



# Quality Report

2023





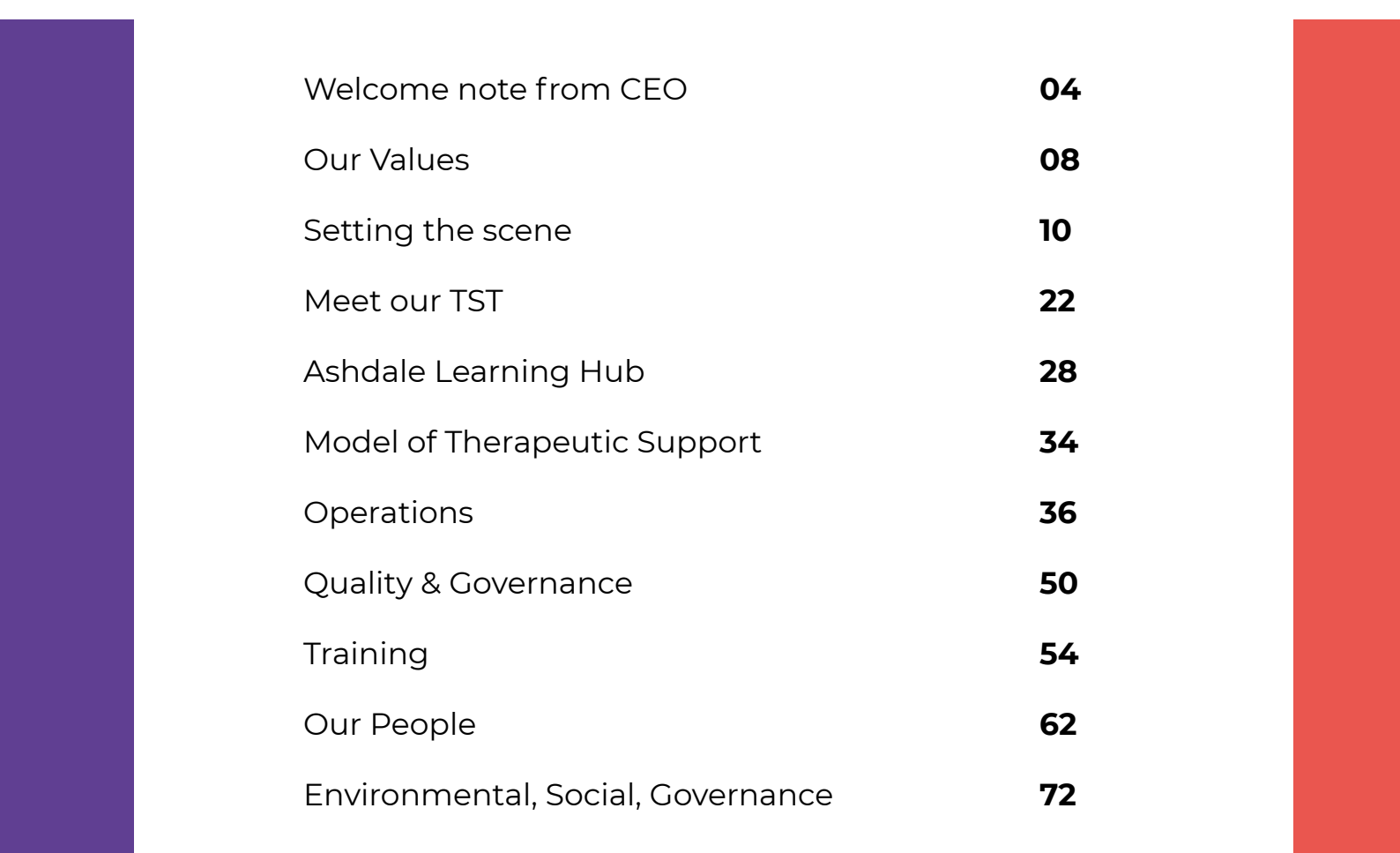
# Rebuilding Lives Transforming Residential Care



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# A message from our CEO



**It is with great pleasure that I present our second Quality Report 2023 which represents our ongoing and significant commitment to providing high quality, therapeutically informed residential services to children and young people across the island of Ireland.**

As Ireland's largest provider of enhanced therapeutic residential care services for children, we are the sector leader in the development of much needed specialist services for children and young people who have experienced significant childhood trauma. This is my first year as CEO having taken over the role from Paula Kane during 2023. This moment marks not just a change in leadership but also the continuation of a vision and legacy that Paula has painstakingly built since establishing Ashdale Care 25 years ago. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Paula for entrusting me with this incredible responsibility.

Paula's tireless dedication, bold innovation, unwavering commitment, and boundless energy has been instrumental in transforming the Children's Residential Care landscape in Ireland, and it is our duty to carry this torch forward.

Before taking up the role of CEO I have worked in various roles at Director level across the organisation. I continue to be amazed and humbled by the passion and commitment demonstrated by our valued colleagues across every home and department in the organisation. It is because of this tireless dedication to provide high

quality, therapeutic and safe, caring environments that we achieve positive outcomes for those we care for.

2023 marked a number of significant milestones for Ashdale Care.

We opened four new homes. This brings us to a total of 56 specialist placements across 17 homes, all of which are registered with Tusla's Alternative Care & Inspection and Monitoring Services (ACIMS). We have observed with increasing concern the significant lack of regulated capacity across the sector in light of unprecedented increases in the demand for placements facing Tusla. We stand ready to assist Tusla by doubling our capacity through developing new enhanced services over the next 3 years. However, there are a couple of key challenges that need to be resolved. The scarcity of social care qualified staff as currently mandated is a sector-wide constraint. We believe that to deliver this increased regulated capacity, the sector requires equivalent interpretation of Regulations regarding staffing with children's disability services. We also need more certainty around a sustainable funding model into the future. We are currently in active discussions with Tusla on both these issues.



Three of the new homes opened in 2023 are under Pilot Schemes to deal with Tusla's ever-increasing demand for Short Term Emergency Placements. We worked closely in collaboration with Tusla to define the purpose and function of these new projects and were able to quickly respond to their emergency requirements by providing significant capital and people to develop these high- quality regulated services in a timely manner.

As we develop our specialist services further, we welcomed Dr Ronan Gibney as Director of Therapeutic Support Services early in 2023. A Clinical Neuropsychologist, Dr Gibney joined us with a wealth of experience across residential care services in both the public and private sectors.

He has significant expertise in neuropsychology, developmental trauma and the area of attachment. Since he joined, he has focused on further expansion of our Multi-Disciplinary Therapeutic (MDT) team by including further Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, therapeutically informed Teachers, and Art Psychotherapists all of whom now form our MDT. 2024 will see Behaviour Therapists added to the team. Together, under Dr Gibney's stewardship, we have reviewed and updated our model of care in line with current and emerging traumainformed research.

In September we established the Ashdale Learning Hub, the base for our MDT Therapeutic team and where direct and indirect therapeutically



**This high-quality comprehensive training offered is integral to ensuring staff retention and also reinforces Ashdale Care's ethos and quality of care, ensuring that the organisations values and core principles are maintained within the organisation as it scales.**



**We opened four new homes.  
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specialist placements across 17  
homes, all of which are registered**



informed activities take place. This dedicated child-facing facility includes two purpose designed classrooms, a dedicated art therapy room, two sensory regulation spaces and a multi-functional creative activity room. This is a first of its kind in our sector and we have found significant benefits already in the ability for children and young people to attend and feel safe to develop relationships with their peers and our therapeutic team. Our MDT also works alongside the teams in our homes by providing them with bespoke training, environmental assessments, regular professionally guided reflective spaces, attendance at placement planning meetings, preparation of therapeutic and educational plans and providing direct consultation to assist the teams caring for each young person. The availability of this specialist and highly informed multi-disciplinary therapeutic team forms our enhanced service and provides trauma informed clinical guidance to our teams across the homes.

2023 saw a very strong regulatory performance across the organisation, signifying our ongoing significant investment in compliance with regulatory standards. Alongside our two internal Compliance Managers who carry out internal audits across all homes, every home was inspected by the independent Inspectors of Alternative Care Inspection & Monitoring Services (ACIMS) within Tusla. All our homes are registered without conditions. Our commitment to organisational learning has led to further development of our

internal governance systems and controls ensuring consistent service delivery across all locations under the stewardship of Tara O'Byrne, Director of Care, and the Operations team.

Kerry Gildernew is now established in her new role as Director of Governance, Quality and Training further demonstrating our commitment to ensuring that with our increasing scale, governance, oversight and quality improvement remains front and centre. Our Governance Committee has Dr Edwina Dunne as its chair who reports directly to the Board in the area of Quality Assurance and Governance.

2023 saw the development of our National Training Centre in Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan where our highly experienced Training team develop and delivers high-quality training across our 300+ colleagues. This investment in upskilling our people is integral to staff retention and also reinforces Ashdale Care's ethos and commitment to high quality care, ensuring that the organisation's values and core principles are maintained as we continue to grow.

2023 also saw a significant investment in the provision of support services. We brought Finance, HR, IT and Compliance together in our new, state of the art offices in Co. Monaghan. This is also the site of our National Training Centre and provides meeting rooms for our teams who come together for team meetings and placement planning



meetings regularly. Our new “mothership” ensures collaboration and communication with our teams and drives continuous improvements in our support services as we saw a significant return to the office following the pandemic.

During 2023 we made a number of key appointments to our Leadership Team, and I'm delighted to welcome Phil Scott as CFO and Eileen Gregory as Director of HR. Both Phil and Eileen bring a breadth of experience and expertise across diverse sectors. When coupled with the significant sector specific experience already in Ashdale Care we have created a highly skilled, committed, and driven management team. We have a specific focus on improving systems and leveraging technology in order that we continue to grow to meet the demands of Tusla & the NI Health and Social Care Trusts for increased high-quality, regulated and safe places for children. To this goal we remain committed.

I hope you enjoy reading our Quality Report.

**Caroline Gray**  
CEO, Ashdale Care

CARE  
PROTECT  
SUPPORT  
EMPOWER  
INSPIRE  
ENTHUSE



# Our Values







# Living our values through our people and young people



## Respect & Inclusion

We are committed to fostering an environment that nurtures the spirit of compassion, teamwork, openness and respect where our people feel accepted & valued.

## Honesty & Integrity

We are committed to maintaining a safe, supportive and trusting culture where we have clear, open communication.



## Responsibility & Commitment

We empower our people within a culture of individual and collective responsibility & accountability.

## Pursuit of Excellence

We are committed to providing an environment of continuous improvement where we strive for the highest possible standards to deliver better outcomes for all.





# Setting the Scene



# What makes Ashdale Care an enhanced provider in residential care?



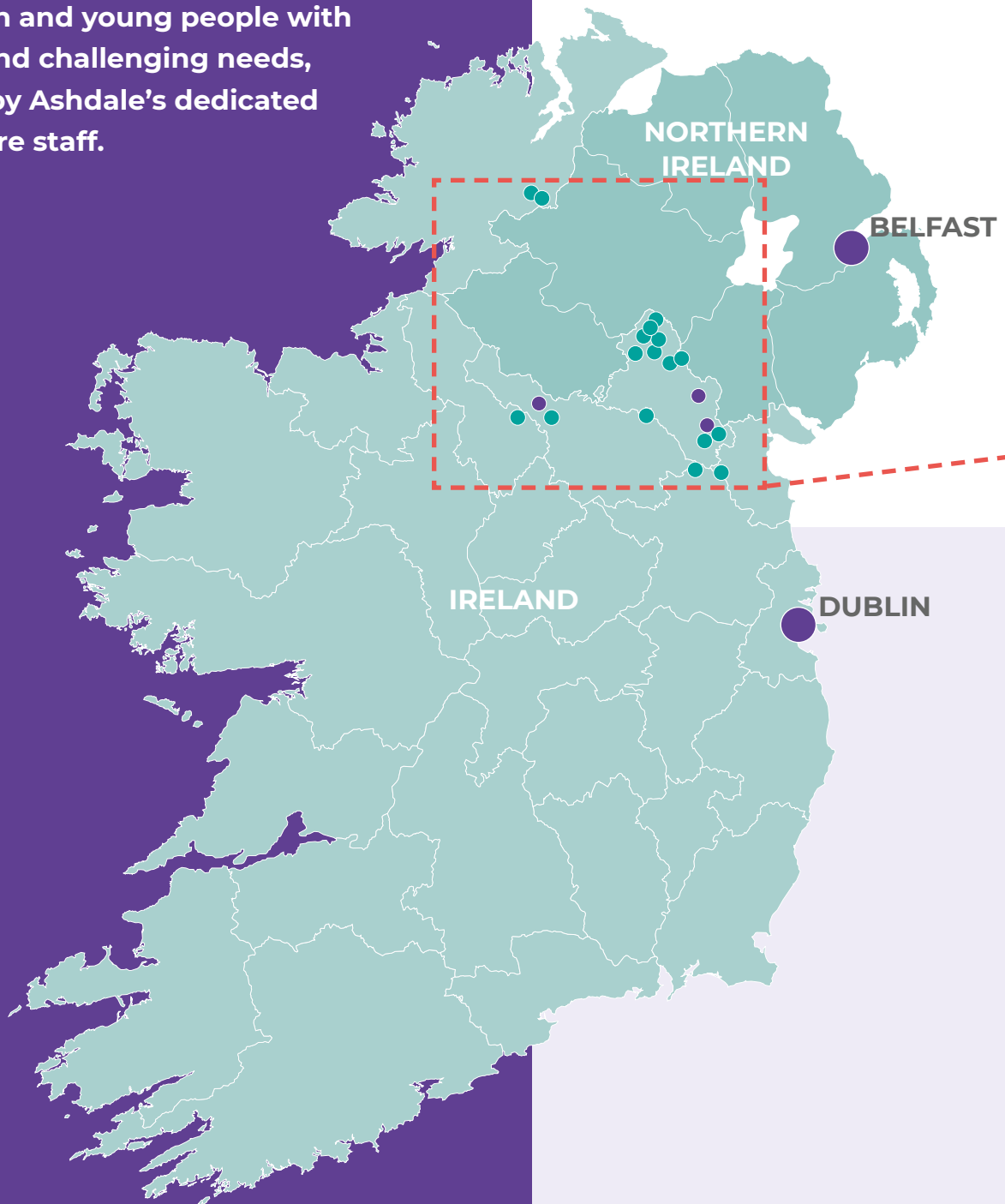
## OUR USP: Enhanced Service

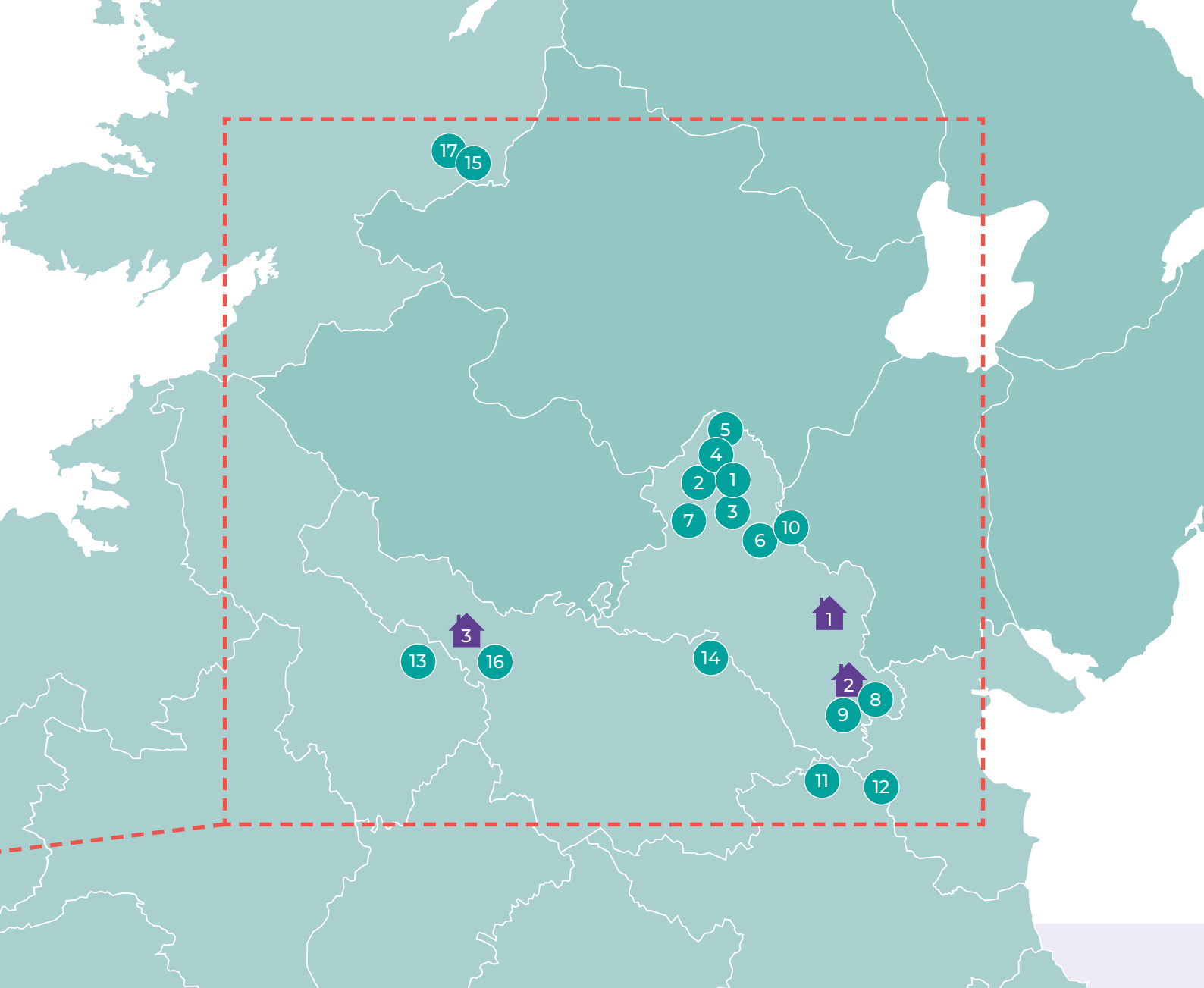
- Invested and reorganised Therapeutic Support Team to ensure future fit for growth of service
- Review of Model of Care completed
- Informed by international research and best practice
- Development of Ashdale Learning Hub
- Identifying ourselves as “thought leader” from clinical/therapeutic perspective with stakeholders
- Trauma informed staff
- Hub & Spoke Model



# Map of services

Ashdale Care is a leading provider of Children's Residential Care in Ireland, providing specialist care for children and young people with complex and challenging needs, delivered by Ashdale's dedicated team of care staff.





	Homes	Location	Opened
1	Tydavnet House	Monaghan	2002
2	Clarnagh House	Monaghan	2008
3	Drumbenagh House	Monaghan	2008
4	Killylaragh House	Monaghan	2015
5	Ivy Hill	Monaghan	2018
6	Lisdrum House	Monaghan	2018
7	Foremass House	Monaghan	2019
8	Oghill House	Monaghan	2019
9	Glyde House	Monaghan	2020
10	Killymonaghan House	Monaghan	2020
11	Cornavan House	Meath	2020
12	Glack House	Louth	2020

	Homes	Location	Opened
13	Willow House	Leitrim	2002
14	Clough House	Cavan	2002
15	Aspall House	Donegal	2023
16	Dring House	Cavan	2023
17	Ballyarrell House	Donegal	2023


- 1** Headquarters:  
The Ridge, Castleblaney, Co Monaghan  
*Opened in 2023*
- 2** Ashdale Learning Hub:  
Lake House, Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan  
*Opened in 2021*
- 3** Templeport Hall, Ballyconnell, Co Cavan  
*Opened in Feb 2023*

# Highlights from last 12 months



Successfully opened 4 new homes in 2023  
- **total 17 homes**

**Investment**  
in the Support  
Services Team



**Relocation of headquarters**  
to Castleblayney, Co Monaghan

**15 excellent home inspections** with a high level of regulatory compliance across the centres inspected. Over 80% of homes inspected had few or no actions and all homes are registered without conditions

Successful transition to our  
**new CEO and Leadership Team**

Introduction of Ashdale's  
**first sibling home**



Expansion within the  
**Training Team and Compliance Team**

Additional  
**Regional Manager on board**

**Investment**  
of the HR  
department



**Additional resources**  
within the  
Therapeutic  
Support Team



**Increased training modules** facilitated by the Therapeutic Support Team and Training Team



Created Pilot Schemes for Tusla in response to demand for **Short Term Emergency Placements**

**Opening of** Ashdale Learning Hub

Registered beds have **increased 22%** from 46 in December 2022 to 56 in December 2023



Enhancement of the **Social Care Leader Programme**

Review of the **Governance Framework**

**Addition of a House Parent** to homes catering for 4 or more young people

Geographical footprint is now **across six counties**



**Increased capacity** across existing homes and new homes to meet Tusla's need





# The Leadership Team

The Leadership Team serves as an exemplary model within our industry, setting the standard for responsible leadership through ethical practices and transparency in operations.



**Caroline Gray**  
CEO

Appointed as CEO during 2023, Caroline has over 13 years' experience in the children's residential care sector. Caroline is responsible for developing and implementing the overall strategy, with positive organisational culture and values at the core.

Caroline, a Chartered Accountant by profession, is passionate about redefining the landscape of children's residential care in Ireland with a focus on further development of specialist, therapeutically informed services to assist vulnerable children as they rebuild their lives.



**Kerry Gildernew**  
Director of Governance,  
Quality & Training

Kerry started as a residential Social Worker in 2007 and gradually advancing to higher levels of responsibility. Her journey from managing multiple homes and ultimately reaching the Senior Management Team in 2015 showcases her dedication and competence.

Kerry has significant experience in overseeing the quality of care provided by the organisation. Her role in leading the oversight of internal governance, chairing the Quality Assurance Committee, managing the compliance and training department demonstrates her commitment to ensuring high standards and compliance within the organisation. Kerry is passionate about maintaining the organisation's culture and ethos and preserving core values as the organisation grows. She holds a BSc Hons in Social Work and a Diploma in Social Work



**Tara O'Byrne**  
Director of Care

Tara's career has progressed from joining in October 2021 to taking on the Head of Care position in September 2022 and subsequently the Director of Care role in September 2023 where she leads operations across all homes.

With over 16 years of experience in residential care roles, Tara brings a wealth of practical knowledge, interpersonal skills, and leadership abilities to her current role. She has a BA in Applied Social Studies, Higher National Diploma in Social Studies, and Post Grad in Creative Thinking, Innovation & Entrepreneurship showcasing a diverse set of skills and knowledge that is valuable in the field of social care.





**Dr Ronan Gibney**  
Director of Therapeutic Support Team

Ronan is a Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Neuropsychologist with over 20 years' experience working in both the public and private sector. He has worked as both a clinical lead and manager of teams in a wide range of settings.

Since joining Ashdale Care in early 2023, Ronan has implemented a service-wide Developmental Trauma Training Programme, has overseen the design of Ashdale's Model of Therapeutic Support, has reconfigured and grown the Therapeutic Support Team and has set up the Ashdale Learning Hub, providing an innovative educational and therapeutic support programme. Ronan is committed to providing a collaborative, trauma-informed environment that supports and empowers both staff and young people in residential care.



**Phil Scott**  
Director of Finance

Phil is a qualified Chartered Accountant with over 20 years post qualification experience in senior financial roles largely focused within global technology companies. He has experience building and supporting organisations through their growth including venture backed as well as publicly listed companies.

Key skillsets include financial management, fundraising, restructuring, business planning, business analytics and system implementations. Coming into Ashdale, Phil is focused on utilising his experience to help support the growing organisation to increase the level of residential and therapeutic support for young people in residential care.



**Eileen Gregory**  
HR Director

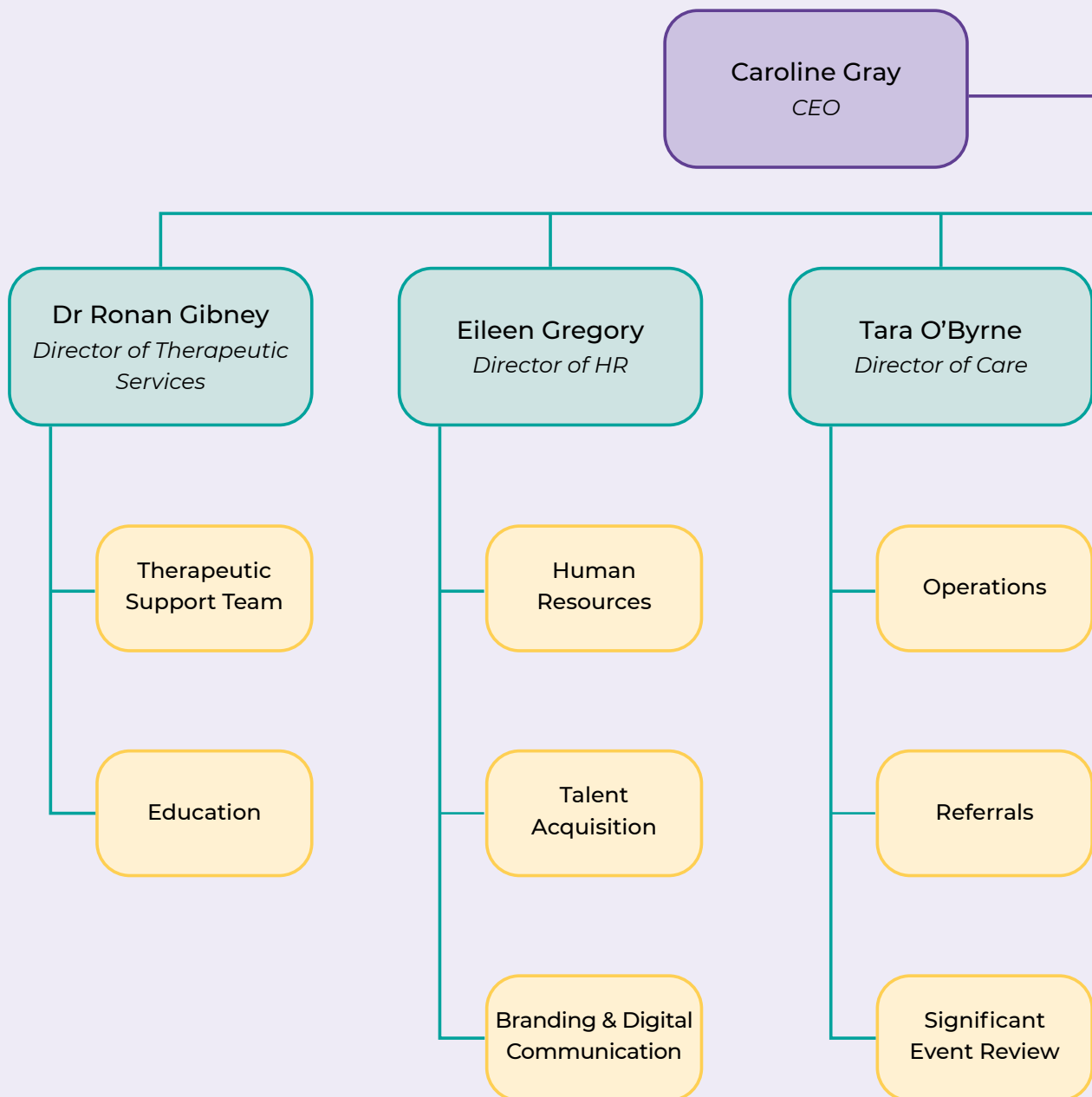
Eileen is a seasoned HR Executive with extensive experience in programme management, talent development, and organisational change across Irish and global companies. Focused on aligning HR strategies with organisational goals, Eileen has led a variety of initiatives to navigate strategic shifts, led reorganisations, and fostered inclusive cultures amidst the pandemic. Eileen's expertise includes leadership, talent management, HR strategy, DEI initiatives, and crisis management.

With a background in Strategic Human Resource Management, Eileen is dedicated to the retention and engagement of cohorts of employees.



# Organisational Structure

Significant rebuild in the Leadership Management Team, with the new team bedding in well.





Our Leadership Team



**Kerry Gildernew**  
*Director of Governance,  
Quality & Training*

**Phil Scott**  
*Chief Financial Officer*

Governance

Compliance

Training

Finance

Support  
Services & IT

Estates

Health & Safety  
Property  
Acquisition



# The Operational Management Team



**Edel McGibbon**  
Regional Manager

Joining in 2007, Edel has over 20 years of experience in residential care. Edel began work as a residential care worker and has progressed to Home Management roles and then on to a Regional Manager position within the organisation in 2015.

Edel has a BSc in Combined Studies and a Diploma of Higher Education in Community Youth Work.



**Tracey Lee**  
Regional Manager

Tracey joined in 2010 and held the role of Residential Social Care Worker, Deputy Home Manager and Home Manager prior to commencing her current post of Regional Manager in 2019. Tracey has a passion for working with young people in residential care and ensuring the well-being and quality of care for vulnerable young people.

Tracey provides a layer of governance and support to the homes to ensure the delivery of high standards of care. Tracey has a BA in Social Care.



**Jean Andersen**  
Regional Manager

Joining in 2010, initially as part of a student placement, Jean has held the roles of Residential Social Care Worker, Social Care Leader, Deputy Home Manager and Home Manager, prior to commencing her current post of Regional Manager in 2021. Jean has a BA Hons in Social Care Practice.



**Sinead Duffy**  
Regional Manager

Sinead joined in 2013, having previous experience working in mainstream residential and children's detention services. She has held the roles of Residential Social Care Worker, Social Care Leader, Deputy Home Manager and Home Manager before being promoted to a Regional Manager position in 2023. Sinead has a passion for trauma informed and relationship-based practice.

Sinead has a BA (Hons) in Social Care and is one of the organisations CARE educators, following certification from Cornell University.



**Samantha Erskine**  
Referrals Manager

Samantha worked with the organisation in 2008 as a Residential Care Worker for 2 years. She returned in 2015 as a Home Manager before taking on her current role in 2020. Samantha leads the responsibility of reviewing referrals and implementing the matching process across the home.

Samantha has a BSc Hons in Social Work and has obtained a TCI Trainer Associate Certificate from Cornell University.



**Jenni Layden**  
Operational Support via SEN's/Safeguarding

A Social Worker for over 30 years, Jenni is highly experienced in residential care, family service and domestic violence. Jenni was a Residential Social Worker for 5 years in Ashdale's first home before being promoted to a Home Manager, a role she held for a further 5 years. After 7 years of teaching on the Social Work course at one of the colleges in the North of Ireland, Jenni returned to Ashdale in 2021, and has held her current role since.



# Meet our Therapeutic Support Team



# The Therapeutic Support Team

**Consisting of Occupational Therapists, Psychologists, Teachers and Art Therapists, our in-house TST provides Therapeutic and Educational inputs to all of our young people in Ashdale Care in line with our Model of Therapeutic Support.**

The members of the TST use evidence-based practices derived from a Developmental Trauma Informed approach and are also guided by the literature on attachment, the neurosequential model and the principles of positive behaviour support.

## Outcomes monitoring

Ashdale Care is committed to providing the highest quality care and therapeutic support throughout all our homes and for each young person who lives with us. As part of our commitment to quality, we monitor progress and outcomes for our young people across a range of important areas and domains that are relevant to them and to all our stakeholders. This year we are implementing a new progress and outcomes tracking software system that will enable us to analyse in more detail the areas where our young people are making progress and the areas where they continue to need support. Having a systematic approach to the assessment, monitoring and tracking of this data will help assure that we are providing the right support in the right way and will enable us to adjust our supports as appropriate.

## Reflective Practice

Ashdale Care understand that working with young people in out of home care is rewarding but also can be very challenging. As part of our overall support strategy for staff, Ashdale Care have introduced regular Reflective Practice sessions for all staff, working directly with young people. Reflective practice sessions play a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of staff working in Ashdale Care. These sessions provide an invaluable opportunity for staff members to critically analyse their experiences, actions, and decisions within a supportive environment. By reflecting on past interactions and interventions, staff can identify strengths and areas for improvement in their practice and in their environment. This introspective process fosters continuous learning and professional development, ultimately leading to better outcomes for the children in their care. Additionally, reflective practice cultivates empathy, self-awareness, and resilience among staff, enabling them to navigate complex situations with greater confidence and sensitivity.





# The role of the Education Team



- Providing group education classes/sessions for a maximum of four young people.
- Classes focus on developing social competence, group interaction skills and peer relationships between our young people.
- Group activities focus on what stage the young person is at developmentally, e.g. incorporating a range of play-based, interactive and academic activities.
- After-school clubs are also provided e.g. homework clubs, tutoring sessions, cooking clubs and film clubs.





# The Role of Occupational Therapy

**An Occupation is defined as any activity that has meaning to a person.**

## **Our Core Belief:**

Engaging in meaningful occupations positively influences health and well-being.

The role of occupational therapy in Ashdale is to intervene at the level of the person, environment and occupation to remove barriers and promote inclusion, engagement and participation in meaningful occupations.





# The role of Psychology

**Psychologists assess and treat young people's cognitive, behavioural and emotional issues. They help develop tailored intervention strategies to help each young person to make sense of their lives. They provide therapeutic support and guidance for young people, staff and the organisation as a whole.**

Often, young people in residential care have experienced significant levels of trauma or difficult life circumstances. Psychologists play an important role in helping young people address this trauma, supporting them and those who are caring for them, to move together towards recovery and positive change.



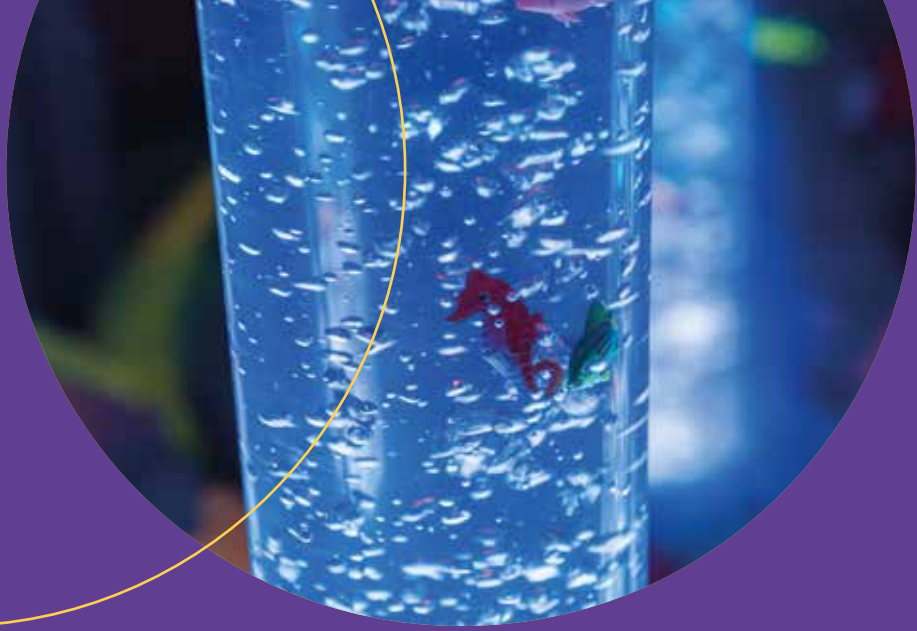


# The role of Art Therapy


**Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy which allows the young people to express their conscious and subconscious thoughts and feelings that would often be difficult to express verbally.**

Art therapy is person-centred and client-led and we work with what the young people bring on the day of the session.





# Ashdale Learning Hub





# Introducing Ashdale Learning Hub

**Ashdale Learning Hub (ALH) is our in-house, education-focused environment that facilitates learning using a developmental trauma-informed approach. Classroom type activities are provided, along with additional therapeutic supports, by our Teachers, Psychologists, Occupational Therapists and Art Therapists.**

Many young people in Ashdale Care are not in school. This may be due to school exclusion or difficulty in coping with the school environment resulting in behavioural and emotional difficulties.

ALH provides a developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed learning forum. It provides structure, meaningful daily activities and is a stabilising, therapeutic support for our young people.

ALH offers our young people an opportunity to improve their social competence, friendship skills and sense of belonging. Though not a replacement for school, it provides a bridge back to mainstream school for those currently out-of-school.



The Ashdale Learning Hub is located in a spacious, dedicated building and outdoor area that provides a range of educational and therapeutic support services.

It consists of:

- Two purpose-designed classrooms
- A dedicated Art Therapy Room
- Two Sensory Regulation spaces
- A Multi-Purpose/Creative Activity room
- An Indoor Social Activity room
- Individual Therapy spaces
- Extensive garden and playground area



# What Happens in Ashdale Learning Hub?

Multi-Purpose room for structured group activities including some messy play & games



A range of therapeutic and educational supports including:

- Play-based indoor and outdoor skills development
- Small-group educational classes (3-4 pupils), provided by our fully-qualified teachers and following a carefully-designed, individualised curriculum
- Social, Emotional and Sensory Regulation groups
- 1:1 sessions with Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Art Therapy and Teachers (where appropriate)
- After-school activities



Senior Classroom  
for age 12 +



The junior classroom  
for 8 – 12-year-olds



Sensory Room



# TST: Development Plans for 2024

Delivery of specialist Developmental Trauma Training in modules across 2024

Continued development of Outcomes Measurement for all young people

Expansion of the Therapeutic Support Team to include additional, In-House Behaviour Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Art Therapists and Teachers

Continued development of Ashdale Learning Hub with expansion of therapeutic groups, educational classes and individual therapeutic sessions

Outdoor skills building groups for children







Expansion of the Reflective Practice Support sessions for staff and managers

Development of new specialist therapeutic services

Rollout of Green Schools Programme

Development of Research Programme within Ashdale



# Model of Therapeutic Support



# Model of Therapeutic Support

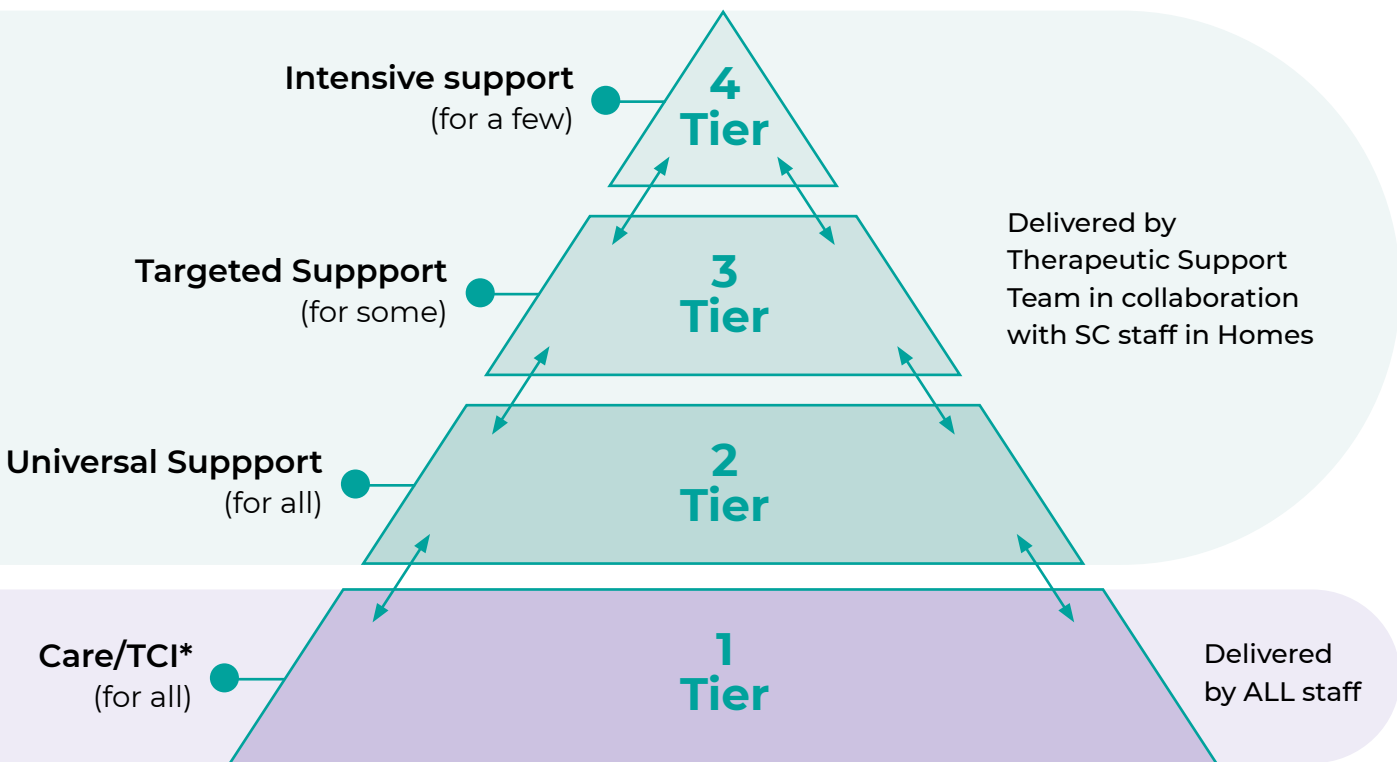
Ashdale Care provides an integrated approach to care in accordance with Ashdale Care’s Stepped-Care Model of Therapeutic Support.

This ensures a comprehensive, Developmental Trauma informed, attachment-oriented service that is guided by evidence-based approaches and best practices in order to facilitate safe, effective, child-focused residential care.

The Model of Therapeutic Support is implemented by Social Care staff in the home (using the CARE/TCI programmes), with additional indirect and direct therapeutic support, assessment and intervention being provided by Ashdale’s Therapeutic Support Team.



Targeted, specific, high-intensity, direct/indirect



\*Devised by Cornell University

Universal, general, lower-intensity, indirect

## Ashdale Care: Stepped-Care Model of Therapeutic Support



# Operations





# Admissions/ Discharges

**In 2023, Ashdale Care placed a total of 24 new admissions. This accomplishment was made possible through the unwavering dedication and expertise of our experienced management and staff teams. By adopting a trauma-informed approach, we have been able to provide the necessary support and care to the young people under our supervision.**

Our commitment to excellence is reflected in the highest quality individualised bespoke training conducted by our Therapeutic Support Team and training team, enabling our staff to deliver direct care and intervention tailored to each young person's specific needs.

Notably, two young people successfully transitioned back to their homes after receiving intensive support and intervention from both our social care and therapeutic support teams.

Additionally, four young people celebrated their 18th birthdays and smoothly transitioned to aftercare services, while another four were successful in returning back to placements within the North of Ireland.

These achievements highlight our commitment to empowering and positively impacting the lives of the young people in our care.



**Ashdale's approach to managing young people's risks 'in house', enables children to feel safe and held in their home by their team. I feel this is a big factor of success with young people's placements.**

**SOCIAL WORKER**



# External quality ratings – overview of inspections operating 17 fully regulated homes across Ireland

**Strong in-house quality and governance procedures result in continuously positive external inspection reviews and means all homes are registered without conditions.**

- Tusla manages the registration, inspection and monitoring of children’s residential facilities in Ireland
- The Alternative Care Inspection and Monitoring Service (ACIMS) conducts the inspections and is one of the regulatory services which is a sub directorate of the Quality Assurance Directorate within TUSLA
- The National Standard for Children’s Residential Centres, 2018 (HIQA) provides the current framework against which inspections are carried out and provides the criteria against which centre structures and care practices are examined. All homes have been inspected against these standards; all were announced inspections
- In common with best practice, in all cases corrective action plans were developed for homes to address issues and achieve compliance, allowing registration under current criteria to roll forward for another three years without conditions
- Tusla findings reflect the organisations systematic proactive central support structures and good quality training designed to equip front line home management teams with adequate resources to safely and compliantly deliver care to the young people in their care
- Commissioners and Regulators have consistently chosen to express very positive perceptions, reflecting the organisations multi-disciplinary teamwork which ensures effective service integration is achieved with Local State Mainstream schools, and in house teaching provision
- In 2023, we underwent 15 inspections conducted by Registration and Inspection, demonstrating a high level of regulatory compliance across the inspected homes. With over 80% of homes receiving minimal or no actions, we are dedicated to further enhancing our governance structures to ensure the utmost compliance with regulations and national standards. Our commitment remains unwavering in delivering high-quality care and fostering positive outcomes for the young people under our care



**TÚS LA**  
An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

**Health  
Information  
and Quality  
Authority**  
An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis  
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte





# Compliments

**In order to foster a positive working culture and recognise the impactful work of our staff in our homes, a Compliments Register has been established. This register serves as a platform to highlight and celebrate positive feedback received (by internal and external personnel) for individual staff members, homes and the company as a whole. Home Managers diligently record compliments on the weekly operations reports, which are then compiled into a collective database. This database allows us to identify patterns and trends in the compliments received.**

The compliments we have received consistently highlight the high level of care provided within Ashdale Care Ireland, and they serve as a testament to the hard work and dedication of our teams. For instance, we recently received an email from a SWD team leader expressing their gratitude and stating that the quality of care provided was “exemplary.” They also expressed their wish that all their young people could receive the same level of care. Additionally, a Guardian ad Litem shared their delight with the progress of one young person, stating that they were “the most settled he’s ever been” and that he seemed like a “different little boy.”

These compliments not only validate the efforts of our staff but also highlight the positive impact they have on the lives of the young people we work with. They serve as a reminder of the importance of our work and motivate us to continue providing exceptional care and support.



**Thanks so much to the team for the support provided to the young person at this time. You can really see that the young person is starting to settle despite all of the trauma surrounding the Christmas period and the struggles during family contact.**

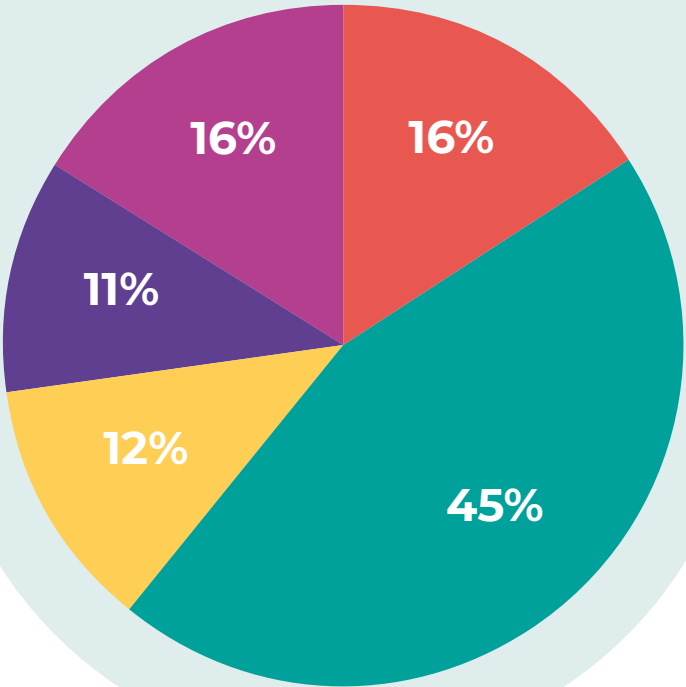
***SOCIAL WORKER***







### Categories of Compliments



- Quality of care
- Quality of staff
- Quality of service and staff
- Quality of service
- Quality of care and staff





# Complaints

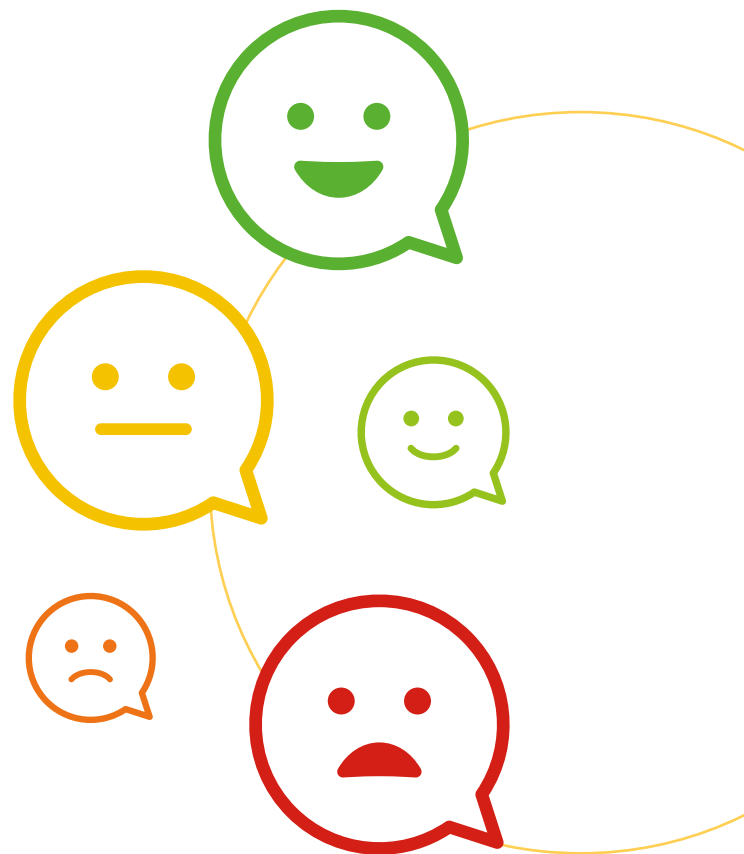
**Ashdale's commitment to governance and improvement is evident through the regular review and amendment of its Policy on Complaints. The most recent review took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2023, resulting in changes that aimed to ensure the efficient handling of all complaints, whether notifiable or non-notifiable. A key focus was on recording complaints in a manner that facilitated the identification of trends or the need for escalation, enabling prompt action to be taken.**

To facilitate oversight and monitoring, all complaints are directed to a dedicated email address, within the organisation. Notifiable complaints, in particular, receive close monitoring to ensure they are addressed in a timely manner and in accordance with the established policy. Similarly, non-notifiable complaints also undergo oversight to identify any emerging patterns or trends that may warrant escalation. These findings are then shared with the Home Management and Regional team, fostering a collaborative approach to addressing and resolving complaints. Overall complaints have oversight via the Director of Care, and, as part of good governance, oversights are shared weekly with the Leadership Team as part of the Weekly Governance Report.

Analysis of complaint trends reveals that a significant proportion of notifiable complaints pertain to various aspects of social work services. These include issues related to placements, family time, the absence of a social worker, or inadequate communication with social workers. Additionally, notifiable complaints concerning group living are directly linked to the prevalence of dysregulated behaviours and peer relationships within the home. It is important to note that these complaints are not limited to a specific home but are influenced by changes in the composition of residents or if a particular individual exhibits high-risk behaviors

that impact the overall setting. In cases where high-risk behaviors of one young person affect another, these complaints are escalated to the Child Protection and Welfare Referral Form (CPWRF).

By closely monitoring and addressing these trends, Ashdale aims to continuously improve its care services and ensure a high quality of care for all residents.





# Annual Feedback from Surveys 2023

## Ashdale Care Feedback Surveys 2023

Ashdale Care recognises that surveys can provide valuable feedback from young people in receipt of services about the quality of care they are receiving, how their interactions with staff and others have been handled, what services they feel are lacking or not meeting their needs and their overall experience with the service.

Ashdale Care issued survey feedback forms to all young people residing within the organisation in October 2023 along with Social Workers and family representatives (where appropriate to do so). Young people were supported by their keyworkers to complete the forms.

The information gathered will be used to help inform service delivery by listening to the perspectives of young people who experience Ashdale Care services. This helps to make Ashdale Care more people-centred, responsive, and effective.



**Everyone is working together to ensure that the young person does not feel that his behaviours are wrong. The team are role modelling and teaching the young person that his behaviours will not cause negative reactions and that he will be supported to understand them so he can interact with other children in a more socially appropriate way.**

*NIAPP*





# Young People's Voice

## Young People Survey Findings:

Over

**70%**

**of young people in Ashdale Care surveyed, stated they felt well looked after and had somebody to talk to if having problems.**

The results showed that young people felt that the staff who looked after them worked together to support and help them, that they were helped to understand what is expected of them in the home and that the care and support they received is good.



Over

**60%**

**of young people felt they were helped to do well with their learning**



Over

**60%**

**felt they were treated well by the people who looked after them, that their views and worries were taken seriously, staff know how to support and help them, and they have a good understanding of the supports available to them.**



**52%** of young people find it easy to talk to the people that care for them

**48%** said they would recommend Ashdale Care if a friend required support.



Out of all the surveys

**36%**

answered yes when asked if they felt involved in decisions about their life.



Results show that

**48%**

of young people feel listened to by the people who look after them

1. All feedback forms will be reviewed and responded to locally in each home; action plans will be developed, and individual work completed in each home to respond to any area of dissatisfaction reported by an individual young person/social worker/family member.
2. Regional managers will review feedback and review evidence of actions being completed, satisfying themselves that the areas of dissatisfaction have been addressed and are closed out.
3. Focus next year will be to get a better participation from all stakeholders.
4. Review of the survey forms to ensure they are developmentally appropriate, child friendly and easily understood.
5. Review of feedback forms for parents/carers/social workers to ensure the questions provide us with a real understanding of their thoughts, feelings and attitudes towards the care being provided.
6. Explore identifying an electronic questionnaire/survey for 2024 feedback which may result in increase of uptake from professionals.



# What Young People are happy with in Ashdale Care

Yes, you guys all love me lots

I love my room and my bed is nice and cosy

I like how the staff treat me for my birthday, Christmas and during the summer when I have activities

Relaxing and therapeutic with all the lovely fields around us

I like that I get more support every day, staff try to work out things for me. I like how I get TV and games and have a friend in the house and it's nice and warm and safe for me

I feel loved and cared for and I just love it here

Likes the lights in my room and the food

I love playing my switch and going on adventures

I like the staff are good craic

I be really taken care of

# What Young People suggested we could do better

- 'Live with my siblings / more independent time.'
- 'I would like a pet and love the new sensory room. The lights are cool, maybe some more lights.'
- 'I don't like it when there is more than three staff. I don't like the daily change in staff. Would like staff to do 3 overnights in a row.'
- 'I want to decorate my room.'





# Relationship with Placing Bodies

## Tusla and Health & Social Care Trusts in NI

**Ashdale Care has successfully established and nurtured highly positive working relationships with both Tusla and Health & Social Care Trusts in the North of Ireland.**

Through ongoing collaboration, Ashdale Care has consistently provided suitable and safe quality placements for young people in need. These partnerships have been built on trust, effective communication and a shared commitment to delivering exceptional care and support. By understanding the unique needs and preferences of each organisation, Ashdale Care ensures that the placements align with their requirements, resulting in a mutually beneficial arrangement. The dedication to maintaining high standards of care and the emphasis on creating a safe and nurturing environment have been instrumental in fostering these positive working relationships.

Ashdale Care has successfully provided safe and high-quality residential placements to 47 Children in 2023, enriching their lives and supporting them through a trauma-informed lens and approach to reach their full potential.

We have developed an excellent partnership with Tusla and are now a selected provider to participate at Tusla's Forum for "Social Care Workers, Employers Forum".









# Quality & Governance



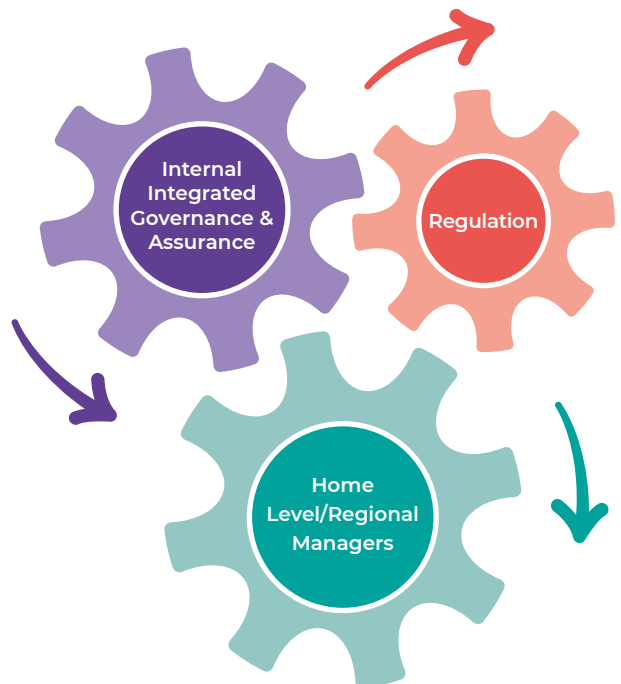
# Strong In-House Quality & Governance Systems

**At Ashdale Care we are fully committed to governance and reporting practices that prioritise diversity, inclusivity and equality as integral components of our ethos. We recognise the importance of transparency and inclusive decision-making processes as critical tools for ensuring all our stakeholder voices are not only heard but actively contribute to shaping the organisations strategic direction. By incorporating these principles into our governance framework, we set a standard for ethical business practices, inspiring others to follow suit in championing diversity, inclusivity and equality within the broader corporate landscape.**

The culmination of our approach to sound governance is illustrated in all systems in place throughout the organisation. We have recently reviewed our Governance Assurance Framework which serves as a testament to our commitment to equality and inclusivity across all aspects of our organisation and provides a detailed account of the approach and initiatives that support our commitment to providing high-quality care to young people in a transparent and open way.

On a daily basis, we address the issues and opportunities our organisation faces such as performance measures (non-financial), compliance with Tusla’s national standards, staff well-being & training, external quality rating, service quality and sustainability, etc. We measure and report on these issues using a combination of quantitative and qualitative performance metrics ranging from non-financial analytics, surveys, third party

regulatory inspections and stakeholder feedback. Our governance structures are the foundation for ensuring we have in place assessment of systems, policies and practices against the National Quality Standards and the National Regulations, we identify areas that may require improvement and we promote organisational ethos.





# Governance & Quality Assurance



**As an external Independent Consultant, I have the privilege of working with Ashdale Care in building a robust integrated governance framework underpinned by rigorous Quality improvement and Assurance.**

To embed Integrated Governance, Quality Improvement and Assurance in an organisation involves engaging with staff at all levels. Essentially, the CEO and Leaders shape culture, create the conditions and model the behaviour necessary for quality to flourish.

My role requires me to engage with the Leadership team to explore individual roles and the essential requirement to work as a team with a systemic and integrated approach in which Financial, Human Resources and service performance are fully integrated at every level. This involves each member of the Leadership team working out their own accountability arrangements in detail and ensure that these arrangements are integrated as part of the Triple lock and Assurance Framework.

For Integrated Governance for Quality and Safety to be effective all staff must be aware and have clarity on their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities and seek out and obtain all opportunities to visibly demonstrate their commitment to building a culture of high quality, safe services and actively demonstrating the values of the service.

As part of the Assurance, I am an independent member of the Quality Assurance Committee and Chair the Governance Committee.

My involvement allows me to engage with staff, listen to their challenges, prompting their solutions so they understand the importance of the quality data that is required to give confidence that the controls are in place and working well in their areas of responsibility and how this fits in the organisation's overall Assurance Framework.

Additionally, my role as an Independent Consultant involves me visiting all the homes once yearly and speaking with Home Managers, essential to hear their voice on the quality and safety of the services. To hear their opinion on how the Framework is working in practice in each home, exploring their understanding of their own roles, responsibilities accountabilities and authority to achieve the objectives demanded by the robust integrated Governance and providing Assurance in their areas of responsibilities.

It is indeed exciting and encouraging to work with Ashdale Care to be part of an organisation that embeds in their Governance a commitment to continuous learning and change as integral to a quality improvement process and Assurance in delivering high quality, safe services to the children in their care.

**Dr Edwina Dunne, DBA**



**Brona**  
*Compliance Manager*

Brona joined Ashdale in 2019. She has spent her entire professional career working in residential childcare after qualifying from Sligo Institute of Technology with a BA in Social Studies in Social Care in 2005. Brona has experience in many roles across different organisations from Social Care Worker, Team Leader to Home Manager for 13 years +. She spent 5 years in home management in Ashdale and has now entered into the world of Compliance, applying her many years of experience, to ensuring our young people are provided with the best care possible and ensuring our homes meet the highest possible standards.



**Patricia**  
*Compliance Manager*

Patricia joined in 2022 and has 10 years' experience working in children's residential care. Patricia has worked across several different sectors in social care from residential care, semi-independent and aftercare before commencing her role in compliance. Patricia provides a layer of Governance and support across all homes to ensure they are compliant with the National Standards for Childrens residential care. Patricia has a BA in Applied Social Studies and Social Care and MA in Human Rights and Criminal Justice.



**Despite high levels of property damage from the young person the team worked tirelessly to return the home back to a liveable, comfortable and safe environment. The home has a warm homely atmosphere. The home is welcoming to young people and their visitors.**

*Social Worker*



# Training





# Ashdale Care's Accredited Training Team

Meet the team



**Valerie**

*Training Officer*

**Ciaran**

*Training Officer*

**Helen**

*Training Manager*



# Investment in Training our People During Induction

**Ashdale Care's investment in training and in their people in developing and maintaining their skills, is a vital part of their strategic planning for the future. We know that in doing so the benefits to our young people are immeasurable.**

Designing a robust induction program within an organisation to support our values and philosophy of care, requires careful planning and integration of various components. In this case, our three-week Induction Journey, focuses on Developmental Trauma training, CARE (Children And Residential

Experiences), Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI), as well as mandatory training areas like First Aid, Medication Training, Fire Safety, and Anti-Ligature training, providing a comprehensive onboarding experience for new employees.

## **1. Introduction to Organisational Values and Mission:**

- Provide an overview of the organisation's values, mission and commitment to providing a safe and supportive environment for clients.
- Emphasise the importance of understanding and implementing trauma-informed care principles in all interactions.

## **2. Developmental Trauma Awareness:**

- Offer training sessions & workshops on developmental trauma, its impact on individuals and strategies for providing trauma-informed care.
- Include case studies or real-life scenarios to illustrate concepts and encourage active participation.

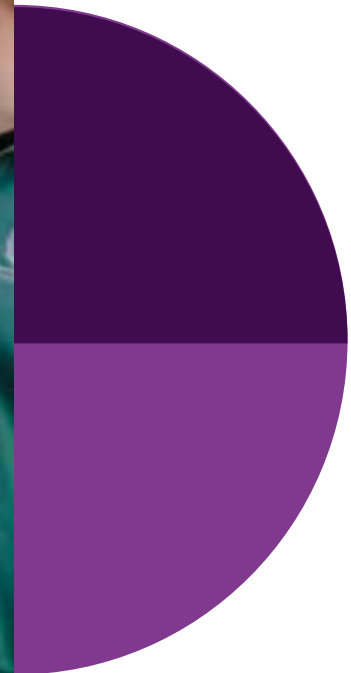
## **3. CARE Model Training:**

- Introduce the CARE Model (Children And Residential Experiences) and its principles.
- Conduct interactive sessions to explore how the CARE Model can be applied in daily practice to promote positive outcomes for individuals in care.

## **4. Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI):**

- Provide comprehensive 5 Day training in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, focusing on de-escalation techniques, crisis prevention and intervention strategies.
- Incorporate role-playing exercises to practice TCI skills in simulated crisis situations.





### 5. Mandatory Training Sessions:

- First Aid: Offer three-day training in First Aid Responder techniques including CPR, wound care and emergency response protocols.
- Medication Training: Provide instruction on the safe administration of medications including dosage calculations, documentation procedures, and recognising adverse reactions.
- Fire Safety: Conduct fire safety training sessions covering evacuation procedures, fire extinguisher use and prevention strategies.
- Anti-Ligature Training: Offer specialised training on identifying and mitigating ligature risks within the organisation's facilities, emphasising safety protocols and regulatory compliance.

### 6. Integration and Application:

- Facilitate discussions and activities to help new employees integrate their learning into their roles.
- Encourage reflection on how trauma-informed care principles and crisis intervention techniques can be applied in various scenarios.

### 7. Assessment and Feedback:

- Conduct assessments or quizzes to gauge understanding and retention of key concepts.
- Provide opportunities for feedback to identify areas for improvement and refine the induction program for future cohorts.

### 8. Ongoing Support and Development:

- Offer ongoing support and resources for employees to continue their professional development in trauma-informed care and related areas.
- Encourage participation in additional training opportunities, workshops, or peer learning communities.



# Residential Child Care Project

- Ashdale has partnered with Cornell University to utilise its years of research and examination of international best practice to roll-out the trauma informed and outcomes focused CARE and TCI models in Ashdale
- Ashdale is a pioneer and at the forefront of the positive developments in the children's residential space in Ireland and is constantly striving to provide better outcomes for its children and young people



Cornell University.



*Facilitated by Dr Johnnie Gibson & Angela Stanton Greenwood from Cornell*

Another successful CARE training completed with our staff, showcasing the organisation's commitment to the roll out of CARE



# Numbers in Induction within the Last Year

9

Total number of inductions

March 2023 -  
March 2024

157

Total number in attendance for onboarding

March 2023 -  
March 2024





# Training: Development Plans for 2024

Delivery of CARE Model across all Homes and via Induction/ Onboarding programme  
January 2024 – December 2024

Continued Partnership with Cornell University in our sustainment of TCI and CARE Fidelity

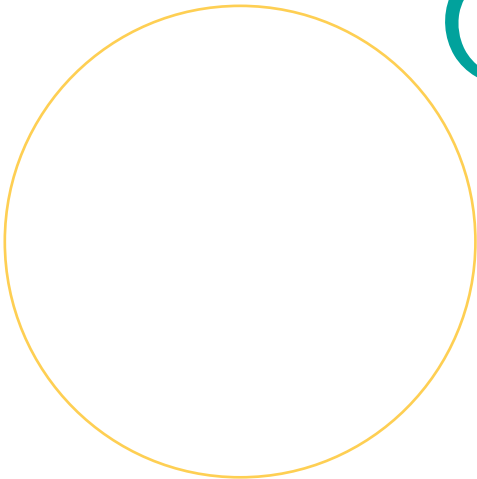
Identifying the organisation's goals, assessing employee needs and developing a structured approach to address those needs. A comprehensive training plan for the year 2024 is completed

Roll out of the Training Plan for 2024

Continued development of Training Team with additional TCI, CARE and First Aid Responder Trainers



Continued development of Quality Improvement - training data – identifying trends, patterns and areas for improvement



Continued development of a robust Training Management System (TMS) to support training reporting



Expansion of Training Delivery in response to the geographical expansion for Ashdale



Development of E-Learning Platform within Ashdale Care



# Our People



## Valerie's Story

I first joined Ashdale Care in June 2013, taking on the role of Residential Social Care Worker in Clarnagh House. Whilst this role was not without its challenges the support received from the management and the camaraderie within the team made it 'the best job ever'. I always felt it was such a huge privilege to be part of the four young people's lives who were residing in Clarnagh House at that time, creating a safe space for them to experience caring relationships, learn new skills and support them in reaching their potential. After two years of working as a residential social care worker, I took up the position of Deputy Home Manager. Initially I missed working directly with the Young People however I found I was quickly gravitating towards the job satisfaction of supporting the team instead of the young people. Through role modelling, mentoring and supporting I realised I was enabling the team to also reach their full potential. Additional management training provided by Ashdale Care also upskilled me and prepared me for future management positions. In 2020, I took on the role of Home Manager within Clarnagh House. Again, the role of Home Manager was not without its challenges however with guidance and support received from the Regional Manager and Therapeutic Support Team this empowered and enthused me to be a more confident and effective manager, enabling me to support the team, especially through times of crisis. In 2019, I had the opportunity to attend a CARE workshop and following on from this I was appointed as a CARE educator. This created an exciting opportunity for me to be part of the training team rolling out the CARE training to all personnel and promoting Creating Conditions for Change within the organisation, in which I hold the role of being "CARE Lead".

In August 2023, I joined the Training Team. This again give me a great opportunity in connecting with people and transfer the skills and experience I have gained from the ten years of working within the



**Through role modelling, mentoring and supporting I realised I was enabling the team to also reach their full potential.**

organisation to my new role as trainer. Within my training role I particularly enjoy facilitating induction, meeting new members of staff joining the organisation, inspiring and guiding them through the induction process and promoting Ashdale Care's values and ethos. We frequently talk about what a privilege it is to be part of our Young People's journey within Ashdale Care and rightly so. Over the course of my journey, I feel it has also been a great privilege to work within teams, to encourage, support, mentor and upskill people and to witness their growth, commitment and dedication to their role and to the Young People they work with.



## Sinead's Story



**While this position proved challenging, it was one of the most rewarding experiences of my career.**

I began my journey with Ashdale Care in 2013 as a Residential Social Care Worker, having come from mainstream children's residential and children's detention services. What interested me about Ashdale Care was the trauma informed approach to the care of young people. My previous experience in children's services paled in comparison to the Ashdale approach, which motivated me to understand the needs of young people and the supports required to achieve progress in the work we did. During my time as a Residential Social Care Worker, I received ongoing training in trauma and attachment which enhanced my understanding of the needs of the young people I was supporting. The direct therapeutic insight and guidance available at that time further informed my work with the young people. The work was challenging but supported through ongoing training, supervision and a spirit of teamwork and reflective learning. I left Ashdale Care for a period to experience another sector in social care. It wasn't before long I realised my interest, skill, and heart lay with residential care and specifically, trauma informed and relationship-based practise.

I returned to Ashdale Care as a Deputy Home Manager in August 2018 under the direct guidance and supervision of an esteemed colleague. My time as Deputy Home Manager afforded me the experience to develop my skill and confidence in management and leadership. The role provided me with the opportunity to develop skill in paperwork requirements, collaboration with external professionals, oversight of practise standards, while at the same time, developing skills in organising, communication and team development.

My experience as Deputy Home Manager empowered me to progress onwards to the role of Home Manager in May 2020. As Home Manager I shouldered significant responsibilities including leading a team to ensure best practices were met, supporting the young people in reaching their full potential, engaging with external professionals and families and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the home. While this position proved challenging, it was one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. Supporting young people reunify with family,





return to education, build relationships in their community, and develop lifelong skills and resilience has been the greatest privilege for me. Having the opportunity to develop colleague skills and practise and now work alongside them in their more senior capacity has been another privilege.

The opportunity arose in September 2023, and I successfully applied for the role of Regional Manager. This has allowed me to use my knowledge and skill in a governance capacity, ensuring appropriate resources and supports are available to other Home Managers to ensure best practises are achieved along with supporting their learning and development.

Over the years I have experienced some changes in Ashdale Care – the expansion of homes across the

country, the development of supports and services for the young people and the increased professional opportunities for colleagues to learn, develop and progress in their careers. However, what has been consistent with Ashdale Care is that the young people remain at the core of our daily work. We are now able to support more young people across the country and offer enhanced services and supports to meet their needs.

It continues to be a privilege and honour for me to work in an environment that maintains the young person at the centre of all work and creates opportunities for young people to reach their full potential, along with working in an environment that remains committed to the continued professional development and wellbeing of our colleagues.





# Human Resources

**We have placed an increased emphasis on recruitment, training and well-being during this period. Recognising the essential role of a happy, skilled and compassionate workforce in providing effective support, our organisation has made significant investments in our employees.**

The emphasis on employee development reflects our commitment to cultivating a team equipped to address the complex social issues young people face daily. By investing in our employees, we contribute to job creation and elevate the quality of care and support available to young people, reinforcing our dedication to making a positive and lasting impact on their lives.

In order to make this happen we have made significant additions to the People Team,

completing a root and branch review of our compensation and benefits package aligned to our employee feedback coming through the listening sessions held with representatives from each home and members of the Leadership Team.

As the organisation grows, we are committed to investing in further electronic platforms to enhance the employee experience from the first point of contact, right through the employee life cycle.



**Caroline**

*HR Operations Manager*





**UPDATES ON NEW PEOPLE**

- New hire orientation
- Cohort approach
- Building connections from day one
- Employee referral programme
- Recommend to a friend



**NEW AREAS OF SUPPORT IN THE ORGANISATION**

- Dedicated HR programme resource
- 10 Social Care Leader qualifications in 2023/2024
- Increased sponsorship with educational courses
- Comprehensive bespoke training
- Increased attendance within the Social Care Leader programme



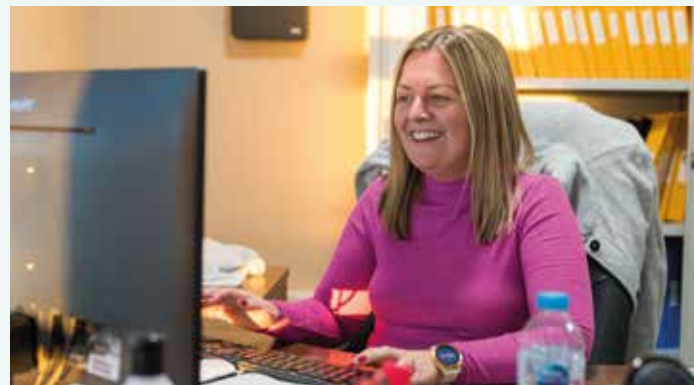
**RETENTION STRATEGY**

- Listening sessions
- Staff care utilisation
- Compensation, benefits & tenure
- Induction & training
- (20+) internal promotions
- Rotas - adjusted shift patterns to provide greater flexibility at a local level
- Gym discounts
- Education reimbursement
- Employee engagement
- Team building events
- Community work
- Staff recognition awards



**NEW INITIATIVES COMING ON BOARD**

- Applicant tracking system – smoother application process, streamlined onboarding process & reduction in time to hire
- Electronic rotas
- Employer branding, leveraging social media via LinkedIn & Instagram





# Academic Partnerships

It's commendable that Ashdale Care has established close partnerships with six universities and colleges, actively engaging with students through on-campus presence, guest lectures and supervised placements. The initiative to offer a glimpse into 'A day in the life of a Residential Social Care Worker' is an effective way to generate interest in residential childcare as a career.

The commitment to providing bespoke training modules for student placements demonstrates a focus on enhancing their skills and preparing them for future employment. It's noteworthy that a substantial number of students choose to join Ashdale's community as employees, indicating a positive impact on their experience during placements.

Investing in maintaining relationships with universities and colleges, coupled with strategic

locations near key educational institutions, showcases a commitment to nurturing a continuous pipeline of talent. This approach not only benefits the students but also contributes to raising the profile of residential childcare.

Overall, this proactive and comprehensive approach to talent development and relationship-building is likely to yield long-term benefits for both Ashdale and the broader field of residential childcare.



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE  
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



**Academic partnership continues with TUD as we give talks to students on the "day in the life with Ashdale Care". We also support our management teams with continued study**





# Staff Recognition Awards





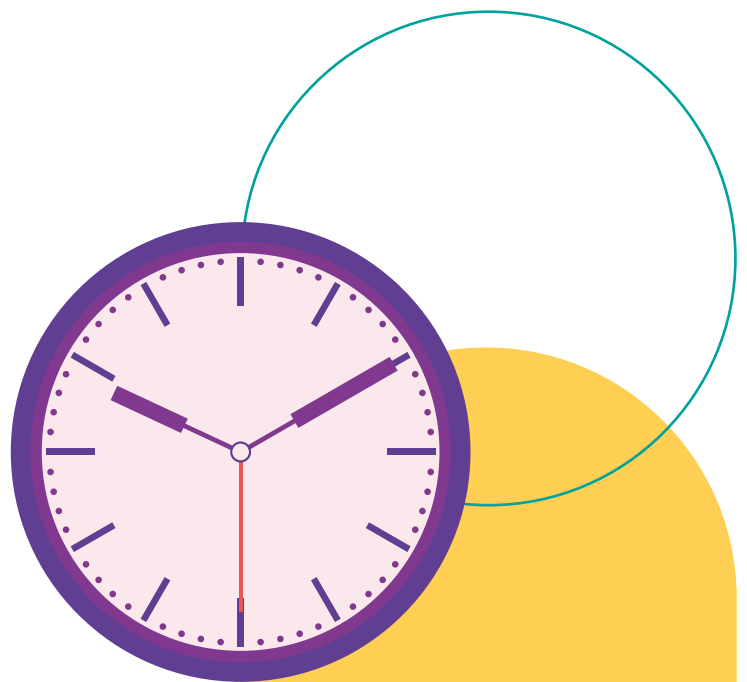
# Time Management System (TMS)

**Ashdale employs approximately 300 hourly paid staff across multiple shifts in 17 residential homes. Up to the end for 2023, time reporting was operated via a manual timesheet system resulting in a significant time investment across all staff and payroll to consolidate up and confirm hourly data for payroll. In addition, data analysis has proved cumbersome and time consuming**

The existing HR information system (TMS) has been upgraded to implement digital time reporting with effect from the beginning of 2024. This investment in digitalising the recording of the monthly rosters and the daily updating of hours via digital check-ins across all staff will lead to significant benefits as we move forward as an organisation.

The benefits that will accrue to Ashdale going forward include:

- 1. Time Efficiency and Accuracy**
- 2. Streamlined Payroll Processes**
- 3. Real-Time Visibility**
- 4. Shift Scheduling Optimisation**
- 5. Compliance and Accountability**
- 6. Cost Reduction**
- 7. Employee Empowerment**
- 8. Scalability and Centralisation**





# Rules For A BETTER LIFE

- 1, Leave a little sparkle  
wherever you go.
- 2, Expect nothing and appreciate  
everything.
- 3, Laughter is the best medicine.
- 4, Always stay true to yourself.
- 5, Forgive and forget.
- 6, Worry less, smile more.
- 7, When life gives you rainy  
days play in puddles.



# ESG - Environment, Social & Governance



# Ashdale's Commitment to Sustainability



## Motor Fleet

Move to Hybrid/ EV's



## Home Energy & Refuse

Energy Audits; solar/ PV solutions;  
efficiency in waste disposal



## Garden Maintenance

Robotic Lawnmowers;  
re-wilding; tree planting



## Head Office Efficiencies

new HQ "A-Rated"



# ESG at Ashdale

The last 12 months have seen the development of the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) Committee within Ashdale. This committee has a critical mission focused on promoting sustainability, social responsibility and ethical governance within the context of its operations. The primary objectives and responsibilities of the ESG Committee within Ashdale can be summarised as follows:

## 1. Environmental Stewardship:

- Develop and implement initiatives to reduce the organisation's environmental impact, such as energy conservation, waste reduction and sustainable sourcing.
- Evaluate and recommend environmentally friendly practices and technologies for adoption in residential homes.

## 2. Social Responsibility:

- Foster a supportive and inclusive environment for the children residing in the homes, prioritising their well-being, safety and development.
- Collaborate with local communities to strengthen relationships and contribute positively to social welfare initiatives.
- Ensure that the organisation's activities align with ethical and socially responsible standards.

## 3. Governance and Ethics:

- Monitor and enforce ethical guidelines and standards for all staff members, ensuring a commitment to integrity and transparency.
- Establish and oversee policies that uphold the rights of children, including privacy, dignity and equal opportunities.
- Conduct regular assessments to ensure compliance with relevant regulations and ethical practices.

## 4. Stakeholder Engagement:

- Communicate ESG goals, progress and impact to stakeholders, including employees, residents, families and the broader community.
- Seek input from stakeholders to incorporate diverse perspectives and address concerns related to environmental, social and governance matters.



### 5. Continuous Improvement

- Regularly assess and enhance ESG policies and practices, taking into account evolving standards and best practices.
- Implement mechanisms for ongoing measurement and reporting of key ESG performance indicators.

### 6. Training and Awareness

- Provide training and awareness programs for staff, residents and other stakeholders to promote a culture of sustainability, social responsibility and ethical conduct.

### 7. Reporting and Accountability:

- Develop and publish regular reports on the organisation's ESG performance, including achievements, challenges and future goals.
- Establish accountability mechanisms to ensure adherence to ESG principles and address any identified gaps.

By fulfilling these responsibilities, the ESG Committee contributes to the overall well-being of children in residential homes, enhances the organisation's reputation and aligns its operations with ethical and sustainable practices.



**The quality of care was 'exemplary' and wished all their young people were afforded the care this young person was provided.**

**SOCIAL WORKER**



# Young people's involvement in Green Schools Programme

Ashdale Care have joined the Green Schools programme in a positive step towards promoting environmental awareness and sustainability. We are focusing on litter and waste for the first year as it involves the active participation of the young people. We are also involving a representative from the Green School Committee in the ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) committee, ensuring that environmental concerns are integrated into broader organisational strategies.

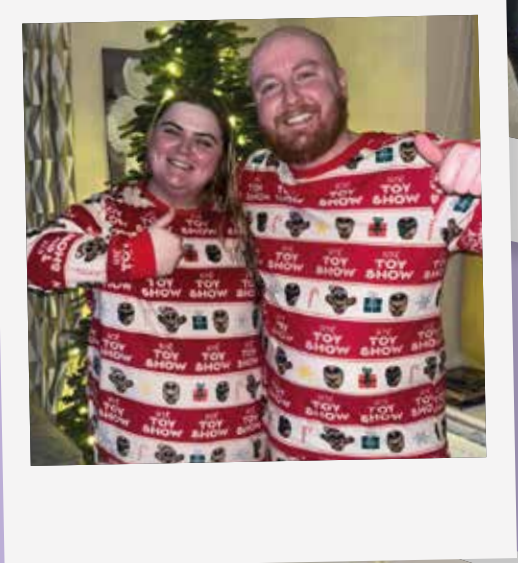
Alongside the green committee, we have formed a subgroup that includes the young people, allowing them to contribute their ideas and perspectives directly. As part of an inclusive approach, having a designated Green School Champion in each home is a practical way to ensure that the initiative is implemented effectively at the grassroots level. These champions will play a crucial role in motivating their peers and fostering a sense of responsibility towards reducing litter and waste.

Overall, the initiative holds great potential for creating a positive environmental impact whilst instilling a sense of environmental responsibility in the young people involved.





ESG





# Ashdale's commitment to working alongside Tusla.

In supporting Tusla with their Strategic Plan for Residential Care services for Children and Young People 2022 – 2025, we have implemented/actioned the following recommendations within Ashdale Care in line with recommendations from Tusla's Strategic Plan.



## Recommendation 2

Increase capacity across Residential Care Services

## Recommendation 4

Improve governance, accountability and integrated decision making for Residential Care placements

## Recommendation 5

Implement a standardised, evidence-based model of care in all Residential centres, with a specific focus on integrated care planning and permanency planning

## Recommendation 6

Improve access to therapeutic support for children in Alternative Care

## Recommendation 7

Strengthen Recruitment and Retention of Residential Care Staff

## Recommendation 8

Promote consistent external regulation of all Residential Care Centres

## Recommendation 9

Promote longitudinal research and follow-up of children and young adults discharged from Residential Care

## Recommendation 10

Develop and implement cross-agency Tusla initiatives to support the participation and retention of children and young people in Residential Care in education

## Recommendation 11

Improve data collection, validation, monitoring and reporting on key metrics in Residential Care



# Development Plan – 2024

In the coming year, Ashdale Care aims to keep growing its reach and enhancing the care we provide to young people. We're dedicated to expanding not only our geographical presence but also the positive impact we have on the lives of those we support. Our main aim is to stay at the forefront, as a leading provider of enhanced residential care for young people, and our 24 Development Plan is key to achieving this goal.

This plan focuses on improving and innovating our care services, adopting best practices, and using our expanding reach to touch more communities in need. Through these efforts, we want to solidify our position as a trusted and impactful force in youth care.





**AshdaleCare**  
Ireland

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