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# PARKWOOD HALL CO-OPERATIVE ACADEMY

## Parkwood Hall

### Co-operative Academy

"Growth through Personal and Social Learning"

## Statutory Policy File

# RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION POLICY

Index No: 16

*Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment'*

### Our Core Values



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## 1. INTRODUCTION: “WHAT IS RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION?”

Research<sup>1</sup> carried out by the NFER for the Local Government Association in 2011, identified a range of specific benefits which residential schools offer:

- the quality of education
- personalisation of learning
- opportunities for learning outside normal school hours
- supporting independence
- the development of social skills in a supportive environment
- the availability of specialist support and medical expertise

A key finding of the study was that parents and young people valued their residential education placement. Parents felt that residential education offers a wider range of opportunities, skills and support than mainstream placement or day provision in special schools, citing development of independent-living skills outside normal school hours as a particular strength. Parents who seek a boarding place at Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy do so because they appreciate the significant added value and essential difference that residential education can make for their child.

Residential Education at Parkwood Hall Co-Operative Academy consists of the following three separate components:

A) **A “Waking Day Curriculum”** – which is a 24 hour educational provision which is funded by an LA. It is therefore statutory provision that the student is entitled to receive for no charge. The waking day curriculum at PHCA currently runs from 9.00am on a Monday morning through to 3.30pm on a Friday afternoon. During this time the student in receipt of the waking day curriculum will receive an education which is the same as that for all day students, with the addition of direct teaching of independent-living skills and social skills, together with enhanced opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and personal attributes in a range of domestic and leisure activities. For a small number of students, the waking day curriculum incorporates the necessary provision and adaptations to meet their medical needs.

A waking day curriculum placement will be identified, and its specific content will be described, in an individual student’s Statement of Special Educational Needs or the Education Health and Care Plan, and is therefore of a statutory nature. It can only be varied or ceased by means of due legal process, whether through Annual Reviews or otherwise.

B) **Part-Time Boarding or the “Residential Education Experience”** – which is usually paid for by parents and families, but may also be partly or fully financed by local authorities. This combines aspects of the waking day curriculum (independent-living

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<sup>1</sup> Poet, H., Wilkinson, K., and Sharp, C. (2011). *Views of young people with SEN and their parents on residential education*. (LG Group Research Report). Slough. NFER

skills, social skills, range of activities) with aspects of respite and short-break provision (enabling the student to develop more as an individual in their own right and helping families to sustain themselves). Part-time boarding may be for 1, 2 or 3 nights per week and would be delivered under a written agreement, which can be varied or cancelled by any of the parties involved, depending on its particular terms.

C) **Short-break or respite provision, known as “Tree-Tops”** – this provision is largely aimed at providing short breaks for families during holiday periods and for some weekends (e.g. some Saturdays in the run up to Christmas). It is mainly day provision, but some overnight stays are offered, particularly during the long summer holiday. On these occasions, the general principles of residential education apply (emphasis on independent living and social skills, a stimulating range of activities). This is a charged service normally paid for by parents (see also below).

### **Charges for the “Residential Education Experience” and “Treetops”**

Both these services are non-statutory provision, but they both fall within the school’s primary educational purpose and mission as a charity.

The charges for these forms of non-statutory provision must be based on a “full-cost recovery” model, in accordance with our funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education. However, the school runs a voluntary fund, which has amongst its objects the aim of assisting students and families of limited means to access non-statutory activities. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, whose child or children would benefit from part-time boarding, can apply to the voluntary fund for financial assistance, which is distributed at the discretion of the fund’s Trustees. In some cases, they will be able to use direct payments or other sources of local authority funding to pay for or assist with the cost of part-time boarding. More information about charging for non-statutory provision, and sources of financial assistance, can be found in the academy’s charging policy.

### **After-school activities (also known as extended day provision)**

In the past we have been able to offer a limited number of after-school places on the residential activity programme, free of charge, to students who live locally and whose parents can collect them. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016, we have had to charge families for this activity programme. This is because we have to operate a “full-cost recovery” budget to comply with DfE rules. We will try to make use of grants and other means of additional funding to reduce the cost to parents as much as we can.

## 2. The Aims of Residential Education at Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy

The aims of residential education are the same as those of all education at Parkwood and are as shown in the following diagram:



At the centre of the aims is the school’s strap-line ‘Growth through Personal and Social Learning’. Alongside this, the residential staff team aim to develop individual potential, whether it is in terms of developing communication skills, or encouraging outdoor and sporting activities such as swimming and cycling. In order for full personal and social development to occur, the residential aspect of the school must offer a safe and caring environment, enabling the fundamental attributes of trust and self-esteem to grow.

One of the key aspects of residential education, and one upon which parents frequently place most value, is the development of independence skills, which are part of preparing the individual for life outside and after school. Whether it is learning to look after oneself, acquiring the ability to be a safe user of roads and transport or more advanced skills such as cooking, budgeting and learning to use a range of domestic appliances, all students are enabled to master independent living skills at their developmental level.

Finally, the benefits of therapies such as Speech, Language and Communication therapy and Occupational Therapy, which are such a valuable part of the offer during the standard school

day, are continued into the residential provision. The SaLT team and the OT work extended days and provide advice on programmes and solutions to problems for the residential team. A visitor to the residential provision will see the widespread use of symbolic communication (often called PECS) and evidence of attention to detail in respect of sensory issues and the development of gross and fine motor skills.

The involvement of the teaching staff in the residential environment is a key feature. Many teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) regularly work into the evenings on at least one day a week and help deliver activities. They also become involved in early morning schedules, helping get students up and ready for school. Similarly, all of the residential education team each spend at least one day per week supporting the students during the school day, particularly at lunch-times, when they sit with the students for the meal and then help run “enrichment” activities in the time between the end of lunch and the start of afternoon school. This ensures that the linking of education and the residential experience is as full and seamless as possible.

### 3. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is subject to two separate but overlapping inspection regimes; the first is the Section 5 Ofsted framework, which applies to all maintained schools and we were last inspected under this framework in November 2014. The overall judgement for the school was *Good*.

The school is also subject to Ofsted Welfare inspections and these take place at least once a year. The school is measured against a range of key standards, which together provide a measure of how well the residential provision meets the needs of the students. Our most recent Welfare inspection was in May 2016, when the residential education provision was rated as *Good*. The inspectors identified in their summary that:

- The residential provision plays a significant part in, and makes an essential contribution towards, the positive outcomes attained by pupils. These are successfully measured by individual, achievable targets identified by staff and motivated pupils.
- Staff are nurturing of pupils and develop excellent relationships. They create calm and relaxed environments in which pupils feel safe. Close liaison with parents and carers enable staff to work with them, and with specialist therapists, to support pupils to progress in all areas, *including social presentation, self-care and independence skills.* (my italics)

The school is also subject to regular checks and inspections in respect of Health and Safety, including Fire Safety, and Environmental Health and Hygiene. The approach to health and safety is generally described as “exemplary”, with students showing a high level of awareness of what constitutes safe practice. We have completed a programme of replacing fire doors throughout the school and a recent visit by Kent Fire and Rescue Service confirmed the school’s own risk assessment rating as low to medium risk.

We have also recently commissioned a DDA accessibility audit and we have begun a programme of adaptations to ensure that the school continues to be accessible to children and adults with varying disabilities. These include a disabled access ramp and motorised door from the building to the main playground, and the installation of a radio activated pager system so that students, staff and visitors with hearing impairment are alerted in the event of a fire alarm.

## **4. THE COMPONENTS OF RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION AT PARKWOOD HALL**

### **4.1. THE ACCOMMODATION**

#### **Sherwood House**

- Situated on the second floor of the West Wing of the main building, this house has flexible accommodation which can be used in the following ways:
- One large, single gender unit which has 15 bedrooms, two lounges, two kitchens, two large bathroom areas and a small sensory room.
- One large mixed-gender unit with separate bathroom and bedroom areas for girls and boys. The two areas are divided by access controlled doors during personal care times and overnight but the doors are opened outside of these times for social interaction and activities.
- Two smaller units which are divided by access controlled doors. A mixed gender unit which can accommodate up to 14 students (8 male, 6 female).
- The Sherwood programme has as an emphasis on developing independence and social skills through community living.
- Students play an active part in menu planning, shopping, food preparation and cooking.
- Students master the skills of doing their own laundry and basic housework.
- More emphasis on accessing activities in the wider community.

#### **Hyde House**

- This is a large unit on the first floor of the West Wing of the main building, this house has flexible accommodation which can be used in the following ways:
- One large, single gender unit which has 15 bedrooms, 2 lounges, a kitchen and two large bathroom areas.
- One large mixed-gender unit with separate bathroom and bedroom areas for girls and boys. The two areas are divided by access controlled doors during personal care times and overnight but the doors are opened outside of these times for social interaction and activities.

#### **Richmond House / Oak class**

- A smaller unit on the first floor of the East Wing of the main building.
- There are two rooms which are used as the teaching area during the day and after school as an extended day provision. There is a large bathroom area which includes a wet room and a small room which can be used as an individual bedroom if required.

- This class / unit offers an integrated approach with a highly personalised curriculum being organised on the house area for four students (at present) whose needs are best met with a very high staff input.

### **Knole House**

- A separate building located some distance away from the main building, within the school grounds.
- One large unit which has 14 bedrooms, 1 lounge, a conservatory, playroom, kitchen and five bathrooms.
- A large enclosed garden with a swing, playhouse and trampoline.
- The programme at Knole is designed for younger students and has a greater emphasis of using the outdoors to extend their learning.

#### **4.2. The Staff**

The Residential Education team consists of four groups of staff; Team Leaders, Key Workers, Residential Education Assistants (REAs) and Education Support Assistants (ESAs) . Key Workers work longer hours than REAs and take on a range of additional responsibilities, such as being a personal tutor to a small group of students, each of whom remains with the same personal tutor during their time at Parkwood. The REAs work the “core” residential hours of 7.30am to 9.30am and 3.30pm to 9.30pm. There are 7 full time and 1 part time Key workers, 1 Team Leader (who is a Key Worker with additional responsibilities) and 2 Senior Team-Leaders. There are approximately 4 REAs (full time equivalent) and a number Education Support Assistants who work both on house and in class on a rota between the hours of 07.30 to 21.30.

The residential team is led by Chris Allan, one of the two Deputy Principals, who is a qualified teacher and holds a Master’s degree in Autism Studies from the University of Birmingham. Chris’s role involves a focus on innovation and planning across the entire school, including the waking-day curriculum. The day-to-day management of the residential provision is shared between the 2 STLs and the AESL.

#### **4.3. The Activities**

There is a very wide range of activities on offer; from quiet play and simple social activities based on the “house” area, to community-based physical activities such as swimming and bowling. Wherever possible, community activities link with external agencies. Students are encouraged to make their own choices of activity, learning the importance of balancing stimulating activities with “down-time” and quiet time with friends. Although the ability of individual students to advocate for themselves may vary, the staff make sure that no student is forced to do activities which they don’t like, unless there is a key benefit to be derived from it (e.g. keeping one’s room tidy!).



#### **4.4. Arrangements for deputising for the Deputy Principal (Innovation and Planning)**

Chris Allan is one of two resident senior staff; the other is the Principal. One of the two are always on-call for any query or emergency. There is, therefore, clear continuity of cover from a very senior member of the School Leadership Group.

In addition, on each evening there is a designated Senior Residential Education Officer, whose job it is to ensure that activities are appropriately staffed and to handle minor issues that may arise. They are assisted by the Duty Teacher, who has clearly defined duties during the evening, such as; maintaining the lists of who is on-site and who is off-site and ensuring that the fire list is correct. The Duty Teacher also sleeps in, helping to maintain the minimum number of staff available to deal with any emergency, such as a night-time fire evacuation.

#### **4.5. Overnight Supervision**

There is always one member of the Residential Education team and the Duty Teacher sleeping in on two specified locations in the main building; (a) Sherwood, (b) Teacher sleep-in room. There is one Key Worker or Team Leader sleeping in at Knole House and two Waking Night Attendants (WNAs) there.

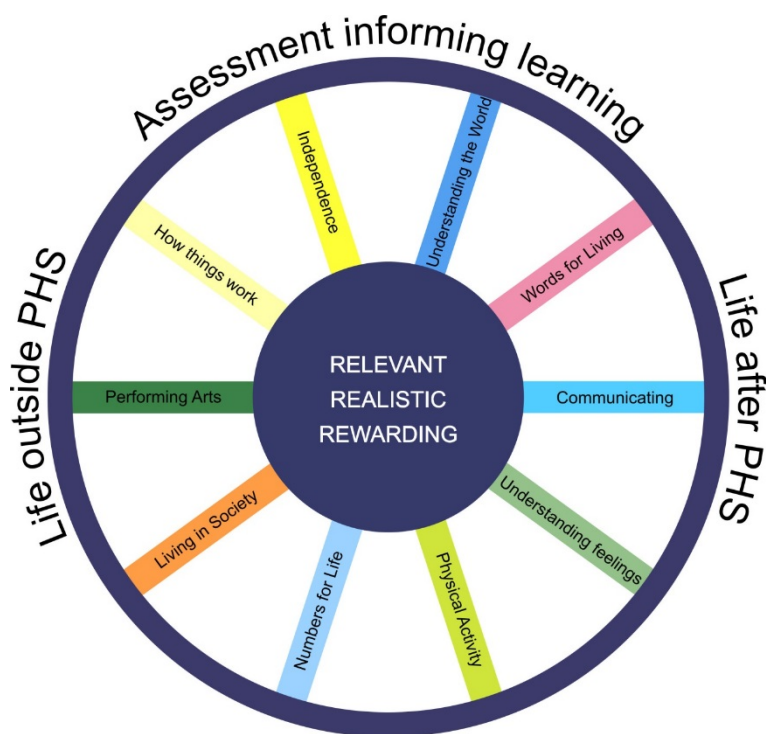
There are three WNAs in the main building. The Duty Teacher sleeps in the main building and the Principal and his family have a flat in the main building. In the event of a fire alarm or other night-time emergency, there are another eight members of staff living elsewhere on site who can provide support and assistance.

#### **4.6. The Curriculum**

The waking-day curriculum at Parkwood Hall Academy is designed to be Relevant, Realistic and Rewarding. It consists of 8 spokes on a wheel, as shown in the diagram below. The areas of learning relate to the areas of the National Curriculum, but we deliberately use very different terminology. For example, we use the term Words for Living to describe what is often called English or Literacy. The reason for this is that it reminds everyone that the aim is to teach and learn skills which are practical and based in real-life experiences. Similarly, rather than teach Science or Technology, we help students to learn How Things Work, whether those things are machines, processes (e.g. cooking) or plants and animals.

The wheel also draws everyone's attention to the importance of considering the wider context; of the life that students lead outside Parkwood, and the life they will lead when they move on from Parkwood. We aim to ensure that they have the skills, especially the life skills, they need.

#### 4.7. The Curriculum Model at Parkwood:



#### 4.8. Assessment and recording

Progress made by students is assessed in a number of ways.

Formative assessment is ensured by means of:

- Care plans, which incorporate essential medical information as well as the progress being made to individual goals.
- Joint review meetings are held termly to set and review targets which link the progress made in residential education with the progress made the classroom and which take cognisance of the abilities and aspirations within the home.
- Annual Reviews, the statutory process for evaluating and reviewing progress and provision for all statemented pupils, according to the Code of Practice.
- Assessment of the Independence 'spoke' of the curriculum wheel, in the same way as assessment of Words for Living (literacy) and Numbers for Life (numeracy) are carried out and recorded.
- Completion of the Pathways to Independence profile, which enables achievements to be recorded and learning targets to be set.

Summative assessment is assured through the use of the OCN accreditation framework, especially those aspects of independence skills which are practised and mastered in the residential context.

#### 4.9. Self-evaluation and feedback

All residential staff are encouraged to be self-reflective in their practice and receive regular supervision sessions which enable self-evaluation to be translated into improved practice.

More formal means of self-evaluation and feedback are assured through regular staff meetings, parents’ forum meetings, parental “surgeries”, parental surveys and student participation in School Council and House meetings.

**4.10. Role of the governing body**

The Governing Body plays a very full role in monitoring standards and providing a “critical friend” for the residential education team. A range of visits are made, the majority of which are unannounced. The outcomes of these visits are formally reported to the Curriculum and Strategy committee of the Governing Body and some Governors have specific roles, for example in relation to safeguarding and to overseeing the quality of the residential provision. At least one Governor is involved in all appointments and governors play a wider role in the appointment of senior residential staff. A growing number of Governors have undertaken specific training which strengthens their monitoring role. For example, several Governors have undertaken safer recruitment or safeguarding training. The Governing Body, like the staff group as a whole, now reflects more fully the diversity of the students and their families.

**APPROVAL**

This policy was approved by the Curriculum and Strategy Committee on behalf of the Governing Body of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy on:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors