



BHCC comms re Drove Road overnight respite 03.03.25

I am writing to update you regarding the ongoing difficulties with staffing levels at Drove Road. You will hopefully be aware that there are no restrictions in place with regard to using overtime, care crew or agency staff to cover shifts at Drove Road. However, we are still facing difficulties providing sufficient staff to ensure there are no further cancellations. I am sad to say that 2 families had their respite cancelled this weekend. This was despite best efforts to secure additional staff not just through the usual routes but from an additional agency and from other teams across the directorate.

I have briefed you previously on the fact that this is not just one issue which needs resolving but a multitude of issues which require solutions on a number of fronts, some of which are not quick fixes. These issues are as follows -

- 3 permanent staff members are unable to work directly with the children and we need to make a sustainable plan around how we resolve this
- 1 staff member on long term sick
- 1 vacancy which is being interviewed for
- The rotas need a review in terms of planning, oversight and efficiency
- Not enough care crew staff

In terms of actions to address the issues -

- 6 Care Crew staff were recruited 2 weeks ago and we are now onboarding them, this takes a while as we need DBS checks and they need training.
- The interviews for the care staff vacancy are set up and we will recruit to that soon, again the onboarding will take a while.
- A review of the rotas is being undertaken in the next week
- An assessment and plan is being made regarding how to resolve the issue of the 3 staff who are not working directly with the children so we have all staff at Drove Rd working directly with the children
- Staffing review will be completed by the end of Feb

I know all of this is taking longer than everyone would like and the issues families are facing are acute. Please be assured that respite is not cancelled lightly, it requires Head of Service agreement and assurance that every possible alternative has been explored to prevent this. Additionally, there will not be any cancellations due to any spending controls, at present we are spending more on agency workers than previously.

It is clear that the situation at Drove Rd is untenable and unworkable at present. We need to significantly review how things are set up in order to run the service well, which is under way. In the meantime we are doing all we can to ensure the service continues to operate as best as possible.

Warm Regards

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