a day at the farm for children, parents and staff. It was the most relaxed I had felt in years. To be around people who weren't judging me and who understood exactly what it was like. I formed friendships with other mums that day and we still talk now two years later. W continued his sessions each week, during school time and half term. It was very difficult for quite some time, he would be very angry about going, refuse to wear the overalls, wouldn't participate in any of the activities or interact with staff and peers. He would just stand in the background watching. This is exactly what he needed to do and the staff knew that. He needed to have time to feel safe, to know that the staff could be trusted, that they weren't going to give up on him and that they cared. He needed time to get used to his new routine and know he could depend upon it. This was something that W had struggled with a great deal in his previous school, he was let down massively by them. The staff at New Forest knew this and worked so hard to build up his confidence and trust. His previous school let me down too, in awful ways. So I was of course nervous too, I didn't know the staff at New Forest, I didn't trust anyone. I would drop W at his sessions at the farm and park around the corner. That quickly went away. I was amazed at how quickly I trusted them. I could see how committed all the staff are in how they interacted with the children. How passionate they are about their work, how much they care about the children, their ability to be flexible in catering for each child's needs individually and the communication is nothing I have ever experienced. That was key for me, to be informed in detail about his school day would better prepare me for his moods at home and vice versa. I was blown away, I still am. W's sessions at the farm are what started his journey of positive relationships with staff AND peers. It did take a long time, but now he is enthusiastic about going to the farm and school. He engages in EVERY session at the farm. Not only does he do all the tasks, but he does them happily. This is because he feels safe, he was and still is fully supported by people who went above and beyond for him. That's what all the staff at New Forest do. By them being so flexible, understanding and knowledgeable to cater the sessions to his needs and continue these sessions even during half term, I now have a son who travels 80 miles to and from school everyday. I truly believe it's down to those first few months at the farm that enabled my son to have trust in staff, even when he's having a very bad day, he knows he's safe with them, as do I. Thank you"*

**Mother, 12 May 2019**

*Since D has been placed with you, it has been really lovely to see the improvements he has made with the support you have given him. I really enjoy reading the placement reports even of incidents as they are always measured and child focused. I like hearing how you speak to D and focus on the positives even in moments of difficulty and give him the consistent message that it is ok to have a bad day and that doesn't mean the placement is broken or he has ruined it.*

*The communication I get is always good and balanced so I always know what is going on for D but am not overwhelmed with multiple calls and emails for minor things. As D's social worker it has been a breath of fresh air for me to see him being supported so robustly and I have been able to take a step back as previously I was seeing D nearly every day and having multiple calls daily from the placement which became unmanageable.*

*I like that you all have been able to see the lovely D I know as sometimes others have struggled to see behind his behaviour.*

*Thank you,*

**Social Worker, 10 May 2019**

# New Forest Care

## “Therapeutic Support

New Forest Care (NFC) have a multi-disciplinary therapy team including a consultant child & adolescent psychiatrist, registered mental health nurse and an occupational therapist. NFC offer ongoing monitoring efficacy of treatment – when K is admitted a referral will be made to CAMHS and in the interim their psychiatrist will, in conjunction with the mental health manager, provide psychiatric oversight and monitor current medication. Access to the mental health team is available 24 hours a day via the on call system within New Forest Care.

## Staffing

The staff at MF are experienced and suitably qualified with the manager reporting that staff morale is much improved. There are usually three on duty with one waking and one sleep-in staff and all staff met national minimum standards with respect to staff having achieved, or currently undertaking, the level three diploma in childcare. Staff are trained in team teach which seeks to defuse or deescalate challenging behaviours rather than relying on physical intervention- since November 2018 there have been only five instances of interventions.

NFC has three school sites- all are within a 20-minute drive of MF and all were visited as part of this quality assurance visit. Classrooms seen provide modern facilities where pupils follow the national curriculum and can take a range of GCSE's or B.Tech as well as AQA's. School rooms had white boards while the music rooms had a drum kit, 12 track mixing desk, Apple Mac, microphone and five guitars.

Class sizes are small comprising three or four young people and are based on age not ability. All school sites have outdoor space including a five-a-side football court, climbing wall as well as free access to local gyms. A positive rewards policy means that young people will earn at least one weekend activity and in reality more are achieved with a wide range of activities including sailing, bowling, cinema all being on offer.

Education and care staff provide daily verbal handovers to each other so as to ensure consistency of care. Where additional staffing levels are needed these can be provided by the care staff to promote consistency of care while one to one is offered for brief periods in rooms so that there are no internal or external exclusions as is consistent with the organisations' non-exclusion policy.

- No agency staff used by new forest care. Stable staff team known to all young people now in place. Staff shortages covered by staffing known to all young people. Both young people allocated new key workers”

**Excerpts from local authority Pre-placement report for MF Childrens' Home  
1 May 2019**

*“Just wanted to thank you for the therapy sessions you've done for me and B. B is doing brilliantly. I'm aware I haven't been able to engage in the sessions as much as I would've liked due to everything else I've got going on but I do feel I've benefitted too. Thanks again, appreciate all the work you've done so far Best wishes N”*

**Mother, 4 May 2019**

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*"Please accept our sincere thanks for the excellent support and hard work provided by N.F.C in general since A joined your facility, and mainly I would like to take this opportunity and thank Mr M for his effort and excellent communication and mediation when it gets to arranging for our visit and everything else, also for his professionalism and presentation in Lac Review Meetings, also many thanks for Mr J for his*

*attitude high level of experience when he speaks with myself or my wife whether on the phone or in person.*

*I would like to describe for a bit my experience with NFC and what maybe made me think this way.*

*The way NFC pay respect to our culture/Tradition and Faith.*

*The way NFC staff recognised A as a troubled Young man who need help instead of seeing him with a price tag number who generate money.*

*The way NFC care for A and fulfill his need.*

*The way NFC staff we met respect and welcome us when we visit.*

*And whenever we called NFC, staff in general always pick the phone up even if they on annual leave and they make sure our message passed to whoever on duty.*

*To be honest my list could go on forever and I wish we can thank you enough for accepting A early this year and for your hospitality ever since, which now I can say yes A saw that the grass greener on the other side and not what he experienced on his previous placement at Ingleside Croydon.*

*Please pass our warm thank you and appreciation to xxxxxx and all the rest I missed their names.*

*Many Thanks again to all of you guys".*

**Parents, 27 March 2019**

*"L and I would like to extend our own thanks to you for everything you have done for J. You have been kind and caring and helped him so much to prepare for his next stage. You have let him mature and been there when he has fallen, when he has been angry you have been able to be strong but fair.*

*This example is mirrored in the wonderful team that you have around him who have also contributed to J's welfare. We cannot thank you all enough. We miss him so much and so wish things were different. But this is about the bigger picture and we are sure that with all of us pulling together J can lead a life of fulfilment and happiness.*

*Many thanks again from the XXXX family*

**Family, March 2019**

*"Thank you so much for being there for me and listening to me whether I was grumpy, happy or a complete wreck. I truly hope you have an amazing Grinchmas"*

**Young person, Dec. 2018**

*"As anticipated it was a very difficult afternoon moving A. Unfortunately it did result in staff having to physically intervene to keep A safe when his behaviour significantly escalated. However, staff were skilled, professional and child centred throughout. The afternoon resulted in a positive outcome for A as this was managed without the police being called and he moved to his new placement".*

**Hampshire Social Worker, Nov. 2018**

# New Forest Care

*“I just wanted to say a massive thank you for always being there for me. You are amazing and have helped me so much, and even though I don’t see you anymore you still make me so much happier. I also want to say thank you for never leaving my side no matter what, and I appreciate it truly!”*

**Young person, 11 October 2018**

*“The manager clearly prioritises the young people’s needs, he is child-centred and young people enjoy spending time with him. Relationships with staff have been enhanced by limited staff turnover”.*

*“The staff report that they are well supported in their roles and that there are a range of helpful training opportunities available”.*

*“The Manager and staff team fully promote equality and diversity and work openly with the young people on areas such as identity. Staff have created an open atmosphere where young people feel able to request advice and support”.*

**WF Childrens’ Home, excerpts from Ofsted report, October 2018**

**Report prepared by Martina Lambeth-Wallace, Director/Secretary  
October 2019**