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Welcome to Sunfield

Founded in 1931, Sunfield is an independent residential special school and charity with almost 90 years of experience in supporting boys and girls, aged 6 – 19 years, with severe and complex learning and behavioural needs, including conditions such as Autism Spectrum Condition.

We offer 40 residential placements, between 38 and 52 weeks, as well as an education day provision to young people nationally.

Our integrated teams in care, education, psychology and therapies work together, with children and their families, on one site, nestled within 58 acres of beautiful parkland grounds on the rural border of Worcestershire and the West Midlands.

We are registered and approved by the Department for Education (Reg No. 885/6024), registered with Ofsted as a Children's Home (Unique Ref. SC038435), and registered as a Charity in the United Kingdom (No. 527552).

Ruskin Mill Sunfield is a non-denominational school and our young people come from various religious and cultural backgrounds. We celebrate a variety of festivals woven into our weekly assemblies and work with the children, the staff teams, children's families and the placing authorities to ensure we are meeting their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural needs.

This Statement of Purpose provides an overview of Ruskin Mill Sunfield. It is our statutory duty to produce this document, under the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulation and Quality Standards 2015, but we hope it will also provide you with some helpful information about what we do.

Further information is available on our website at www.rmt.org/sunfield and in our prospectus, which you can download via our website. You can obtain a printed copy of our Prospectus from our Admissions Manager, who could also arrange for you to visit Ruskin Mill Sunfield, if you would like to find out more about us in person.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further information or would like to arrange a visit.

Sarah Marshall
Head of Care and Registered Manager

“The children are the heart of Ruskin Mill Sunfield. They inspire us to develop and motivate us to deliver the best holistic care and support possible. As a team we never under estimate how privileged we are to work with the children and each other.”
About Us

Vision, Values and Purpose

Our Vision
This is how we want our world to be:

That each child and young person has the potential to shape their own future through experiencing meaningful relationships with universe, earth and people. Through experiences provided by the home, land, craft and community.

Our Values
These are the things we value and aspire to in our work:

We value inclusive learning and living activities that integrate practical activity, thinking and emotions,
We value mutual respect and we strive to understand all people’s differences and uniqueness,
We value the capacity for re-imagination present in all people, towards positive change and development,
We value openness, goodwill, tolerance and treating individuals with dignity and respect,

Our Purpose
This is what we do for our children and young people with their various needs

Provide a holistic and nurturing living and learning experience with particular reference to Holistic Support and Care as developed by Ruskin Mill Trust.

To advance in the education of young people with learning difficulties and/or behavioural problems or special educational needs through training in the areas of arts, craft, agriculture and environmental sciences, with particular reference being given to the indications and insights of Rudolf Steiner in these areas,

To promote research into the practice and development in these areas of education provided that all research finding will be widely disseminated,

Work with families & carers to provide support, guidance and the opportunity to spend quality time with their child,

We do this so that:

We provide an opportunity for children and young people to learn and grow from experiences providing secure relationships,

Our practice is delivered through holistic support and care drawn from the seven life processes that Rudolf Steiner articulated.

To complement the experiences of the child we can underpin the child’s journey through a 24-hour curriculum incorporating experiences of the land, practical skills, and a therapeutic environment provided in the homemaking impulse of our care provision,

We provide an environment infused with rhythm and warmth, health and nourishment as the foundations for the development of trusting relationships,

Parents and carers are confident that their child’s needs are continuously met,

Parents and carers actively contribute to every stage of their child’s journey,

External state holders commission high quality personalised and value for money service for their young people,

Supporters know that their contribution makes a positive difference to individual lives,

The community comes to understand the potential for Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s children and young people to contribute to their environment.
Strategic Goals 2021 - 2022

Our Strategic Goals
This is what we will achieve in pursuit of our vision:

**Service Excellence**
Offering consistent, outstanding, and holistic care and support,
Offering differentiated and person centred provisions to meet each young person’s personal needs
To be a beacon of outstanding therapeutic practice within the special needs community

**People**
Team members feel proud to be part of the Ruskin Mill Sunfield community
Staff feel valued and recognised for their dedicated and expert contributions
Staff are highly skilled and are supported to continually develop their knowledge and understanding

**Financial Sustainability**
Ruskin Mill Sunfield is financially sound and invests in the future development of the provision we can offer

**Strategic Partnerships**
Ruskin Mill Sunfield works with and meets the high expectations of key stakeholders and trustees
Ruskin Mill Sunfield continues to maintain and grow collaborative partnerships and welcomes
wider opportunities for joint working
Board of Trustees

CHAIR OF THE TRUSTEES - Helen Kippax MSc, HNC:
Helen has a diverse background in fine arts, social care and educational development including helping to establish a Steiner School in Sheffield. Helen undertook an HNC in Fine Arts as a mature student and set up and ran her own gallery in Sheffield. Helen joined Ruskin Mill Trust in 2004 and was tasked with setting up the Trust’s third centre, Freeman College in Sheffield. Helen was Principal of Freeman College until 2012 when she became a Trustee of Ruskin Mill Trust and Senior Mentor. Helen has gained an MSc in Practical Skills Therapeutic Education from University West of England and continues to support and research the method of PSTE as a Trustee for RMT. Helen provides mentorship to senior leaders across the Trust.

FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE CHAIR OF RUSKIN MILL TRUST - Aonghus Gordon MEd, FRSA
Aonghus has a distinguished track record of development and leadership of several ground-breaking charities that provide high quality environments and opportunities for people with disabilities. He is passionate about the need for people to break out of dependency and marginalisation, believing that everyone has the potential to shape their own future.

After training as a potter, Aonghus started Ruskin Mill Trust in 1981 as a centre for cultural development, a small project linked to a nearby specialist school in Gloucestershire. It is now one of the UK’s leading educational charities working with learning disabilities, with twelve centres across England, Wales and Scotland. Aonghus has pioneered its unique method of Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE), inspired by Rudolf Steiner, John Ruskin and William Morris’s ideas about social renewal, healthy human development and the importance of art, crafts and land work. Thousands of young people have benefited from this integrative education method.

Aonghus is the founding Trustee of both Ruskin Mill Trust and Ruskin Mill Land Trust, which has an impressive reputation for acquiring and restoring redundant iconic industrial buildings and transforming them into educational and cultural centres, winning many awards and commendations. The Trust has acquired and been gifted over 900 acres of farmland, woods and gardens, all looked after using biodynamic principles, a strong area of interest for Aonghus who has championed biodynamic food ecology for children and students.

In 2013 the Trust’s research centre was launched in a bespoke building whose design was informed by the Trust’s PSTE method, and drawn from the foundation stone mosaic in the Ruskin Mill Gallery, a project that was put together by unemployed youth and students with learning differences in 1982. The Field Centre sponsors extensive research into the benefits of craft, biodynamic agriculture, the outdoor curriculum in education through action research, and the therapeutic approach to specialist education. Aonghus has forged many international partnerships, including the development of a Master’s degree in collaboration with Lillehammer Inland University, Norway and, with American colleagues, the establishment of a college for young people on the autistic spectrum in California, at the Meristem Centre.

Aonghus is a Trustee and Board Member of numerous charities and was awarded Social Entrepreneur of the Year for the South of England by Ernst and Young in 2005. He is a charismatic motivational speaker and is not afraid to challenge his audience, which has led to frequent requests to lecture and run workshops in the USA, Europe, China, Russia and the Middle East. He is a Companion of Ruskin’s Guild of St George and, like Ruskin, has a fascination for meteorology and geology.

TRUSTEE - Vivian Griffiths
Vivian brings knowledge and experience of biodynamic agriculture and Camphill Communities to Ruskin Mill Trust. Vivian was involved in Camphill Communities since 1972 where he started as a young co-worker at Botton Village. His passion for gardening led him to establish and work on various Camphill and community gardens as well as gaining a National Certificate in Horticulture from Somerset College of Agriculture in 1976. Over the years, Vivian has helped develop Camphill Communities throughout England, and continued his biodynamic agricultural practices. Most recently, Vivian has been a Garden Volunteer at Brantwood, John Ruskin’s home in the Lake District. He has been heading up The Biodynamic Step by Step Gardening Courses, which began in 2018, at Brantwood and nearby Ulverston. As a Trustee, Vivian has responsibility for quality assuring Biodynamic Practices across the Trust.

TRUSTEE - Constantin Court
Constantin joined Ruskin Mill Trust in 2007. Constantin has a vast experience in social and educational establishments, working across different regulative frameworks in organisations who apply the insights of Rudolf Steiner in a contemporary way. Constantin has worked with children and adults in Germany, Palestine, Israel, Switzerland and Egypt before coming to the UK. He was instrumental in developing Ruskin Mill Trust’s first school, Brantwood Special School and is now Director of Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE) Pedagogy and a member of the Executive Team Ruskin Mill Trust with responsibility for quality assuring Practical Skills Therapeutic Education and overseeing the Trust’s staff development and training programme, Hiram Education and Research Team (HEaRT).
TRUSTEE - Toby Zundel
Toby is a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. He has been working with children and adolescents for 20 years and currently leads a specialist NHS CAMHS service in London that provides an alternative to inpatient care in the form of a day service and outreach team. Toby has also undertaken extensive research work on subjects that include engaging adolescents who self-harm and intensive community treatment, including two randomised controlled trials. He is widely published and has co-authored a book, *Self-harm in young people, a Therapeutic Assessment manual.* Toby has been a Psychiatric Advisor to Ruskin Mill Trust since 2014, supporting a wide range of students and advising staff. He brings his expertise in mental health and child and adolescent psychiatry to the Ruskin Mill Sunfield Board of Trustees.

TRUSTEE - Tara Gratton
Tara started her career in education in 1992 as a teacher in a primary school. In 2004, Tara took up her first Head Teacher role and over the following years has worked with a range of schools and education federations, as a head and executive head, to improve their outcomes and quality. Tara has now developed a proven track record of leading outstanding schools, and for supporting and transforming schools that are struggling. Tara has been a safeguarding lead, member of a local safeguarding board, governor and board member for a range of other educational establishments and has a strong understanding of governance and compliance. Tara is the Trust's Director of Schools, and is bring her skills and extensive experience to the Ruskin Mill Sunfield Board.

**Senior Leadership Team**

RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL – Leigh Bown
Leigh Bown has 20 years' experience working in education and social care. Following his BSc Degree in Health Community and Social care with Organisational Development, he specialised in Paediatric Occupational Therapy with a specific passion for Sensory Integration Dysfunction. Leigh then spent a number of years working with young people at Cotswold Therapeutic Community and School. Here Leigh developed a sound knowledge of Child Development with a specific interest in Attachment Disorder.

Leigh started his management journey here before joining Ruskin Mill Trust where he broadened his knowledge base away from just mainstream science and education and saw how his prior knowledge was being embedded through the Trusts unique method. Leigh then left the Trust to learn more about regulation and also to spend more time with his family.

Leigh spent 4 years with the Care Quality Commission, also working alongside Ofsted on some joint projects focussing on leaving care. Whilst at the CQC Leigh became one of only 3 people nationally to achieve the diploma in quality assuring regulated activity through the CQC academy. He then branched out within the CQC to work with the Strategy and Intelligence directorate, supporting the development of national policy and what is now the current CQC inspection methodology.

Having always enjoyed working with community groups and stakeholders Leigh represented CQC in leading speak out groups discussing on public engagement of those that use services and their families. It's through this process Leigh strengthened his resolve to always provide the best possible transformative education, care and support.

Leigh was invited as a guest speaker on SGS College Level 5 leadership and management course for Children's and Adults Social Care. This led to spending a further 2 years supporting the redesign and delivery of that course whilst still working full time with CQC.

In 2017 Leigh re-joined RMT, remaining with the CQC as a Specialist Advisor. Leigh has supported the journey to full regulatory compliance across all adult services and as of 2019 began overseeing children's services also. Leigh had been involved since Ruskin Mill Sunfield was taken into the Trust, supporting the journey of improvement from various distances, but now looks forward to being strongly involved as the provisions Responsible Individual.

HEAD OF CARE AND REGISTERED MANAGER– Sarah Marshall
Sarah has 20 years’ experience of working with children within therapeutic services who display a range of challenging behaviour including attachment disorder, autism, self-harm, personality disorder and specifically from 2009 as an Ofsted Registered Manager has supported teenage boys manage and control impulsive behaviour’s and thought processes in relation to Sexually Harmful Behaviour, allowing them to successfully transition into adulthood. Sarah has a proven track record of achieving and maintaining a stable staff team and leading as a model home within an organisation. Sarah holds a HND in Health and Social Care and also a BA Social Welfare Degree. Sarah has vast experience of admissions, transitions and working in close partnership with a vast number of Local Authorities and Ofsted. Sarah works with senior leadership team and the safeguarding team which she is a member of both, they promote staff emotional resilience through debriefing and systemic reflective practice approaches.
HEAD OF SCHOOL – Chris Lore
Chris Lore has been employed as a senior leader at Ruskin Mill Trust since 2016 in a number of different provisions. Before working at Ruskin Mill, Chris has taught and managed at the primary, secondary, and university level in both mainstream and special education settings. He has a passion for a holistic and practical approach to education and a firm belief that all young people have a right to be supported to achieve their potential.

HEAD OF PSYCHOLOGY & THERAPY – Maria Peris
Maria is a Counselling Psychologist registered with the HCPC and BPS. She started her career working with adults suffering from a range of psychiatric disorders, but for the past 16 years has been working with children and adolescents experiencing social, emotional and mental health needs. Maria is trained in CBT, DBT and DDP, and uses a combination of these therapies when working with the children and young people, and the adult support network around the child. Maria has experience in leading Therapy teams and co-ordinating the therapy services in different provisions. Maria joined Ruskin Mill, based at Ruskin Mill Sunfield, in November 2019.

HEAD OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT - Richard Tucker
Richard has 25 years’ experience working with young people with learning difficulties. He has had experience at support, management and senior management level. He is passionate about the possibilities of Rudolf Steiner education in our contemporary context and has been involved in training and development for over a decade. He joined the training and development team at Ruskin Mill Trust in 2014 overseeing the training needs at Ruskin Mill College and Plas Dwbl College and became part of the team at Ruskin Mill Sunfield in September 2017. Richard has an MSC in Practical Skills Therapeutic Education.

SCHOOL FARM MANAGER - Ed Berger
Ed has over 20 years’ experience in biodynamic farming and gardening in social, therapeutic and educational settings. He joined Ruskin Mill Sunfield in 2018, moving within Ruskin Mill Trust from Vale Head Farm, the Glasshouse College’s farm in nearby Kinver. Here, over a period of 14 years he led the development of the land from a dilapidated equestrian centre to a thriving biodynamic farm, with a focus on therapeutic education for young people with special educational needs. Ed’s oversees the land development at Ruskin Mill Sunfield, working collaboratively with a team of land based tutors to re-imagine the site both as a working farm/estate and a place of learning for the children.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD AND PASTORAL MANAGER - Niall Crawford
Niall joined the team at Ruskin Mill Sunfield as Safeguarding Lead and Pastoral Manager in January 2020. He has 25 years’ experience of working with children and young people in Educational settings through teaching, management and advisory roles. For the Last 14 years he has worked in Birmingham for the local authority and more recently for Services for Education. Over his time in Birmingham he has lead on a teacher training programme, managed the induction of Newly Qualified Teachers and trained staff at all levels in safeguarding. Supporting schools and settings to deliver their statutory obligations and meet all requirements around child protection. His expertise in PSHE and Citizenship lead to Niall working with government bodies on the development of new curriculum content as well as developing qualifications for pupils to work towards in these subject areas. Niall has project managed many interventions for schools that promote health and well-being and help schools develop a curriculum that is rich in culture, growing and supporting a healthy lifestyle. Prior to working in Birmingham he worked as a PE teacher for 11 years in Gloucestershire in a large secondary school.

ADMINISTRATION MANAGER AND HEALTH & SAFETY LEAD – Michelle Elliott
Michelle Elliott joined the team at Ruskin Mill Sunfield as Administration Manager and Health & Safety Lead in January 2020. She has over 9 years’ experience working in a similar role working in an independent school for children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, communication difficulties, complex needs and challenging behaviour with additional responsibilities over the years including Exams Officer, SENCO Administrator and Designated Safeguarding Lead. She holds a Foundation Degree in Child and Adolescent Mental Health but believes there is always more to learn in the world of SEN. Michelle has a Son with Asperger’s and holds valuable life experience enabling her to empathise with many of our Parents/Carers about their journeys leading to Ruskin Mill Sunfield and is passionate about raising awareness of special needs and an understanding of ASD.
Care Team

- Regional Residential Manager
- Responsible Individual
- Head of Care and Residential Manager
  - Home Manager
  - Home Manager
  - Home Manager
  - Home Manager
  - Home Manager
  - Home Manager
- Deputy Home Manager
- Assistant Home Manager
  - Care Support Worker
  - Learning Support Worker
  - Night Care Support Worker

Children
What We Do

Referrals, Admission and Transitions

Ruskin Mill Sunfield has a designated Admissions Team that supports the process of referrals and admissions into Ruskin Mill Sunfield. This includes the Regional Director, Head of School, Head of Care, Head of Psychology, Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Admissions Manager. Referrals and admissions can occur throughout the year, and start dates are dependent on when the placement is needed, the length of time the child needs for transition, and the availability of a compatible vacancy. Ruskin Mill Sunfield takes admissions for young people between the ages of 6 – 19.

Parents and local authorities are encouraged to visit Ruskin Mill Sunfield to see first-hand what we can offer. These visits are led wherever possible by members of the Admission Team and provide the opportunity to meet with staff from a range of departments and explore how a child’s individual and specialist needs would be met at Ruskin Mill Sunfield.

Assessment process and criteria
Admission to Ruskin Mill Sunfield is based on a home being able to meet the needs contained within a child's Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) and on the assessed compatibility of other children already living within the home.

Assessment visits are carried out by members of the Admissions Team, a minimum of two members are part of this assessment visit. This visit will mostly take place in the child’s current provision and involve consultation with their current supporting staff as well as with family (a separate visit may be made if needed). We also look at all recent reports such as LAC/CIN reports, EHCP, current school/care reports including risk assessments, behaviour, health and care plans. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for the child to come to Ruskin Mill Sunfield to take part in some activities at Ruskin Mill Sunfield to help support our assessment. Based on the outcomes of our initial assessment, provisional risk assessment and/or on-site assessment, the admissions team will make a final decision at the weekly admissions meeting on whether we can offer that child a placement.

Children and Young People we support
Ruskin Mill Sunfield can meet the needs of young people with complex learning needs, Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Developmental Delay, Down’s Syndrome and other associated complexities such as epilepsy. However, as every child is completely unique, we will always assess every child individually.

Compatibility
We recognise that young people with requiring residential placements will often have associated challenging behaviour. We always carry out compatibility assessments, to gauge the likely effects of any child's potential admission on the existing group of young people, and the likely impact of those young people's needs on the new child. Young people who find it difficult to live with others are less likely to be appropriately placed in our group living environments and may require more individualised living and learning areas. We promote therapeutic social homely environments.

Restrictions
Ruskin Mill Sunfield offer swift, well-planned admissions, providing we have a suitable vacancy. Our respite provision is only offered to young people who are already attending school as a day pupil or have already been referred for a residential placement but are awaiting a suitable longer-term vacancy.

Placement Plans and Reviews
Placement plans and admission documentation for young people joining Ruskin Mill Sunfield are agreed prior to an admission, so our staff can be prepared, and plans completed, before a child arrives. Each admission has a carefully planned transition and induction phase. A full assessment is undertaken during the first three months of all new placements (see Therapies section). A formal review is held after one month, and again at the end of the three-month assessment period. Review meetings continue on a six-monthly basis, in which a child's placement plan and progress is monitored and reviewed.

The child's EHCP and placement plan will be regularly reviewed and, depending on the placement arrangements, this may be led by Ruskin Mill Sunfield, local authority Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) or social workers. It is at this meeting that any amendments to their EHCP can be recommended. The child, their family and any departments involved with the child can contribute to this review through reports and/or attendance.
Transitions to Adult Services

Transition planning for each young person starts in Year 9 (age 14) in line with SEN Code of Practice. Every child has an individual Transition Plan to support and monitor their progress into Adulthood. The transition plan captures the skills a young person needs to develop, experiences they may wish to try (e.g. college, work-related activities) and captures the child’s wishes for their future in a range of areas (e.g. living environments, leisure opportunities etc.). Parents are also encouraged to contribute to the plan to outline their wishes for their child’s future. This plan is reviewed six monthly at key review meetings to record progress and amend the support that may be needed as a child reaches adulthood.

Home managers and keyworkers work alongside designated local authority personnel to ensure that a new provision is identified within a timely manner allowing for a transition period (as identified in the Transition Plan) to ensure a smooth change of provision for the child. As Ruskin Mill Sunfield is part of the wider Ruskin Mill Trust (RMT), there are provisions within the Trust that may be suitable for young people to move onto after Ruskin Mill Sunfield. This will be identified early and the Home Manager will work alongside the wider Ruskin Mill Admissions Teams to plan for this transition.

Once the new provision has been identified, whether within RMT provisions or externally, an individual Transition Support Plan is created in agreement with the young person (where they are able to contribute), parents, Ruskin Mill Sunfield, new provider and Social worker/LA lead transition worker. This support plan clearly outlines the time period of transition and what each party needs to do ensure the successful transition of the young person to a new provision. All support plans are person-centred and monitored frequently through the transition period so amendments can be made as needed depending on the young person’s reaction to their transition.

Exclusions

Ruskin Mill Sunfield does not normally ‘exclude’ young people. We accept that young people with ASD go through phases of behaviour and we will strive to continue to support them effectively during this difficult time. In the unusual event that a young person’s behaviour poses too high a risk to other young people and staff, Ruskin Mill Sunfield will support the placement for as long as is possible, to allow a range of behaviour strategies to be fully explored. If these are not successful, we will try to maintain the placement until a new placement can be found. However, our ‘duty of care’ means that we cannot maintain the placement indefinitely and, on very rare occasions, it may become necessary to ask for a young person to be immediately removed or a period of 28 days’ notice will be given. In these exceptional circumstances, we strive to work in collaboration with families and authorities and will only make this decision if it is in the best interest of the child and safety.
Facilities and Leisure Activities

Landscape

Ruskin Mill Sunfield School and Children’s Home is set within over 52 acres of classic English farmland, with hedges, meadows and large mature trees surrounding the school and residential homes. There is a wide diversity of ecosystems within this, including woodlands, wetlands and grassland. We care for a variety of livestock including sheep, goats, cattle, pigs and hens. There is also a historical walled garden and 19th century parkland around the school itself. We encourage every child and young person at Ruskin Mill Sunfield to spend time during their day outdoors; in the gardens, with the livestock on the farm and in the woodlands.

Engaging in the natural environment, experiencing the seasons, helping to grow vegetables and fruit and meeting and caring for farm animals all provide opportunities for individual development. This can begin with early experiences of sensory engagement (e.g. touching, tasting, feeling), moving through to making relationships (e.g. feeding a sheep), through to contributing to the wider school community and locality (e.g. helping to harvest and pack vegetables for the school kitchens or shop). The farm environment offers the opportunity for a myriad of entry points depending on where the child and young person’s journey begins at Ruskin Mill Sunfield and, through bespoke tutor led sessions, the child and young person’s individual learning needs are planned and catered for. To do this, carefully designed activities and infrastructure are created to give the safest and most accessible opportunities for engagement in the farm landscape for our children and young people. Engagement in the natural world is an integral part of our educational offer which contributes to the child and young person’s development of integration, understanding and well-being. Our little piece of the natural world, our farmland and grounds, are viewed as an educational journey that the child and young person can move through at their own pace whilst at Ruskin Mill Sunfield.

Ruskin Mill Sunfield School

We offer spacious classrooms in the main hub of the school building with the addition of smaller classes nestled within the grounds of Ruskin Mill Sunfield and a short distance from the main school. The classroom that young people settle into is decided upon through assessment and compatibility. The school promotes the practical skills curriculum and has classes that accommodate pottery, felting and weaving with views over the countryside, the rooms are light allow for movement across the classroom. In addition, there are also well equipped rooms for cookery, arts and games. Ruskin Mill Sunfield followed an Independent School Curriculum which runs 24 hours and is extended beyond the school environment and into the homes that are situated within the beautiful grounds. Ruskin Mill Sunfield also promotes a farm classroom, a large theatre, lecture room and various meeting rooms. The children have access to a range of technology to support their communication and learning, including items such as iPads, talking tiles and other Alternative and Augmentative Communication aids. These aids to promote a child having a voice and promoting choice and independence are used beyond the school, into the homes and communal areas and offices.

Therapy at Sunfield

Sunfield’s on-site therapy team offer holistic, comprehensive and detailed assessment and therapy provision, which is individually tailored to each child and young person that we work with. Our specialist team comprises a range of disciplines including: psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, music therapy, including Eurhythmie, therapeutic art, massage therapy and colour light therapy which are inspired by the educational and therapeutic insights of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925).

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Our therapy team support our care, land and practical skills curriculum (PSTE) in order that our children and young people are able to engage as much as possible with the wide ranging therapeutic aspects of the 24-hour curriculum. These targeted therapies include one to one sessions, which aim to support the integration of cognitive, emotional and bodily development (Head, Heart and Hand). These therapies aid our children and young people in being more comfortable in ‘being, exploring and contributing’ to the world.

By engaging with the world around them our learners come to know the world and our teams are able to support them in the context of the land, education and home setting. As our children and young people take their journey at Sunfield our team offer targeted therapy which supports the therapeutic efficacy of our PSTE method and Fields of Practice which cover our land, residential and educational offer.
Our holistic therapeutic offer is supported by unique multidisciplinary meetings which seek to engage with the deeper aspects of the individuality of the child or young person and the dialogic nature of the educational and therapeutic encounter. The unique viewpoint of our specialist therapists contributes to building a holistic, supportive and therapeutic picture of our children and young people, a picture which is shared by the teams working with them.

Our primary aim is always to engage with the potential of our children and young people by offering specialist support within the therapeutic offer afforded by our holistic curriculum, so that the individuality of each individual undertaking their journey at Sunfield can shine.

Family Accommodation.
Placements are offered to children and their families who have all arrived at Ruskin Mill Sunfield having travelled their own individual journey and so we employ to work closely with families and authorities to ensure that children in our care strive to the best of their ability during their time with us. We understand how difficult a family situation may be and so we are fortunate to be able to offer family accommodation to those closest to the child to support the journey and make life a little easier for a moment. We are lucky to offer two well-equipped dedicated family accommodation, which can be booked in advance to allow parents a place to stay at the time of admission into our residential provision, these offer families peace of mind that their child has settled well in the first few hours. The family accommodations are also ideal if families have travelled some distance to reach us and need a place to rest before a journey, or simply wish to book to celebrate the child’s birthday, Christmas or spend quality time with them. These can accommodate up to six people, the first has two twin bedrooms, a lounge, kitchen and a shower room with toilet. The second is slightly larger and with two en-suite bedrooms, each sleeping up to four people, a large lounge with bed-settee and kitchen/dining room.

Dining
We have a large communal dining room at Ruskin Mill Sunfield, offering a variety of organic meals which are served at lunchtime during the school and working week. Our catering department has the top 5* award for food hygiene. Young people during their school day are encouraged to eat in the dining room and are encouraged to be able to choose what they wish to have for lunch. The lunchtime menu is displayed and changed daily to meet the child’s communication needs. Opportunities exist for some children who are able to become involved in preparing, ordering and serving food in the dining room. Other meals such as breakfast, evening meals and meals over the weekend are prepared and served in the residential homes, promoting the sense of warmth and an inviting ambience. We have a farm and walled garden developed within Ruskin Mill Sunfield, where we grow and serve our own produce through meals that are served across Ruskin Mill Sunfield and promote the belief of nutritious biodynamic organic foods and the importance of “seed to table”. It is important that the young people at Ruskin Mill Sunfield lead enriched and healthy lifestyles and due to the complexities of their disabilities and comorbid diagnoses it is not always possible to simply treat each symptom in isolation. Therefore, it is necessary that Ruskin Mill Sunfield approach each individual in a manner that treats the ‘whole’ and not a segment. Ruskin Mill Sunfield staff will have training in good nutrition and diet, they will have advice and support from an Anthroposophical nurse who will provide training and advice.

Transport and leisure
Experience and opportunity is promoted within Ruskin Mill Sunfield, although we have a range of facilities available within our extensive grounds and resources, we wish to allow children to have the freedom to experience the community and the activities and experiences that children should have through activities, interests and developing social and independence skills. For this, we encourage staff to develop the curriculum so that children learn from experience and encourage them to be supported in doing this. We have a range of vehicles available to support this being possible.

Cultural and religious events
Each young person’s placement plan details their individual cultural and religious needs and how these needs should be supported, as identified by their family/main carers. All of the main cultural and religious feast days and festivals are collectively celebrated with appropriate food, music and dancing. A Festival calendar is run across the year and families are invited to attend events as they arise.
Residential Accommodation

Here at Ruskin Mill Sunfield we believe that it is vital that all children benefit from a nurturing, therapeutic environment which gives the ability to lead lifestyles that are holistically led incorporating health, education and new experiences so that disability is not what defines them as a person.

We work extremely hard as a care team to underpin the child’s journey here at Ruskin Mill Sunfield, by moulding what surrounds them. This has been nurtured by embedding training and practice to support the vision that we hold. Practically and theoretically our practice is delivered through holistic support and care which is drawn from the seven life processes, thus guiding individuals with training and an understanding of nutrition and diet being woven into all aspects of the homes and our land.

With support and guidance of trust nurses and dieticians, we ensure the home menus are healthy and balanced and that the ingredients are of good quality. The young people and staff plan, cook and eat the meals in the homes in a welcoming, warming and nourishing environment as one, and this has been greatly received and enjoyed. Care and education join together and commit to the development of the vision and the greater understanding of curative education and care which we can take to embed into practice both in the homes and the school.

As a baseline for growth, we provide through care an opportunity for children to learn and to grow from experiences providing secure relationships. At Ruskin Mill Sunfield the growth to serve the children is delivered via the practice of Ruskin Mill Trust and working to develop the will in order to develop the sense of self. It is the belief and the understanding that the behaviour of each child is moulded by what is around them, and so our practice is delivered through holistic support and care drawn from the seven life processes that Rudolf Steiner articulated. This also incorporates experiences of the land, practical skills, holistic medicine and therapeutic education.

To complement the experiences drawn from the seven fields of practice which underpin the child’s journey we offer a 24-hour curriculum. Thus warmth and nourishment are taken into our homes, this being particularly important to the heart of Ruskin Mill Sunfield and the trusting relationships which are nurtured here. All of this is delivered through a pedagogical understanding of hand, head, and heart.

Trusting relationships are nurtured in the expectation that we hold in relation to the staff we welcome to work within our setting, with their reliability and honesty, which is reciprocated in their own unique relationships.

Personalisation

We welcome a child's bedroom to be their own, for choice to be promoted through the décor and the furnishings. Bedrooms can be furnished with the ideas and wishes of children and families and should offer a place of comfort and relaxation. The homes are nurturing and inviting, homely, warm, and decorated to reflect the level of care that is given.
Our Homes

Aspen Cottage – Home for 5 children
Cottage Manager - Wendy Spruce

Aspen Cottage is where young people reside from the ages 10-17 years, the young people have severe and complex learning needs. Each young person has a fully furnished bedroom within which the young people have been encouraged to pick colour schemes and what theme they would like within their rooms. Within Aspen cottage, we promote the works of Rudolf Steiner, we integrate the 7 fields of practice which include; practical skills, biodynamic ecology, holistic support and care and genius loci. We promote the young people to look at the cycle of life by integrating activities in learning in outdoor spaces, the young people take part in collecting eggs from the onsite biodynamic farm and then cooking these eggs on the home making food, which shows the children the full cycle of life. Within this, the young people have weekly meetings as a group where they discuss and input ideas which they feel should be a part of the home alongside working together to create a weekly food menu which they all help to cook. We support the young people with their self-help and independence skills through holistic care and support, we use work alongside many internal departments to ensure that the young people strive and reach their full potential.

Breccia Cottage – Home for 7 children
Cottage Manager - Tracey Cox

Breccia Cottage is a seven bedded home that is split into two sides, this enables a more individualised approach in supporting the young people who live on the home to achieve their ambitions and potential. Our home reflects the individual needs of each young person. Each young person’s area is decorated to suit their needs and to create a homely feel and atmosphere, but keeping in mind of what they young people can manage. We provide individualised and personalised care for the young people that puts their needs at the centre of what we do. We aim to encourage and build on their skills when out in the community. We aim to provide our young people with the resilience to cope with challenges and difficulties that they experience. Our home ensures that our young people are provided with support (appropriate to their age and understanding) to communicate their views, wishes and feelings and participate as fully as possible in all aspects of their care planning and daily care. We celebrate and incorporate different cultural religions and celebrations, we believe it is important to teach our young people the importance of a healthy balanced diet and encourage them to have a part in meal planning. We encourage and support the relationships between our young people and their families, as we feel this is helps the well-being of our young people. We ensure that each child and young person living on Breccia has a personal Key worker who takes an added interest in their care and their progress.

Chester Cottage – Home for 2 children
Cottage Manager – Tim O’Brien

Chester Cottage is an individualised living environment and currently has one young person residing, it is a new home within the organisation that follows the ethos of the wider community and other residential homes. Allowing young people to access the wider community and develop independent living skills. The Home is furnished to meet the individual needs of the young person and provide them with a comfortable place of their own. The young person is encouraged to be involved in decisions made in the home including what will be on the menu and what leisure activities they would like to participate in. Weekly home meetings and keyworker sessions are used to promote this process alongside celebrating and incorporating different cultural religions and celebrations, we integrate the 7 fields of practice which include; practical skills, biodynamic ecology, holistic support and care and genius loci.
Klinter Cottage – Home for 8 children
Cottage Manager – Vincent Powell

Klinter Cottage, a home for young people aged 13 to 19, provides care and support to young people as part of the transitional process into adult services. The young people placed within Klinter have a range of needs that are supported by a committed team of staff. The home has five bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms, as well as three self-contained flats, which provide young people with ability to continue to grow and develop independent living skills, which can be utilised within adult transitions and throughout the young person’s life. The home has a “communication room” with access to Skype, as well as “the hub” where young people can access information relating to who comes to the home, the children’s guide and complaints procedures. We promote the works of Rudolf Steiner, we integrate the 7 fields of practice which include; practical skills, biodynamic ecology, holistic support and care and genius loci. The home ensures that young people’s choice, vision, and views are taken into account not only in respects to their own lives through keyworker sessions but though home meetings, where bigger decisions relating to the home are made. Each young person is supported at their individual level to communicate their wants, needs, choices and opinions using templates created with the home for recording of keyworker sessions utilising pictures, symbols and acknowledging achievements made by the young people at all levels that weaves through into the individual care planning for the young person. The home promotes active community participation, ongoing growth and development to achieve positive outcomes for all young people placed on the home. The homes dedicated and diverse team share insight and knowledge as well as a wealth of experience within the sector to provide a high quality of care and support. Klinter have its own large garden with swings and trampolines so that young people are able to access activities that promote sensory stimulation, this overlooks beautiful countryside views with access to the farm.

“In Klinter, we aspire for our young people to grow and develop within all areas of their lives. We want our young people to enjoy their lives and to progress and excel in their achievements. We want our young people to access the wider community as much as possible and aspire to gain the views, wishes and opinions of the young people”

Linden Cottage – Home for 5 children
Cottage Manager – Tim O’Brien

Linden Cottage is a warm & inviting home, where we strive to ensure that each individual young person reaches their full potential, by promoting independence and life skills. We believe they have the right to be healthy, happy, safe and secure, and to feel loved, valued and respected. Linden House is a mixed house, that can accommodate up to four young people, between the ages of 6 to 19 years old, with a varied level of abilities, and specific learning difficulties including Autism, Sensory Delay Disorder and Visual Impairment. Each young person in the home is encouraged to take an active role in decorating and personalising their own bedroom, through pre-admission discussions with families and carers and through weekly keyworker sessions. Within the home we have two lounges, which are spacious & comfortable, both rooms promote a homely atmosphere and encourage social interaction and learning. While also giving opportunities for story reading, film watching and listening to music. There is also a large selection of toys and activities within each room, to encourage and promote play. The home also benefits from an IT Zone, which enables our young people to access the internet safely & freely and where appropriate use skype. We also have a designated craft area, where we encourage both free play and structured activity. Through the use of a variety of materials such as paints, clay, felt and crayons. We have a large kitchen and dining space within the home, and young people are encouraged to eat within this space and share a social meal around a large dining table. Meals are prepared fresh each day, and young people are encouraged to make choices within the menu, and where appropriate help with the shopping and food preparation. Weekly home meetings and keyworker sessions are used to promote this process, and we strongly embed the nutrition policy and promote and encourage healthy, local sourced, organic biodynamic food, while also tailoring meals to individual specific dietary needs. The home has a large enclosed private garden surrounded by magnificent trees theming in an abundance of nature and wildlife. All our young people are encouraged and given the opportunity and appropriate level of support to freely explore the garden and the wider grounds of Ruskin Mill Sunfield. We also have our own car, which we use to facilitate activities in the wider community.
Shenstone Cottage – Home for 5 children  
Cottage Manager – Eve Marandola

Shenstone Cottage, named after 18th century local poet, gardener and landscape designer William Shenstone, is a homely environment with views over our biodynamic farm and far reaching across the countryside beyond. Shenstone cottage has; five individual bedrooms, a comfortable lounge for social activities, a separate dining room where our young people are encouraged to eat their meals altogether with staff, an activity room for craft and further social activity, a large kitchen area, a bathroom and a separate shower room, a well-being room for young people to receive any medication or first-aid treatment, a utility/laundry room and a separate staff office. Outside, Shenstone has its own separate garden areas as well as access to the wider Ruskin Mill Sunfield environment; play-area, farm, woodland walk, story-telling areas, willow sculptures, etc.

Our wonderful young people in Shenstone Cottage currently range in age between 11yrs and 16yrs and have a range of severe and complex learning needs. Two of our current young people also have visual impairment. Wherever possible, our young people are encouraged to be actively involved in choosing furnishings, fittings and colour schemes for their bedrooms and the living areas. Each bedroom is furnished to meet the individual needs of the young person and provide them with a comfortable place of their own. All our young people are encouraged to be involved in decisions made in the home including what will be on the menu and what leisure activities they would like to participate in. Our team of experienced and dedicated staff encourage our young people to develop social skills and independence as well as offering a range of activities to ensure all young people have a good quality of life experience. Furthermore, we encourage our young people to experience our farm and beautiful surrounding areas and to participate in activities in Shenstone Cottage and our local community to promote their sense of place within their home here.

We are a Steiner inspired home and this is reflected in our activities which promote the Seven Fields of Practice. We participate in the celebration of religious and local festivals as well as support our young people with their own religious choices. We welcome support from parents and siblings and support family visits as arranged.

Wildmoor Cottage –Home for 5 children  
Cottage Manager – Kim Price

At Wildmoor Cottage we want each young person who resides here to always reach their full potential. We believe they have the right to be healthy, happy, safe and secure, and to feel loved, valued and respected. Wildmoor Cottage is a large spacious 4/5-bedroom home. We have a lounge area which is colourful and comfortable where the young people can relax. There is a large courtyard with a rolling garden attached for all the young people to play in and experience the outdoors. The dining space is adjacent to the kitchen and this is also large and spacious. Young people are encouraged to eat healthily and organically. Meals are prepared fresh each day, young people are encouraged to participate in meal preparation, and choices are made through individual keyworker sessions.

Mia Cottage – Solo home for a child.  
Cottage Manager – Vincent Powell

Mia Cottage is our newest home, and is a beautiful solo bed cottage, nestled at the peak of our grounds overlooking the magnificent countryside which forms our wider community. The home itself provides a safe haven to allow for holistic care to be given to a child who is not yet ready to live and integrate into a wider community within the larger homes. Mia garden provides the individualized and grounding care that is needed to allow a child to develop to their full potential and progress their journey with us. The home is personalized to the child and allows them the safety and quietness to succeed and grow.
Health

We strive to ensure that the health needs of the child are met and we do this from each and every stage of placement – admission through to transition. It is important to have a holistic view of the child and knowledge of the child’s medical history and need is paramount to ensure that they are able to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Each individual young person here at Ruskin Mill Sunfield has a health plan in place that captures their health needs, appointments attended and any medical history which is significant in allowing us to understand the child. The young people will be involved in completing this and putting targets in place on how we can support them to become healthier.

Each home has an organised and secure medication area; the school have their own developed well-being area where the individual young people’s medication is administered to give them privacy. Each child has a self-medication plan; these are reviewed regular to give the individual child as much independence as possible in helping to administer their own medication. Staff continue to promote and encourage self-administration and independence with their own medication as much as possible. Each young person has a medication information sheet for each medication they take, these are individualised to each child in their preferred communication.

Ruskin Mill Sunfield is supported by a range of health professionals. We have some enhanced agreements with our local GP surgery where our young people are registered, this includes an annual physical medical examination. The GP will also visit the young people in their home if they are unable to visit the surgery, they also administer annual flu vaccinations. We are also supported by our local opticians, incontinence service, dentist, psychiatrist, our trust nurse and our wider clinical and therapy team.

To meet individual’s specific health needs, some of our young people see off-site consultants and access specialist services within hospitals and clinics. These include conditions such as epilepsy, asthma, diabetes etc. We support all young people in attending these appointments; staff are also trained to manage specific clinical tasks here at Ruskin Mill Sunfield, where appropriate. Staff work with our children that find it difficult with visiting these environments; this is done through social stories, role play, desensitisation plans and visits to the environment. We have a good relationship with the pharmacy who also support Ruskin Mill Sunfield with the specific individual needs of our young people. The relationships and links with these community services are continuing to build and strengthen.

Each individual young person will have a tailored hospital plan in place, it provides hospital staff with vital information from contact details, medication, allergies, communication needs and the likes and dislikes of the child. Young people with individual health needs such as Epilepsy have an individual Epilepsy passport in place.

Nutrition

The Trust recognises that there is a strong link between the quality of healthy food and the methods of farming and gardening employed. Therefore, at Ruskin Mill Sunfield, employs biodynamic methods in the production of all food grown on the land. We recognise that sharing food is a fundamental experience for all people, a primary way to nurture and celebrate our cultural diversity and an excellent bridge for building relationships. We will promote this through food education and skills such as growing and cooking food. The food served within Ruskin Mill Sunfield dining room, houses and the school curriculum, underpinned by biodynamic agriculture and working with the garden. When deciding on whether to buy biodynamic, organic or local produce it will be important to consider the quality and freshness of the produce and the food miles it may have travelled.

We place great importance on a holistic approach to food, in its production, preparation and presentation. Creating a seed to table process enables students and staff to experience all aspects of the school’s food production and preparation, connecting the curriculum with the craft of homemaking, aesthetics and the relationship between the earth, human activity and the natural world.

Seven care qualities - rhythm, warmth, nourishment, trust, constancy, culture and re-creation form the basis of our residential care homes. They help to define the qualities which the Trust stands for and underpin both the provision in school and households.

We will minimise waste wherever possible. Managing the waste from food production and preparation is an important element in the cycle of life and in improving the humus content of the soil. All food waste should be returned to the farm where it will be used in composting to create fertility for the succeeding crops. It also enables young people to experience the holistic cycle of nutrition coming from and going to the plant and taking responsibility for cleaning up after themselves in a responsible manner.

We involve young people in planning menus based on what people like to eat. Introduce seasonal foods, regional and cultural diversity and source recipes from biodynamic cook books.
When away from Ruskin Mill Sunfield, young people and staff should be encouraged to make healthy choices in the food they eat. They should be involved in budgeting for outings and planning where they eat which takes into consideration other people’s tastes as well as their own. Eating out provides opportunities to sample different cultures and styles of food and young people should be encouraged to try alternatives to their usual choices.

We support the government’s healthy eating programme which recommends five portions of fresh fruit and vegetables each day.

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**Education**

**Young person profile**
All students at Ruskin Mill Sunfield have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The objectives from all areas of these plans inform student Individual Learning Plans (ILP). We have both day students and residential students within the school. All students have Severe and Complex Learning Needs. Many have an additional diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and many present with challenging behaviour.

**Teaching staff**
The school is staffed by Teachers, Senior Teaching Assistants, Teaching Assistants, Learning Support Workers and land-based tutors. The qualifications of our teaching teams include; Bachelors in Education, Post Graduate Certificate in Special Education – Autism, Higher Level Teaching Assistant, NVQ in Health and Social Care, Level 3 teaching and learning, and Special Educational Needs Teaching Assistant qualifications. Teaching staff also have specific qualifications and/or training to support student’s needs, and receive in-house training to support their professional development.

**Teaching methods**
At Ruskin Mill Sunfield, teaching teams work hard to ensure that student's access a meaningful and relevant curriculum, including accreditation opportunities and pathways into education, employment, and independent living. Each student is approached as a unique individual with specific needs and has an individualised approach to their education. Activities are designed to be as practical and hands on as possible and to engage a student in an experiential curriculum. Sensory diet activities are built into the school day to enable students to be focused and ready to learn.

**Curriculum**
Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s curriculum is based on the Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE) approach to human development. Through a PSTE curriculum, students are supported to meet resistance in the natural world and to reimagine their own potential to be as independent as their aspirations and abilities allow and to contribute in a meaningful way to their community. PSTE leads to a wide range of learning outcomes, including social and functional communication, relationship skills, executive functioning, emotional resilience, foundation for lifelong learning skills, and the seven subject areas contained in the Independent School Standards. PSTE is embedded within outdoor and practical activities. Through PSTE, learning is promoted through a range of practical, functional activities, delivered in a range of settings, to ensure students have opportunities to consolidate their skills. Literacy and Numeracy skills are embedded across the curriculum, to give students multiple opportunities to practice and develop these skills in a range of environments and activities.

Community participation is also a key area of the curriculum, with classes going out into the community on a weekly basis to develop independence and life skills.

From Year 10 students also work towards accredited qualifications, tailored to meet individual needs and interests. From Year 12, there is also a greater focus on independence, vocational, and functional skills, to prepare students for adult life.

**Teaching Approaches**
Ruskin Mill Sunfield uses a range of teaching approaches, tailored to meet individual need. These include:

**Intensive Interaction**
Intensive interaction is based on the relationships and interactions between primary caregivers and young infants, and focuses on developing early, pre-verbal communication skills such as turn-taking, eye contact, shared attention, attention gaining and body language. It is a student-led approach, which develops existing communicative behaviour into more concrete, meaningful communication in students who have limited ways of interacting effectively.
Intensive interaction aims to demonstrate to the students that interaction with others in their environment can be enjoyable and worthwhile. We support all of our students, at their pace - no matter how limited their communication skills - to feel safe, heard and understood by their peers and the team around them at Ruskin Mill Sunfield, with a view to this also being extended to interactions within their local community as they mature and grow in confidence.

**Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC)**

AAC includes the use of signing, objects of reference (OOR), symbols, pictures and pointing boards to provide visual environmental support to aid students’ understanding, communication and learning. AAC is tailored to a student's individual needs and may contain a mixture of objects, symbols pictures and/or the written word, depending on the student’s level of understanding in any particular location.

PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) is actively used to encourage a student’s initiation of communication. Although it is called ‘picture exchange’, many students begin at an object level to make the exchange more meaningful and positive. Some students are able to use more ‘hi-tech’ communication aids known as VOCAs (Voice Output Communication Aids) and are assessed for these, where appropriate.

*Further information on all of these approaches is published in our fact sheets, which are available on request and can also be downloaded via the website at [www.rmt.org/sunfield](http://www.rmt.org/sunfield).*

**Psychology and Therapies**

**Deeper understanding**

Ruskin Mill Sunfield's on-site Psychology and Therapies department offers a holistic, comprehensive and detailed assessment and therapy provision, which is individually tailored to each individual young person at our residential special school. Their invaluable insight and input provides a deep understanding of the young person's complex and multi-faceted needs, and helps to formulate strategies through which young people can overcome barriers, and be supported to maximise their potential.

**Resident team**

Our specialist team comprises a range of disciplines including: Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy including rebound therapy, Music Therapy, and Steiner based therapies such as Eurhythm, Therapeutic Art, Massage Therapy, and Colour Light Therapy. Our invaluable Family Services and Ruskin Mill Sunfield Assessment and Outreach Service also sit within the Psychology and Therapies team.

Qualifications and professional supervision

Each member of the team is highly experienced and qualified in their discipline.

Each member of the team is supervised by Head of Psychology and Therapies. Each member receives supervisions applicable to their professional discipline.

**Collaborative approach**

The Psychology and Therapies department works closely sharing knowledge, insights and experience with colleagues in our education, land and residential settings. This integrated approach ensures that every child’s psychological, emotional, occupational, sensory processing and communication needs are fully identified and met.

**Sharing Knowledge**

The expert team also provides training to staff and families, alongside emotional support, facilitating reflection and proactive planning. The focus is on improving the young people's wellbeing by empowering staff and families to feel confident in understanding and supporting the young people, through challenging times, and times of development.

**Young People and Families**

**Family focus**

At Ruskin Mill Sunfield, we believe in supporting families and we work in partnership with young people, their families and others who are significant in their lives. We have an experienced Admissions Manager, who helps every child, and their family, transition smoothly to Ruskin Mill Sunfield. We can link new families with an existing Ruskin Mill Sunfield family if they wish, which offers a different and often more personal perspective and enables families to seek another parents’ opinion on Ruskin Mill Sunfield and our services.

Our dedicated Teams Around the Child are the first point of contact if families need to get in touch with us at any time. Once children join us they will respond to any queries or issues affecting or relating to a child, this will be either the home manager or the head of school. They will also help you with the booking of Family Centre facilities.
Keeping in touch
We have regular family forum meetings, frequent one-to-one consultation calls, and reviews relating to children, we also keep families informed about life at Ruskin Mill Sunfield through regular newsletters. Our Family Newsletter is produced once a term, to keep families informed about news, events and useful information. Each house also produces a Focus House Newsletter, which is issued monthly, to provide families with information specific to their child's month.

Family contact
Key workers telephone families regularly, to report on a young person's well-being and progress. Each house has a direct telephone line and families are welcome to call during 'daytime' hours. Young people are also encouraged and assisted to keep in contact with their family, and to send letters or a piece of work home each week. We also have a Skype facility if this is something you would like to access. Individualised arrangements are made between families and the home in respect of frequency of communication.

Time together
Families are welcome to visit informally, which they can arrange simply by calling their child's house in advance to ensure their visit does not cause disruption to planned activities. Ruskin Mill Sunfield aims to support each young person to have a successful and positive time at home with their family. Such visits are usually facilitated by the placing authority (i.e. transport), but we aim to work in partnership with the family to share behaviour support plans, communication systems and routines to follow during the home visit.

Ruskin Mill Sunfield has two self-contained flats, which provide accommodation for families when visiting their child at Ruskin Mill Sunfield. They are used by families in a variety of ways such as providing private space for a family to have time alone together whether they are staying for a weekend, visiting for the day or maybe just to have a meal together. They are particularly well used at the time of admission. Parents, and often siblings, can stay and assist staff to settle the child into the new environment; whilst providing time for that essential sharing of in depth knowledge of the child's needs that reports are unable to capture.

Family voice
Ruskin Mill Sunfield has spent over 15 years evaluating and developing our approach to working with families, to better understand your experience, journey and perspective – and to adapt our services accordingly. We have gained insights through our Focused Research and Family Survey initiatives, Family Forum meetings, one-to-one chats with children's key workers, and family-focused social activities.

Young person's voice
Ruskin Mill Sunfield recognises the unique communication skills of all our young people, and aims to develop these skills to support our young people to communicate effectively in all areas of their lives. A young person-friendly version of Ruskin Mill Sunfield's Vision, Values and Purpose is available to all young people and can also be downloaded via our website. Augmented Communication is used to enable young people to share their wishes and make their views known, on the quality of care they experience.

The young person's voice takes many forms, from members of the Student Council having input into organisational and strategic elements of the organisation, to individual young people being enabled to make choices and voice opinions about different areas of their own lives. They have also helped to implement a complaints procedure accessible to young people by adapting a pack called "Listen Up", promoted by MENCAP.

Key workers regularly meet individually with the young people and represent their views. Young people are supported through this process by individual communication passports, which set out their needs and preferred forms of communication, from eye contact through to symbol, verbal or written word. House meetings and key worker sessions are held in the houses where young people can contribute their views. Young people are also encouraged to contribute and attend their statutory reviews.

Ruskin Mill Sunfield also employs the services of ‘CORAM advocacy’. Representatives of CORAM aim to visit each house fortnightly. CORAM advocacy will visit young people, monitor their welfare and represent their interests accordingly. They feedback individually and as a group, each term, to the Head of Care and Registered Manager. In some cases, they may also attend the young person's review to offer independent representation for the young person. The Independent Visitor visits Ruskin Mill Sunfield every month. These visits are usually unannounced. He visits all of the houses each month, meeting with the young people and staff. He also contacts parents, carers and social workers, and submits a report (Reg 44) to Ofsted. This report is then shared with Ruskin Mill Sunfield who in turn send to placing local authorities.
Our Care Staff

Care Staffing

All of our houses have their own dedicated team of staff, led by an experienced Home Manager. The number of staff in each team at any one time is dependent on the number of young people living in the house and their assessed needs; some may receive extra staffing hours, through Education, Social Care or Health funding. There is always a hand-over period between each shift, for the exchange of information between staff.

Zero Hour staff
We have a team of experienced and reliable, zero hour and agency staff, who are support to cover vacant posts and periods of sickness. We also positively engage some regular agency staff to provide a balance of age, ethnicity and experience to our own team. The staff are assigned to a house which provides the home and young people with constancy.

Staff ratios
Most young people placed at Ruskin Mill Sunfield require a minimum staffing ratio of 1:1. However, there are some young people who need 2:1 support. There are night staff on each home who work from 21:00 to 09:00 hours.

Staff management
A shift is led by a shift leader, there is an On Call Home Manager on duty during out of hour’s week days 17:00 – 09:00 and 24/7 at weekends this is to offer clear support and guidance over the phone to help resolve any issues. This provides the staff with someone who they can discuss a developing issue with, and learn what to do to manage and resolve the issue enhancing skill set for everyone.

Care Staff Recruitment

At Ruskin Mill Sunfield, we have our own Human Resources department, so we can ensure that our staff recruitment and vetting procedures are comprehensive and thorough. We operate an Equality Policy for staff recruitment – this is available on our website and on request.

Applications
All applicants for employment are required to complete a comprehensive application form detailing their full employment history including any breaks in employment, qualifications and experience – including agency staff applying for vacant posts, or existing employees applying for promotion or transfer. All candidates must disclose any criminal offences and consent to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Scheme check. Ruskin Mill Sunfield follows the ‘Safer Recruitment’ Guidance

Selection
Applicants undergo a detailed interview process to determine their suitability for position they have applied for. This includes a face-to-face interview, a scenario based case study and if required a visit to the home.

Induction and Training

Ruskin Mill Sunfield has a rich history of developing training which is innovative and fit for the needs of complex and challenging young people. Ruskin Mill Sunfield is committed to providing the highest best practice training, utilising the latest advancements in special needs education, deepened and enhanced by a modern understanding of therapeutic Steiner Education.

In the early years Ruskin Mill Sunfield was a pioneering home which worked out of and developed the therapeutic education principles of Rudolf Steiner making it a home and a school of world renown in its field. It is our intention to bring that inspiration into our present context in a way which is suitable for our children and young people.

In order to provide the highest quality of care and education for our children and young people staff will have the opportunity to undertake courses in HOSC (Holistic Support and Care) and all staff will be expected to attend courses operating out of HEART (Hiram Education and Research Team) relevant to their role of continuing professional development or interest.
New staff are appointed on a six-month probationary contract, during which time they must complete our formal induction programme. In addition, if their appointment was made on condition they complete or commence a particular qualification route, this too is monitored.

The Ruskin Mill Sunfield Induction Programme for care staff is undertaken for the first three weeks of employment. Throughout this period, they will complete two weeks’ classroom based mandatory training following a week of 9-5 in the home where they are allocated where they will meet the team, young people and read the paperwork relating to the young people in the homes, whilst shadowing existing staff in practice and paperwork. Staff are supervised on shift by experienced care staff from the management team of that home and in addition will have probation meetings throughout their probation period to ensure that they remain on task to complete probation successfully. With the support of their supervisor, staff are required to complete an induction workbook covering quality standard requirements and additional Ruskin Mill Sunfield-specific content.

**Compulsory Core Training**
Compulsory Core Training includes: Introduction to Ruskin Mill Sunfield – the Genius Loci, IT and email set up to complete online training covering Health and Safety, Medication, Food Hygiene, Fire Safety, MCA/DOLS, Infection and Control and Prevent. In addition, we also run face to face training which consists of Missing from Care, Attachment, ASC, Equality and Diversity, Positive Behaviour Support, Safeguarding, Behaviour Watch, CALM theory and practice, First Aid at Work and Communication In Print.

**Additional training**
Additional training: Epilepsy Awareness, Child Development Introduction, specific medical conditions and any other recognised training which will benefit the staff in relation to the child.

**Care staff qualifications**
Ruskin Mill Sunfield is fully committed to ensuring our staff are trained and competent at a level commensurate with their role and job description. We also work with Acacia training to ensure all new care staff without a suitable qualification are registered for Qualification Credit Framework – Residential Children and Young People Level 3 and are expected to complete this within 2 years of working within the care sector.

## Care Staff Qualifications

### Home Managers
All Home Managers are qualified and have one or more of the following: NVQ 3, or QCF level 5 Leadership and Management. All are qualified First Aiders and two are CALM instructors.

### Deputy Home Managers
All are qualified with NVQ 3/QCF Level 3 Diploma in Care and bring a level of experience and expertise.

### Assistant Home Managers
Assistant Home Managers carry the same qualification NVQ3/Level 3 Diploma in Care, and support the home manager and deputy manager with delivering a good standard of care, whilst also providing a mentoring role to the care staff to support their practice and development as they grow through length of service.

### Care Support Workers
It is expected that all staff will hold NVQ 3 or QCF Level 3 in Residential Child Care. If they are unqualified, they are registered and begin working towards a QCF Level 3 Residential Childcare, which has to be attained within two years of employment. The CSW role although predominantly based in the care home, does request flexibility when required to work in the education environment also, this is encouraged in delivering holistic care to the children and young people. On occasion waking nights may also be requested to be completed.

### Learning Support Workers / Zero Hours Staff
It is expected that these staff hold, or are working towards, a QCF Level 3 qualification as they are working in a care environment 07:00 -08:45am.
Care Staff Supervision

The Registered Manager is supported in ensuring all staff in the Department are effectively managed, through individual and group supervision.

The Head of Care and Registered Manager supervises all members of the Home Management Team, including individual and group meetings. Each member of the Home Management Team has line management responsibilities within the team, and for designated houses. They provide supervision and support to the Deputy Home Manager and monitor all statutory and house records; providing a written monthly account of findings to the Head of Care and Registered Manager.

The Home Manager, as well as working alongside his/her staff team, provides regular formal supervision and appraisals for members of the team supported by the Deputy Home Manager. On each home the Home Manager and the Deputy Home Managers supervise Care Support Workers, Learning Support Workers, and identified agency and zero-hour staff assigned to the home.

The Home Manager meets with their Home Team every week. Discussion and decisions from these meetings are recorded, with relevant issues, information and decisions being passed to the Head of Care Residential Manager.

In addition to formal supervision and staff meetings, Ruskin Mill Sunfield provides debriefs at the end of each shift and learning reflection meetings as and when required. Ruskin Mill Sunfield also offer a free Counselling service through Birmingham Hospital Saturday Fund (BHSF) where employees can access the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). In addition, we also have a Trust nurse who can provide training to staff including diagnosis of young people and medication competency assessment for administering medication. An identified debrief team will support emotional resilience training and related support networks, such as de-briefing at the end of a placement if required or in relation to an occurrence. We also hold regular behaviour meetings and Multi-Disciplinary Meetings to support all within the Ruskin Mill Sunfield community holistically. Managers and staff, at all levels, also have the support and guidance provided by the Human Resources Manager.
Our Policies

Young Persons Charter

All young people with a learning disability have the same human rights and values as any other person.

All young people with a learning disability are individuals with their own individual needs:
Physical, emotional, social, spiritual, cultural and sexual.

Each young person is to be protected from abuse in all forms: physical, sexual, neglect or emotional.

Each young person and/or their representative has the right to complain. Furthermore, these complaints should be treated with respect, listened to and resolved.

Each young person will be encouraged to be as independent as possible and to exercise choice.

The choices, views and wishes of a young person should be respected.

Each young person is to be treated with dignity and respect and addressed by their own name.
They should never be talked about as if they were not there.

The privacy of all young people should be respected at all times and in all places. The only exception would be when a young person is placed in danger by this principle.

All information about a young person should be treated confidentially, kept secure and only shared with people who need to know.

Every young person is entitled to the best care at all times.

Every young people should, as far as possible, be involved in decisions, which affect them.

Parents and those with parental responsibility will be consulted in all aspects of care planning for a young person.

Each young person should have access to a telephone, to visiting representatives from “CORAM,” and be aware of other sources of help and advice e.g. Child line
Complaints

If any young person feels unhappy about any aspect of their placement, they can communicate their concerns to any member of staff. There are also opportunities to speak to the Independent Visitor from CORAM. We have a complaints policy for young people and to assist young people in accessing and communicating their concerns, Ruskin Mill Sunfield uses the “Listen Up” pack promoted by MENCAP. This is a pack specifically designed for helping young people with learning disabilities complain about the services they use. As part of this pack, a purple dragon system is operated. A purple dragon mascot in varied communication forms (symbol, photograph, object of reference) is used. This is for young people to use to indicate they have a concern and Augmented Communication tools are used to assist them in communicating their views.

We aim to provide an outcome for our young people as quickly as possible, in a manner to meet their needs. In the event of a furthering concern, support is available for young people to access Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s formal complaints procedure, alongside the complaints procedure for their placing authority.

All young people have access to telephone numbers of their own local authority complaints departments, the Local Authority Complaints Officer, Ofsted, and the Independent Regulation 44 Visitor.

Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s Complaints Policy can be used by anybody (internal and external) at any given time. This policy can be accessed via the intranet (internally), the school website https://www.rmt.org/Ruskin Mill Sunfield/complaints/ and by contacting the designated Complaints Officer (externally). This policy outlines Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s procedures for:

- **Informal Complaints** – concerns/complaints which are resolved by investigation/discussion with the parties involved. Informal does not mean unimportant; it does mean matters are dealt with internally; an internal complaints and compliments anonymous email address is also in place for all to use and is received by the Registered Manager,

- **Formal Complaints** – process for Independent Investigation (overseen by CORAM) for complaints that cannot be resolved through the internal informal process or when the parties concerned are not happy with the outcome of the informal investigation. Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s Complaints Officer is Sarah Marshall- Find this Policy on Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s Website. [www.rmt.org/sunfield](http://www.rmt.org/sunfield)

Behaviour Support

Ruskin Mill Sunfield comprehensively sets out within its Positive Behaviour Support Policy procedures for supporting our young people’s behavioural needs. This policy incorporates CALM (Crisis and Aggression Limitation Management). This is a whole approach to working with individuals who challenge; enabling staff to engage in proactive methods of behaviour support and have an understanding of approaches to preventing a crisis.

There is a strong emphasis on positive attention from adults demonstrating a caring interest. Positive reinforcement is used to influence individual’s behaviour. The policy also outlines the use of discipline, sanctions and physical interventions. It is consistent with DfE and DoH legislation and guidance.

All staff receive an introduction to CALM within their induction period. Care and Education staff will then complete a full four-day training programme within their probationary period. Until staff receive this training they are not permitted to lead on the use of physical intervention for any young person. Refresher training for all Care and Education staff is conducted within a twelve-month period.

Any sanction or physical intervention used is recorded as part of the incident reporting process. These records are monitored by Home Managers, Senior Managers and our Psychology Department. Records of incidents requiring physical intervention can also be copied to parents and placing authorities if required.

Any physical restraint is implemented only as a last resort and reviewed regularly. The needs are highlighted within a young person’s Behaviour Strategies, which are developed through our Team Around the Child (TAC) using an inter-disciplinary approach and agreed with parents, placing authorities, CALM instructors, Care and Education staff and, where appropriate, Health and Psychology departments.
We acknowledge that the very nature of some behaviours associated with Autism pose risk, for example, a child may be sensitive to noise, other people, etc. and anxiety may cause a reaction such as hitting out. We work closely with all stakeholders to minimise behaviours that challenge and its impact on others.

Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s cottages and classes are highly staffed but the young people are living and learning in groups not in isolation. It is advised that all parents consider this prior to placement. This policy can be accessed internally via the intranet and is available to external stakeholders on request. The Positive Behaviour Support Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy can be found on Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s Website www.rmt.org/sunfield.

Countering Bullying and Discrimination

At Ruskin Mill Sunfield, we value all individuals by promoting positive relationships. The expectations set out in our ethos are:

- every young person or adult has the right to live, learn and work in the knowledge that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard their well-being;
- as a community we do not expect to encounter behaviour or language that is racist, sexist or abusive, or hear language that is intended to humiliate others.

We have a range of specific policies and procedures in relation to anti-discrimination and countering bullying, including a Code of Conduct, Spiritual Moral, Social and Cultural and Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education. These policies inform our practice, but are broadly designed to develop children’s awareness of ‘self’, developing healthy views and respect for others regardless of their faith, colour, creed, disability and needs, and can be cross referenced to the vision and values set out in the earlier part of this document. Young people’s waking day curriculum and SCERTS Targets will include specific areas of focus to ensure young people’s programmes are balanced and promote all our values.

Behaviour that challenges presented by some young people can sometimes be directed at others and could be interpreted as “bullying”. Learning disabilities and Autism often mean that the young people do not understand the concept of bullying and it is therefore very difficult to address the behaviour by applying ‘normal measures’ used to counter bullying. However, at Ruskin Mill Sunfield, any form of behaviour that causes distress to others, regardless of intent or reason, is treated as a serious matter. Any instance of such behaviour will be investigated and responded to, and outcomes monitored.

Staff use many forms of Alternative and Augmented Communication to help young people to express their feelings, such as feeling intimidated. Staff are also observant and alert to any patterns of behaviour that may indicate a young person is bullying or being bullied. The young person’s behaviour development plan will address aspects of behaviour that may be causing harm or distress to another young person.

Through the Student Council, young people have encompassed our ethos in their “Golden Rules”, which is shown overleaf.
Be kind

Be happy

Don’t call people

Wash hands

Sunfield Golden Rules

If you are sad then you can go to the swing or the gym

Work together
Safeguarding/Child Protection

At Ruskin Mill Sunfield, we are committed to providing a nurturing environment that transforms the lives of children and young people attending Ruskin Mill Sunfield and we take very seriously our responsibilities to safeguard and promote their welfare. Safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility and we have to maintain a culture of believing that abuse could happen here.

“Children with behaviour / conduct disorders are at greatest risk of abuse” NSPCC 2014

We ensure that our children and young people are safe from harm and able to develop, thrive and fulfil their potential. We value and nurture each child as an individual with talents, strengths and capabilities that can develop over time, by fostering positive relationships and establishing clear boundaries of acceptable behaviour. Working in close partnership with the educational provision, we support their emotional, mental and physical health needs, nurturing their learning, including out of school learning and preparation for independence. We have high expectations of our staff as committed members of a team to provide a safe and stimulating environment in high quality buildings.

In addition, we undertake our responsibilities to work in partnership with agencies as part of the wider, multiagency, safeguarding system, always acting in the best interest of the child or young person where concerns are identified, in accordance with the Ruskin Mill Sunfield Young People & Adults at Risk Safeguarding policy, statutory guidance and Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) and Worcestershire Safeguarding Adult Board (WSAB) policies and procedures.

Missing from Care Procedures and Protocol

As Ruskin Mill Sunfield is registered as a Children's Home, rather than a secure unit, we do not feel it appropriate for young people to feel obviously restricted; and we provide many opportunities for them to enjoy our wonderful grounds. However, young people's safety is paramount and all young people are supervised closely day and night by waking staff. External doors are kept locked, where appropriate, as some of our young people lack awareness of danger and are unable to preserve their personal safety if they were to leave the building unaccompanied. These locked external doors also protect young people from unwanted visitors/strangers entering the building. Augmentative communication tools are accessible to each young person to enable them to request to leave if they are unable to verbally communicate this wish to staff.

Where a young person has been known to abscond in their previous setting, a risk assessment will be carried out and a strategy implemented to provide more robust supervision to ensure their safety. On the rare occasion a young person absconds, procedures are immediately instigated as follows in accordance with Worcestershire missing from care procedures:

- Staff search the immediate vicinity and notify the On Call Manager;
- Search is extended to other areas of the site and additional staff are deployed to help house/school staff;
- If, after 10 minutes, the young person is not found (sooner if it is thought he/she has left the site or is at particular risk) the police are called. The senior team member ‘on call’ is also informed;
- Staff are deployed in transport to search the local area, favourite places nearby, etc;
- Police are provided with a profile of the young person (each young person has a ‘Missing Person Profile’ with these details plus their photograph and details of what they were wearing etc.);
- The search continues until the young person is found.

These procedures are followed unless otherwise agreed in an Individual Placement Plan. The parents and placing authority are informed of the incident, a meeting is convened to discuss and review the risk assessment. The procedures would be the same if a young person were to go missing from the group/staff whilst off-site, except that Police would be notified more quickly if they were not found in the immediate vicinity.
Ruskin Mill Sunfield Policies Index

Below is a list of Ruskin Mill Sunfield's policies, which are available via our website:

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
ADMISSIONS
ANTI-BULLYING
ATTENDANCE
BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT, SANCTIONS AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION
CODE OF CONDUCT
COMPLAINTS POLICY & GUIDELINES FOR STAFF & YOUNG PEOPLE CURRICULUM
DATA PROTECTION
DISCIPLINARY & DISMISSAL
EDUCATION EXCLUSION
ONLINE SAFETY
FEEDBACK AND MARKETING
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE
HEALTH & SAFETY
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
MEDICINES
MISSING CHILD WITHOUT AUTHORITY
QUALITY ASSURANCE (EDUCATION)
YOUNG PEOPLE & ADULTS AT RISK SAFEGUARDING
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)
SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

All of Ruskin Mill Sunfield’s policies can be available upon request