

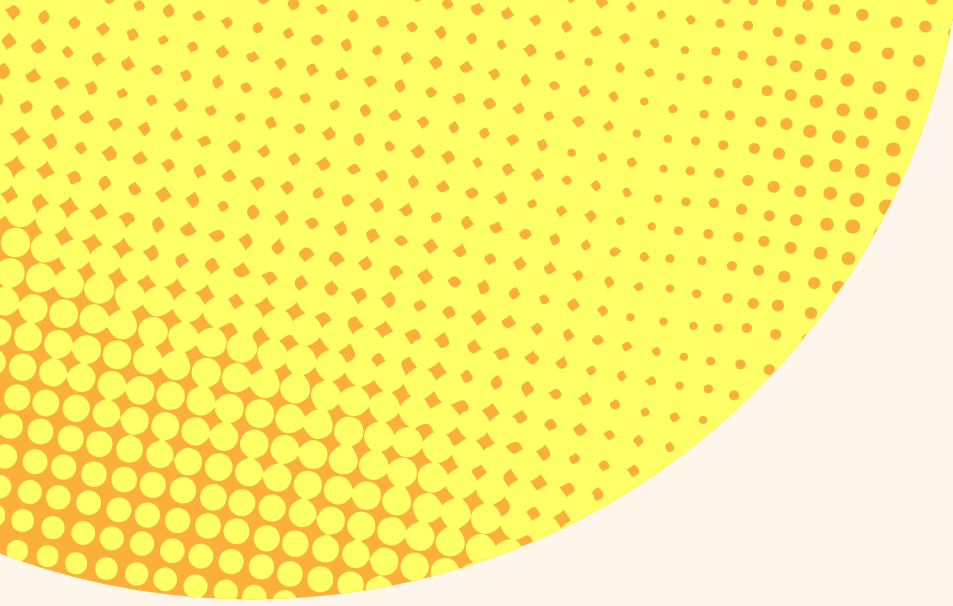


AshdaleCare
Ireland

Transforming lives  Transforming residential care



**Annual
Quality
Report**
2021/22



Transforming lives  Transforming residential care



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Welcome note from CEO

I am pleased to share our first Annual Quality Report and welcome you to our Ashdale Community.

This report is an important aspect of our approach to share our initiatives and practices that support our ongoing commitment to deliver safe, high-quality care to children and young people in a transparent and open way.

It also serves to reinforce our ongoing support to TUSLA in their ambition to continuously improve standards and outcomes for children and young people in care in Ireland. Ireland has always inspired me in this field in that the culture dictates needs led services which is strongly demonstrated by our dedicated Child and Family Agency, TUSLA and our Northern Irish Trusts.

It has been a very challenging year with the ongoing pandemic. Within our Ashdale Community we have been very fortunate that our amazing people have been dedicated to the care, protection and support of our young people and have worked tirelessly to create 'special memories' with them. I know our children and young people will look back and remember the sacrifices and the creativity that was demonstrated by our Ashdale community during this challenging time.

Our regulator within TUSLA has also been outstanding in the unrivalled support and guidance they provided during these times.

Despite these difficult times, our Ashdale Community of Care has continued to grow and thrive. We have developed new services as well as enhanced our existing services with the addition of therapeutic supports and new sensory spaces for our children and young people. We have grown our 3-week-induction programme for new members and have enhanced our training resources in order to upskill our people with as much knowledge and understanding of the complexity of need they respond to.

We continue to support our people in advancing their careers with external training and qualifications so that we can develop our ethos, culture and standard of care throughout new regions and services in Ireland.

We have enhanced our terms and conditions for our people to the very best of our ability and are considered



to be the best employer in this space according to market research.

And to support all of this, we have gained some amazing new hires in our different departments who are essential in supporting our community of carers.

We have also continued on our journey with Cornell University to implement the CARE model and are working towards our Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Fidelity review. We have now 12 TCI instructors within Ashdale and 12 educators within our CARE Project implementation team. Throughout COVID, the international CARE community – from Australia to America and right across Europe – met regularly on our virtual platform to share ideas and best practices to support each other and the young people we all care for.

We also had a successful submission and award of contract for the Provision of Children's Residential services to complement existing community based residential services operated by/on behalf of TUSLA.

'Thank you for submitting your tender for appointment to the above Bespoke Panel Arrangement for Enhanced Provision. The HSE wishes to notify you that your tender submission has been successful on this occasion for Enhanced Provision.'

This service level agreement, managed and administered by the National Private Placement Team, highlights the growing governance and professional credibility that Tusla demands from organisations delivering services to the most vulnerable children and young people in our society.

We have learnt so much from our experience of COVID and how quickly we were able to adapt and still maintain high standards of care.

Our challenge has grown even more.

Tusla is currently experiencing a significant increase in demand for residential placements which cannot be met within current procured arrangements and/or statutory and voluntary arrangements. This is further complicated by the national shortage of suitably qualified and experienced staff in this sector leading to a national shortage crisis and the growth of unregulated placements for children and young people.

We will continue to work in partnership with Tusla to try and address this crisis. We are working tirelessly to grow new services throughout Ireland and have reconfigured our growth strategy to respond as quickly and safely as we can to provide more safe places to children and young people.

We have some exciting new developments coming up which we are confident will not only begin to address this crisis but also create new and exciting career pathways for industry professionals and the amazing staff already in our Ashdale Community.

We continue to strive towards our vision; 'to reach more children and young people in Ireland'.

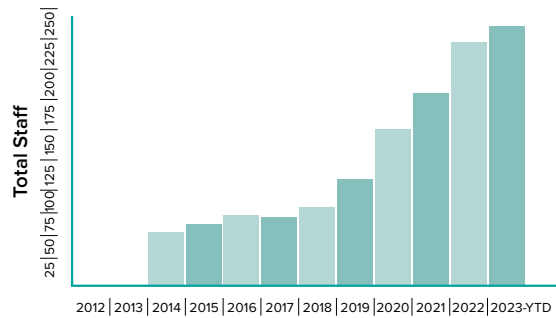
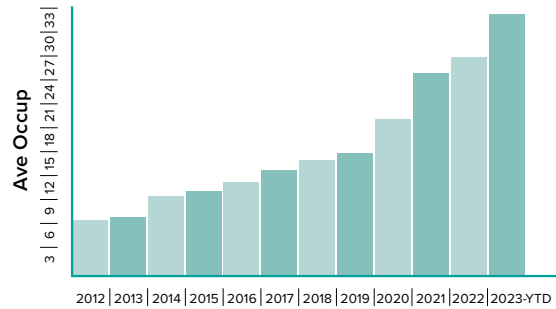
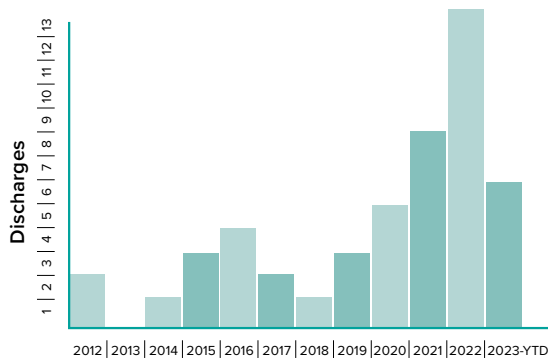
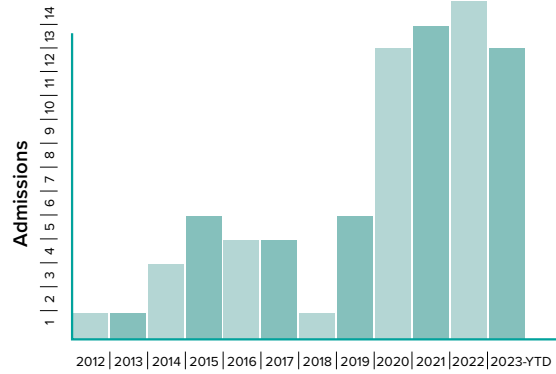
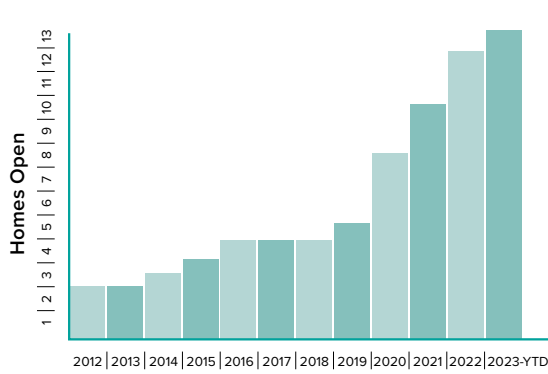
As the longest standing independent provider of residential care services in Ireland, our intention is to be future fit and maintain this title long into the future.

I hope you enjoy our report and I look forward to sharing our next one.



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Ashdale in numbers over the years



	Employees paid										
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Ashdale Care			51	5	13	71	78	110	150	208	220

Ashdale Care provides the highest level of care to young people.

The Ashdale community of care protects, supports, empowers and enables both young people and colleagues to positively transform lives

"I don't know where I would be right now if I didn't come to Ivy Hill. You have saved my life. You have worked alongside me, helping me to become a better person. You have shown me that life isn't about giving up, it's about staying focused and that is exactly how I am leaving here today. I feel ready for the future."

Former placement

"Therapeutic Homes are always people's 'go to'. The majority of Social Workers will look for Clinical Service, especially for kids with reactive attachment... Ashdale could fill their homes twice over with the therapeutic support they offer."

**Regional Manager
- Ashdale**

"It was so refreshing to have staff who went above and beyond. They were very professional and you felt like they really cared. You don't have to push them to do things, they are proactive and just do it."

Senior Social Worker - DNE

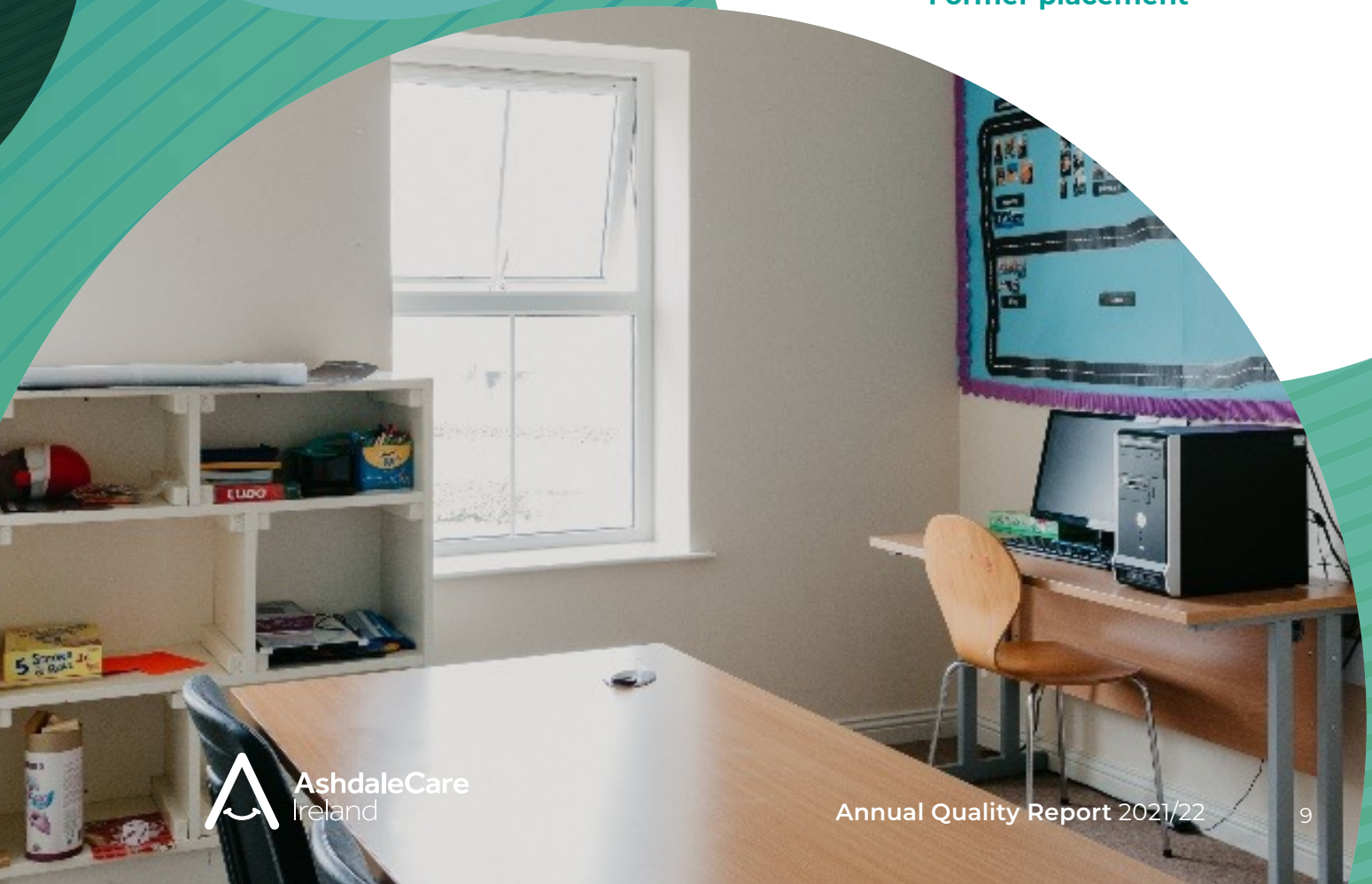
Testimonials

"The Manager and Deputy Manager were fabulous. Staff members were fantastic, committed and it was evident they had a vested interest in that child. The child was under Ashdale's responsibility for 15 – 16 months, he made massive progress."

**Social Work
Manager - Limerick**

"I have missed every part of Ashdale even though I'm only gone 3 weeks its still the longest I've ever been away from Ashdale. Ashdale is my home and it always will be... I have started my new school...it is massive but the good thing is I haven't got lost yet."

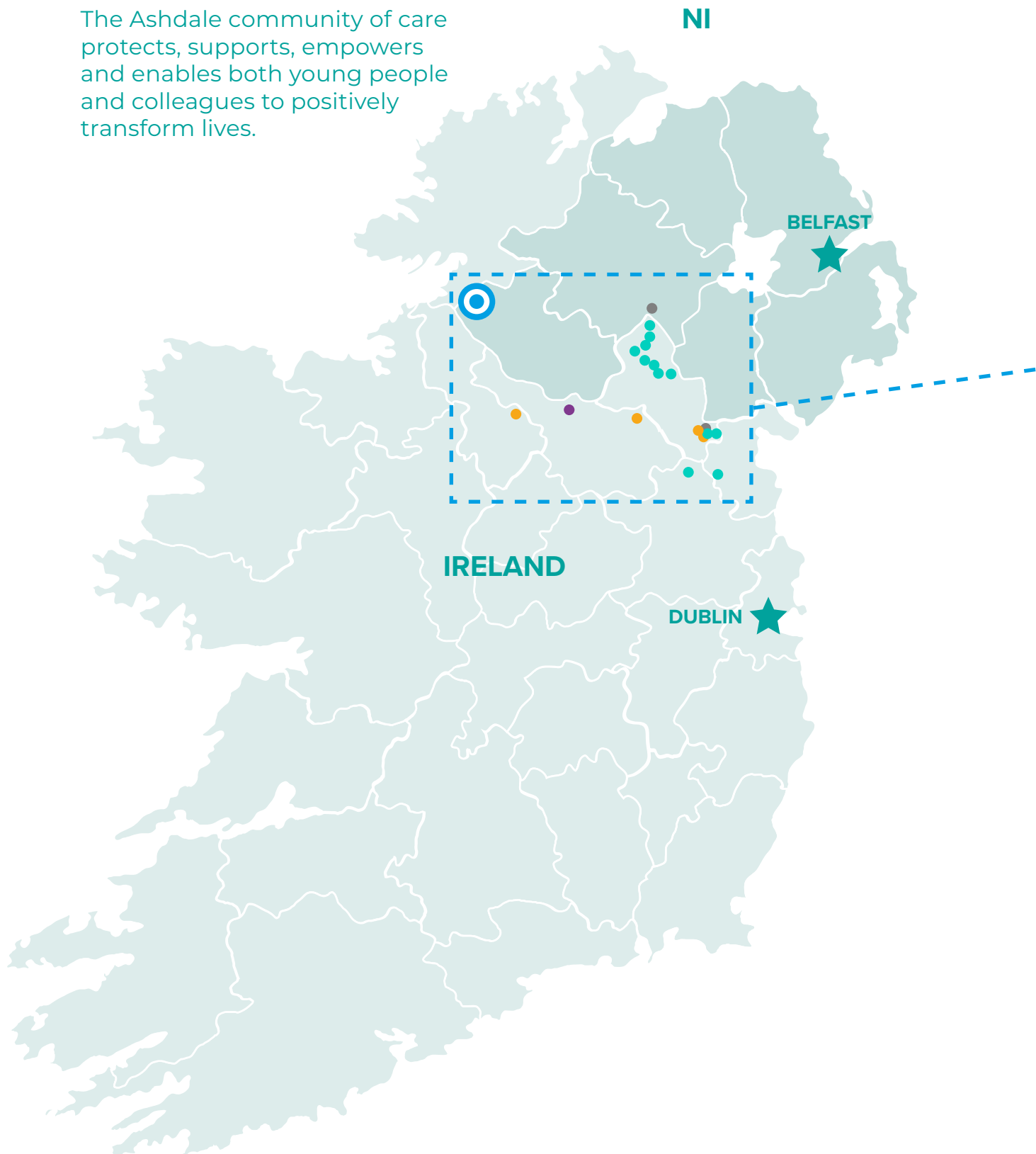
Former placement



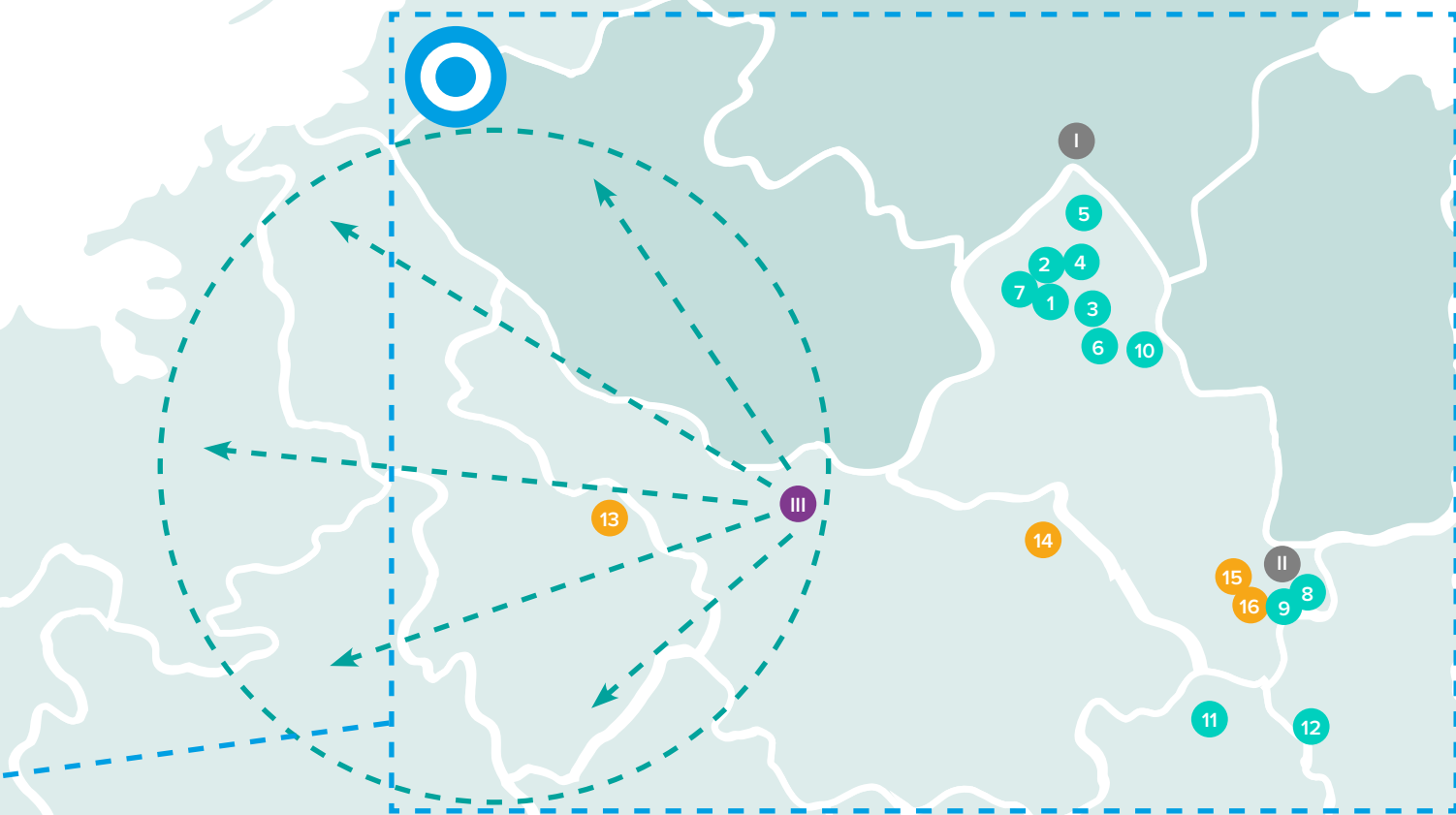
Map of Services

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.

The Ashdale community of care protects, supports, empowers and enables both young people and colleagues to positively transform lives.



Map of Services



#	Hub/Homes	Location	Opened
Homes			
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 Cottage	Monaghan	2020
10	Killymonaghan House	Monaghan	2020
11	Cornavan House	Meath	2020
12	Glack House	Louth	2020
13	Willow	Leitrim	July 2022
14	Clough	Cavan	Oct 2022
15	Alts	Monaghan	Feb 2023
16	Stranatona	Monaghan	Feb 2023
Hubs			
I	Ashdale House	Ballygawley, Co Tyrone	2006
II	Lake House	Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan	2021
III	Templeport Hall	Ballyconnell, Co Cavan	Feb 2023





Introduction to Ashdale Care

Highlights

Ashdale Care operates a “child centric” ethos with an internationally accredited quality of care service, driven by a committed and dynamic leadership team. This enables the organisation to flourish and achieve superior outcomes for children.



Industry leading levels of quality and therapeutic care with a clear outcome-based approach, underpinned by a “child centric” ethos. Ashdale Care was the first independent provider of residential care for children & young people in Ireland and has worked consistently with the regulator to drive standards in this field.

Hub and spoke model – a best practice model of care with multiple, comfortable 2-4 bed residential homes located around central hubs to provide a convenient location for therapeutic facilities and an integrated and holistic enhanced support service. This ensures the home environment is an undisturbed place in which children can relax and unwind.



Industry leading partnership with Cornell University to pioneer the CARE model (a trauma-informed, principle-based, multi-component model); which provides a scalable framework for growth. Ashdale is an international leader facilitating positive outcomes for children and young people in Ireland, and is the first organisation in Europe, and third in the world, to achieve TCI Fidelity status through Cornell - signalling a unique position and a robust and scalable model for high quality care.

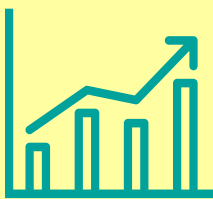
Excellent inspection reviews which have consistently marked Ashdale as achieving positive care delivery with a best-in-class approach to governance, quality and incident management. We set clear procedures and accountability throughout the organisation and in-keeping with the ethos of the business.





Our highly experienced and committed Senior Management Team cover a broad range of disciplines and comprise of a mix of home grown and industry-proven professionals who oversee a highly qualified multi-disciplinary staff base. Significant investment in the leadership team and IT systems along with a strong platform, support the growth plans of new services in consultation with Tusla.

Strong long term and embedded relationships with the key child placement bodies in ROI and NI, catering for children and young people on both sides of the Irish border – and strong brand and reputation for quality and a proven ability to deliver results.



A strong ethos, career opportunities, links with universities and reputation as a leading provider enables Ashdale to attract and retain talent.

Ashdale's culture and deeply ingrained caring ethos, embedded with a robust Governance Framework, gives confidence that high quality care is delivered in a caring safe environment. All staff receive appropriate training, which complies with legal and regulatory requirement and meets strategic objectives.



Leadership Team

A strong leadership team who are passionate about the future of residential child care

Paula Kane

Founder & CEO

25 years with Ashdale

Paula founded Ashdale in 1998. Previously Paula worked within Child Protection services and had the role as Head of Care of four independent children's residential homes in West Sussex. Paula leads the Senior Leadership Team, is responsible for overall strategy, and links in with each department to help grow and retain the culture and ethos throughout the organisation. She is a qualified Social Worker with a BSc Hons in Social Work with CQSW.



Marc Murphy

Director of Finance

4 years with Ashdale

Joined in 2018, Marc has spent his entire career within private healthcare and is a highly experienced CFO in the children's care sector. Marc has 15 years experience in residential childcare, including almost 12 years as CFO of Keys Group. Marc is responsible for all finance, accounting and tax affairs and manages the Finance & Maintenance teams. He is a qualified accountant.



Kerry Gildernew

Director of Governance,
Quality & Training

15 years with Ashdale

Joined in 2007 as a residential social worker and progressed to manage several homes before being promoted in to the Senior Management Team in 2015. Kerry was previously the Director of Care & Quality in charge of all referrals into Ashdale, maintaining strong relationships with the referring bodies. She now leads the oversight of internal governance (Chair of the Governance Committee), home inspection processes and internal home audits, policy development and review. She is a qualified Social Worker with a BSc Hons in Social Work/Dip SW.z



Caroline Gray

Deputy CEO

4 years with Ashdale

Joined in 2018 as Director of Services, Caroline has over 10 years experience in children's residential care. Caroline is responsible for business development, property acquisition and conveyancing, health and safety, support to the regional managers and is the overall manager in Hub 2 as well as a Deputy Chair of the Governance Committee. She is a chartered accountant with a Bachelor of Commerce and Masters in Accounting.



Kelly Looker

HR Director

2 years with Ashdale

Joined in 2021, Kelly has over 20 years experience in HR, with 15 years spent in healthcare at a senior level, Kelly is responsible for Ashdale Care's People Strategy which is centered upon our Ashdale Community and ensuring that our people are nurtured and developed to be the best they can be. She completed a Post Graduate qualification in HR Management and is a Chartered member of the CIPD.



Operational Management Team

A management team who share the same passion for the future of residential care

Tara O'Byrne

Head of Care
1+ year with Ashdale

Tara joined in October 2021 to complete digitalization project; In September 2022 Tara took on the role of Head of Care. Tara has over 15 years' experience working in Social Care in various roles. She has a BA in Applied Social Studies, Higher National Diploma in Social Studies and a Post Grad in Creative thinking, innovation and entrepreneurship



Edel McGibbon

Regional Manager
15 years with Ashdale

Joined in 2007, Edel has over 23 years of experience working in residential care. Edel began work as residential care worker and has progressed to Home Management roles and then onto a Regional Manager position within the organisation. Edel has a BSc Hons Degree in Community Youth Work.



Tracey Lee

Regional Manager
12 years with Ashdale

Tracey joined in 2010 and has held the role of Social Care Worker, Deputy Home Manager and Home Manager prior to commencing her current post of Regional Manager. 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
12 years with Ashdale

Joined in 2010 initially as part of a student placement. She has held the roles of Residential Social Care Worker, Deputy Practitioner, Deputy Home Manager and Home Manager. Jean was afforded the opportunity to open one of Ashdale's newest homes as the organisation developed before taking on the role as Regional Manager in 2021. Jean has BA (Hons) in Social Care Practice.



Samantha Erskine

Senior Social Worker
9+ years with Ashdale

Samantha worked with the company in 2008 as a residential social care worker for 2 years. She then returned in 2015 as a Home Manager in Tydavnet House before taking on the role of Senior Social Worker in 2020. Samantha shares the responsibility of reviewing referrals and implementing the matching process across the homes.



Jenni Layden

Senior Social Worker
12+ years with Ashdale

A SW for almost 30 years, Jenni's experience includes Residential, DV and Family Intervention. Jenni was an RSW for 5 years in Ashdale's first home and was Home Manager for a further 5 years. After 7 years teaching in SWC, Jenni returned to Ashdale in 2021 as Senior Social Worker.



Care, Quality and Overall Culture

Ashdale Care's model of care, coupled with a strong focus on quality and a unique child-centred ethos.

Model of care

- Ashdale's model of care is underpinned by market leading principles that have been further developed as part of the CARE model and TCI accreditation alongside Cornell university.
- Ashdale operates a hub and spoke model emphasising the distinction between the hubs and the homes - hubs are therapeutic centres set away from the homes which enable the homes to remain a relaxing environment where the children and young people can unwind and feel cared for.
- Emphasis is placed on keeping children and young people in education, with a key objective of facilitating integration into, or maintaining attendance in mainstream education.
- At Ashdale the children and young people take ownership of their individual placement plan to ensure full commitment and engagement.
- A focus is placed on a tailored plan and carefully selecting the right mix of therapies for each individual, delivered by a dedicated in-house team of OT's, Psychologists, teachers and creative art psychotherapies.

Culture and ethos

- Ashdale's culture and deeply ingrained caring ethos is led by the Senior Leadership Team and instilled in all employees within the Ashdale Community.
- The culture of respect and passion for creating positive outcomes for young people permeates throughout the organisation.
- The Senior Leadership Team are focused on hiring the best people for the roles and offer clear progression opportunities for their staff.
- The team are supportive, committed and driven to secure the best outcomes for young people in their care.
- Ashdale is focused on the wellbeing of its staff and encourages all staff members to utilise support available such as consultation with the therapeutic support team after significant events, external confidential support to staff (6 sessions per staff member with potential to extend), a monthly listening group led by members of the Leadership team for staff feedback as well as access to gym/spa membership and team away days.

Leading quality focus

- Ashdale has a robust overarching governance and care framework in place to ensure high standards of quality are continuously maintained throughout the organisation.
- As part of the Assurance framework that Ashdale created with an Independent Consultant expert, the Governance Committee seek to identify potential risks, ensure that controls are in place to mitigate these risks, and consequently maintain high levels of operational quality and safety across the organisation. Based on sufficient evidence it provides assurance to the leadership team, the board and external regulator that internal controls are in place for quality and safety and are operating effectively.
- Ashdale has detailed policies and procedures in place including regular meetings which generate a detailed ongoing actions list with clear reporting lines. These policies are reviewed annually by a policy review group.
- All homes are well invested and maintained. Homes are subject to monthly audits by the in-house compliance manager.
- Ashdale provides continuous staff training with mandatory refresher courses to ensure the highest levels of care. Bespoke training workshops are also implemented to respond to individual requirements within the homes as they arise.
- Ashdale is recognised for its ability to maintain the safety of children with the most challenging behaviours, which is driven by a combination of appropriate safeguards and governance, leadership and culture in addition to an unrivalled level of therapeutic support. This is recognised by its excellent quality reviews.

Core values

The delivery of quality, child-centric, outcome-focused care, alongside a continuous drive for improvement in the level of services is underpinned by a core set of values within Ashdale Care. This supports Tusla's 2022-2025 strategy, "to improve alternative care services across the continuum of care for children and young people who cannot live at home for a period of their lives"

Honesty and integrity

- Committed to promoting the highest standards of honesty and integrity to enable and empower every individual and transform and nurture their life experiences.



Pursuit of excellence

- Creating an environment where each individual can pursue the highest possible levels of personal development through feeling protected, accepted, listened to, valued and supported.

Transforming lives



Transforming residential care

Mutual respect

- Fostering an environment in which every member of the Ashdale community nurtures the spirit of trust, compassion, team work, openness and respect.



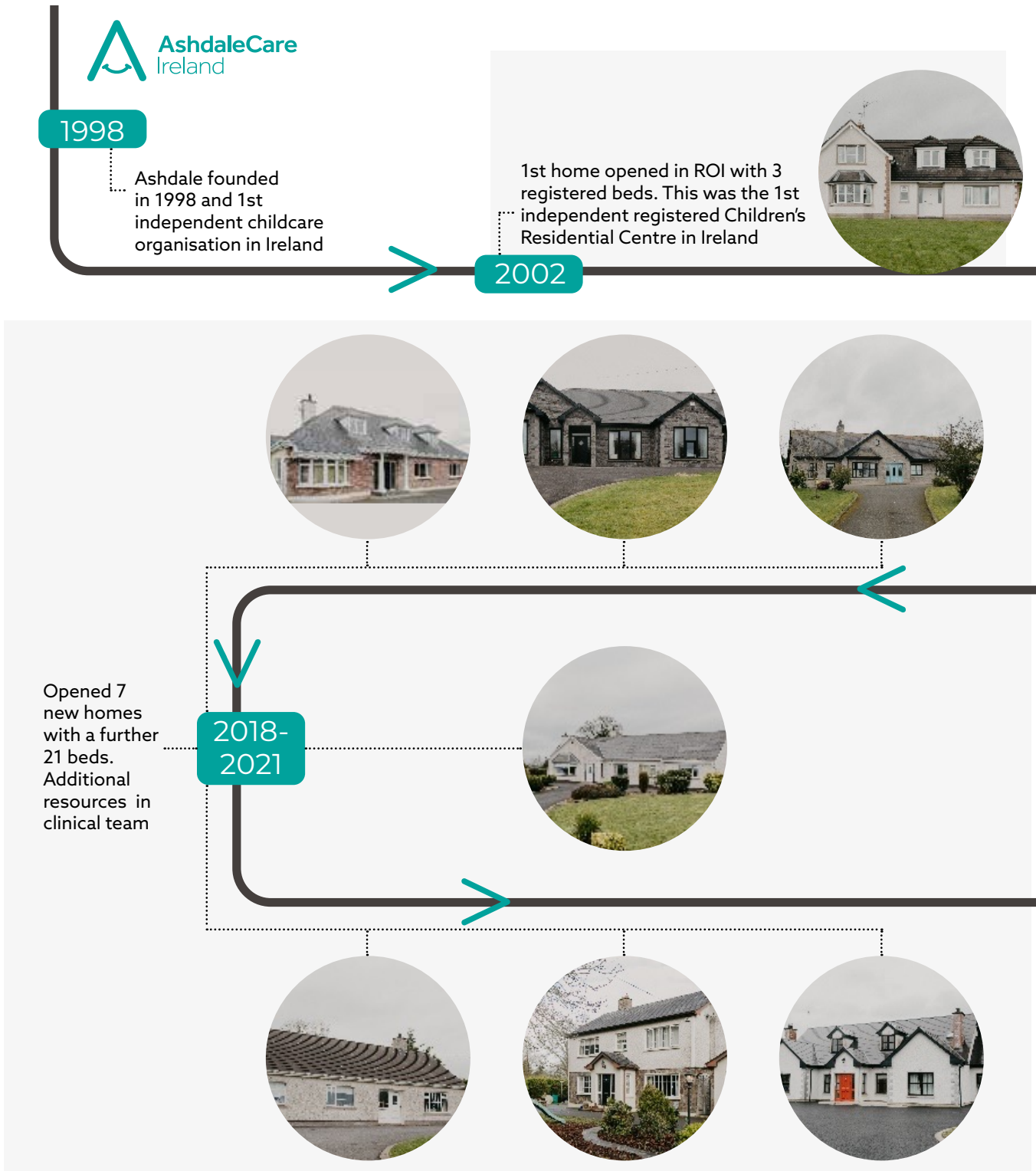
Personal accountability

- Committed to fostering an environment within which each individual understands and accepts responsibility for upholding and reinforcing the core values.



Ashdale's history

Ashdale Care was founded by Paula Kane (CEO) in 1998 and has achieved international accreditation as a provider of children's therapeutic residential services in Ireland.



Landscape of residential care in Ireland

Increasing demand for high-quality independent provision of specialist residential care for children, coupled with undersupply, has created a significant opportunity for Ashdale Care's continued growth. This aligns with the Ashdale Community vision of reaching more children in Ireland and continuing to support Tusla in creating more safe places for children and young people.

A significant and growing landscape and demand for differentiated services

- Ashdale's first hub is based in Ballygawley, Co Tyrone and all of the homes this hub supports are located in North Co Monaghan.
- At 44 registered placements, Ashdale is currently the largest enhanced stakeholders of independent provision of residential childcare services in Ireland.
- Ashdale is responding to the increasing demand on Tusla to provide differentiated services as part of our 3 year strategy.

Increasing child welfare incidences and declining foster carers driving demand

- Demand is scaling across the landscape driven by a combination of factors. The number of children referred due to welfare concerns has been rapidly increasing over recent years, and all indicators point to a continued sharp rise in demand for children's services. An independent report reviewing the Tusla referrals process found there was a systematic delay in registering at-risk children; pointing to a larger unmet need.
- There is also a structural workforce deficit for social workers which means that community supports cannot meet the complex needs of children in the community. Foster care is a critical part of the alternative care network for children in Ireland who cannot remain with their families, and the number of carers in Ireland has declined significantly in recent years; with a decline of almost 600 in the number of approved foster carers between 2016 and 2021. This means an increasing number of foster care placements are breaking down and reaching crisis point, further driving residential care demand.



Landscape of residential care in Ireland

Rapid growth in emergency respite and under-reporting of the scale of demand

- These demand dynamics have led to emergency respite services being used to partly fill the gap. Children in these services, which typically operate on a “bed and board” basis and without the therapeutic services wrap around provided by Ashdale, can stay for a maximum of 28 days before reapplication. The reality of the reapplication process means children can remain in these settings for a number of months.
- A number of other well publicised reports in the Irish market have highlighted the capacity issues in the alternative care system with under-reporting of the scale of the unmet demand for children’s care services in Ireland. As at May 2021, there were 81 cases with approved funding for residential places waiting for placement in ROI.

Declining practical available capacity in the market; despite rapidly scaling demand

- Despite rising demand for placements; the practical available capacity in the Irish landscape is under significant pressure due to closures and reduced occupancy. There has been a persistent level of churn of smaller providers in the independent sector; this is expected to continue as regulation increases to keep driving quality up. Barriers to entry have also increased significantly and many providers have also diverted capacity to other sectors (e.g. disability).
- In Northern Ireland there is no provision of an equivalent level of complex care and there is no residential care available for children under 12. The closure of more beds in NI will likely further reduce capacity to deal with more complex cases

Ashdale’s response to the current landscape

- Ashdale continues to work in partnership with Tusla to meet their need. Ashdale submitted to the high level tender process through the HSB on behalf of Tusla to procure placements on the bespoke panel for, and on behalf of Tusla, in March 2021. Tusla is the organisation responsible for procuring and funding residential care in Ireland, and Tusla’s budget has been increasing substantially year-on-year; with most of this being directed towards increased independent sector placements.
- The State does not provide comparable services to Ashdale and hence Ashdale will continue to increase their platform to support Tusla in meeting need.
- Ashdale have responded to Tusla’s requirement for constantly improving quality through the ongoing development of a comprehensive Governance Framework to support and ensure quality services .

Stay on
the
discs



A woman with her hair in a ponytail, wearing a green and grey patterned sweater, is kneeling on a blue mat. She is looking down at a large, shallow grey tray filled with many small yellow balls. To her left, there is a stack of colorful circular mats in orange, teal, purple, and red. The background is a bright blue wall and a white door frame.

Ashdale Care's compliance with National Standards

Ashdale's Compliance with the National Standard's

Ashdale Care is the leading provider of therapeutic residential care services in Ireland dedicated to transforming the lives of children with complex and challenging behavioural requirements.

Child-Centred Care and Support

- Family Time
- Young person's booklet
- Young person's meeting
- Parent/Social Workers feedback forms
- Compliments log

Child Centred Care & Support

Safe Care and Support

- Child protection
- Safeguarding policies
- SEN Team
- Policy & Procedure group

Safe Care & Support

Leadership Governance & Management

- SLA in place with placing authorities
- Management structure clearly defined
- Governance committee
- Board of Directors
- Statement of Purpose & Function
- Compliance Team
- Health & Safety
- Independent Governance Chair

Leadership, Governance & Management

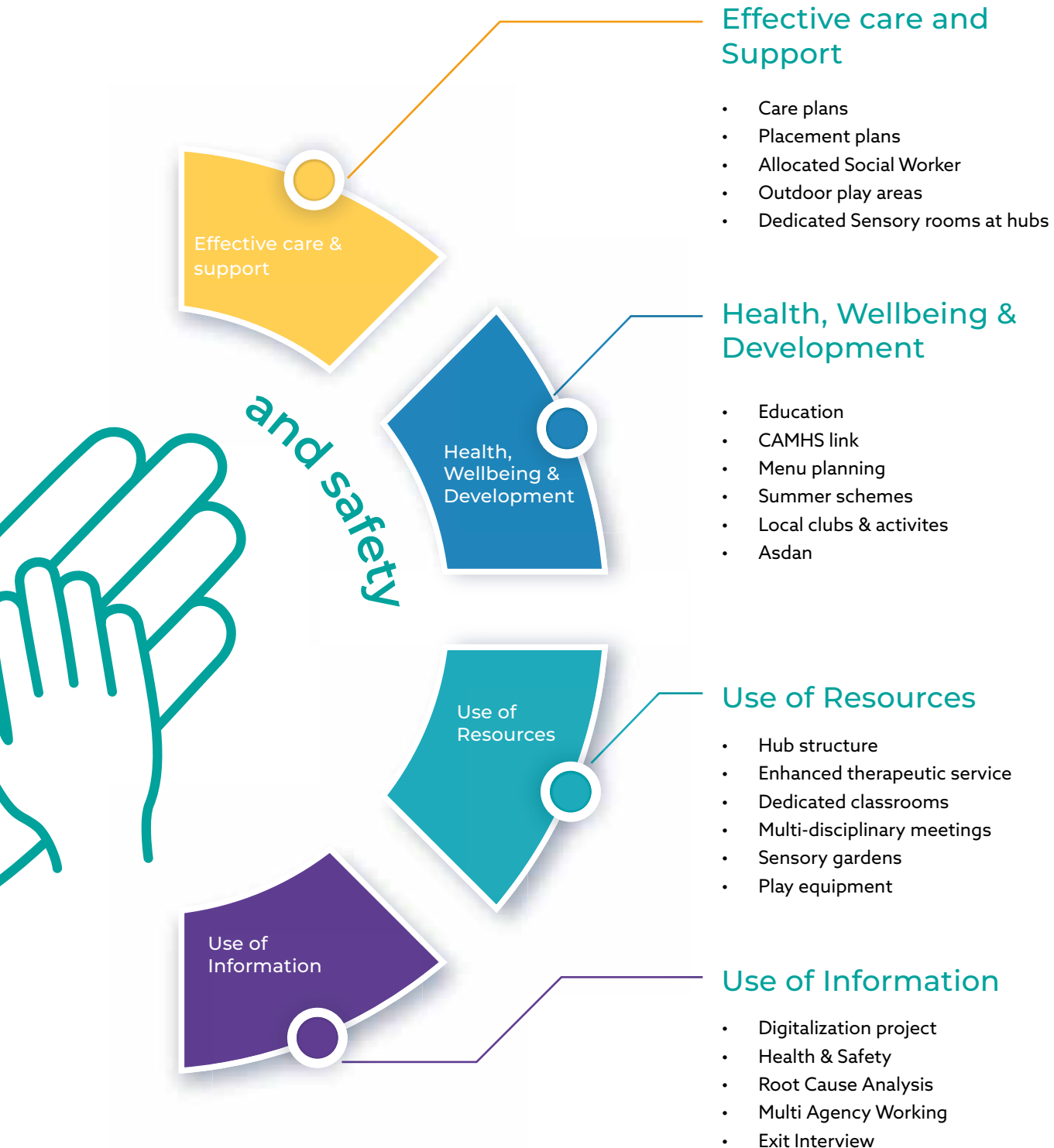
Responsive Workforce

- Workforce planning
- Retention strategy
- On call
- Supervision
- Appraisal
- Training
- Pay & benefits package

Responsive Workforce

Culture of Quality

Ashdale's Compliance with the National Standard's







The Ashdale Care Community

Hubs

Ashdale Care currently have three hubs which provide an enriching setting outside of the residential homes. Here, Ashdale Care's children and young people receive therapeutic services and education.

Overview of hubs

- Ashdale currently operates 3 hubs: Ashdale House (headquarters of the organisation, based in Ballygawley, Co Tyrone), a second hub in Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan, and a third hub in Co Leitrim, each supporting a number of allocated residential homes.
- The hubs offer a space for therapeutic treatment, one to one education and support services, as well as rooms for hosting meetings and review sessions with the care team.
- Formal staff meetings and monthly placement plan multi-disciplinary review meetings take place in the hubs. During these meetings Management, the full staff team, and the Therapeutic Support Team reflect on and evaluate each child or young person's care and placement plan and associated outcomes.
- The hubs also serve as a social place where Ashdale frequently holds celebrations and seasonal parties for the children and young people and staff and more informal relaxation zones for the children and young people.



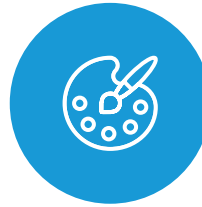
Psychology



Education



Occupational
therapy



Creative Art
Psychotherapies



Outdoor
activities



Hubs



Ashdale House

- Ashdale House is the main 'hub' and is the headquarters of the organisation, located in Ballygawley, Co. Tyrone. It has a state-of-the-art sensory room to use for therapeutic programmes.
- The therapeutic journey commences here through the process of referrals and meetings with the referring bodies.
- Departments working at the hub include the Director of Governance, Quality and Training, senior social workers, psychology, art psychotherapy, occupational therapy and teaching staff.
- Head office departments such as Business Services, HR, Finance, Quality Assurance, Training and Maintenance are also located at Ashdale House.

Hubs

Lake House

- Lake House is situated in the rural area of Carrickmacross in Co. Monaghan and serves as the main training, conference and meeting centre for the homes in this area.
- Job roles working at this hub include the Deputy CEO, regional managers, psychology, occupational therapy, teacher, Compliance Manager, TCI/SEN coordinator and Business Services administrator.
- The children and young people visit this hub regularly for direct therapeutic interventions, one-to-one education, education support services, as well as attending their meetings/reviews.
- As the organisation continues to expand, new hubs will be established, which will replicate Lake House. Ashdale House will remain the main hub and location for head office functions.



Homes

14 high-quality, well-invested residential homes provide a safe haven for Ashdale Care's children and young people & community to feel valued, respected and cared for within a home environment.

Overview of homes

- All homes are domestic in nature and are set in landscaped gardens. Creating a calm, clean and peaceful space where children feel cared for enabling them to relax and unwind is an important objective. Each individual home is well invested, with a specification and level of comfort, that is significantly ahead of residential norms.
- Children and young people are actively encouraged to take responsibility for their environment and Ashdale Care proactively listens to, and applies suggestions for the upkeep of their home.
- A dedicated Maintenance Team ensures that all homes are maintained to a high standard and all repairs, or special adaptations, required are undertaken in a timely and professional manner.
- Homes may be registered for a higher number of beds than the organisation will choose to make available. The occupancy of the home reflects the requirements of the relevant mix of children and therefore in some instances a home registered for four children may be deemed more suitable for two or three individuals and this is determined on a case by case basis.



Location

- Ashdale homes are situated in peaceful, countryside locations close to the Irish border, including County Monaghan, County Louth, Co Leitrim and County Meath.
- All homes are located within a short distance from each other with hubs within a 30 minute drive of the homes. The hubs are approximately 1 hr 45 mins drive from Dublin and 1hr 30 mins from Belfast.
- Homes are also located near to towns with cinemas, leisure centres, shopping centres and other recreational activities. They are also close to local, mainstream schools which the children attend.



Homes

Key features of an Ashdale Care home

- Children have their own bedroom which they can decorate.
- Shower rooms and bathrooms.
- Living area to relax, watch TV, play games etc.
- Private space to meet family, key workers or social workers.
- Up to 12 staff members in each home with at least 2 staff present at all times.
- Each home has up to 3 cars which staff use to transport children to school, other important appointments, recreational activities and to visit family/friends.
- Large garden areas in which sensory play equipment is used.



Admissions and discharges

Track record of resilient and committed care provided to challenging children and young people admitted from a range of care settings.

Admissions process

- Ashdale accepts referrals from the National Private Placement Team (NPPT) within Tusla and the Health and Social Care Trusts within NI.
- New referrals are led by the referrals department, which coordinates and responds to all placement enquiries.
- Every enquiry and referral is viewed from the perspective of meeting the child or young person's needs, and ensuring that Ashdale's service is the right fit for the individual.
- The organisation is committed to caring for the most challenging children and young people and a group risk impact assessment is completed by the Home Management Team and shared with the respective Social Workers ahead of placement.
- A comprehensive individual and bespoke proposal is forwarded for consideration to the referring agency followed by an invitation to visit the services and multi-disciplinary team to further explore a proposed placement plan.

"We have had a very positive experience with Ashdale... the staff were phenomenal with the child we placed with them, to the point that she returned back to her family. Their follow up is excellent, they didn't cut and run because we're no longer paying them."

**Senior Social Worker –
Kildare**

"In Northern Ireland, some children in the Intensive Support Unit ("ISU") require therapeutic care that is not currently available within the jurisdiction. There are probably a lot of children who would benefit from specialised care, but finance remains an issue. In an ideal world, if I had the option to place children currently in ISU in to Ashdale I absolutely would."

**Social Worker –
Southern Trust**

Homes

Admissions and discharges overview - 2021/2022.

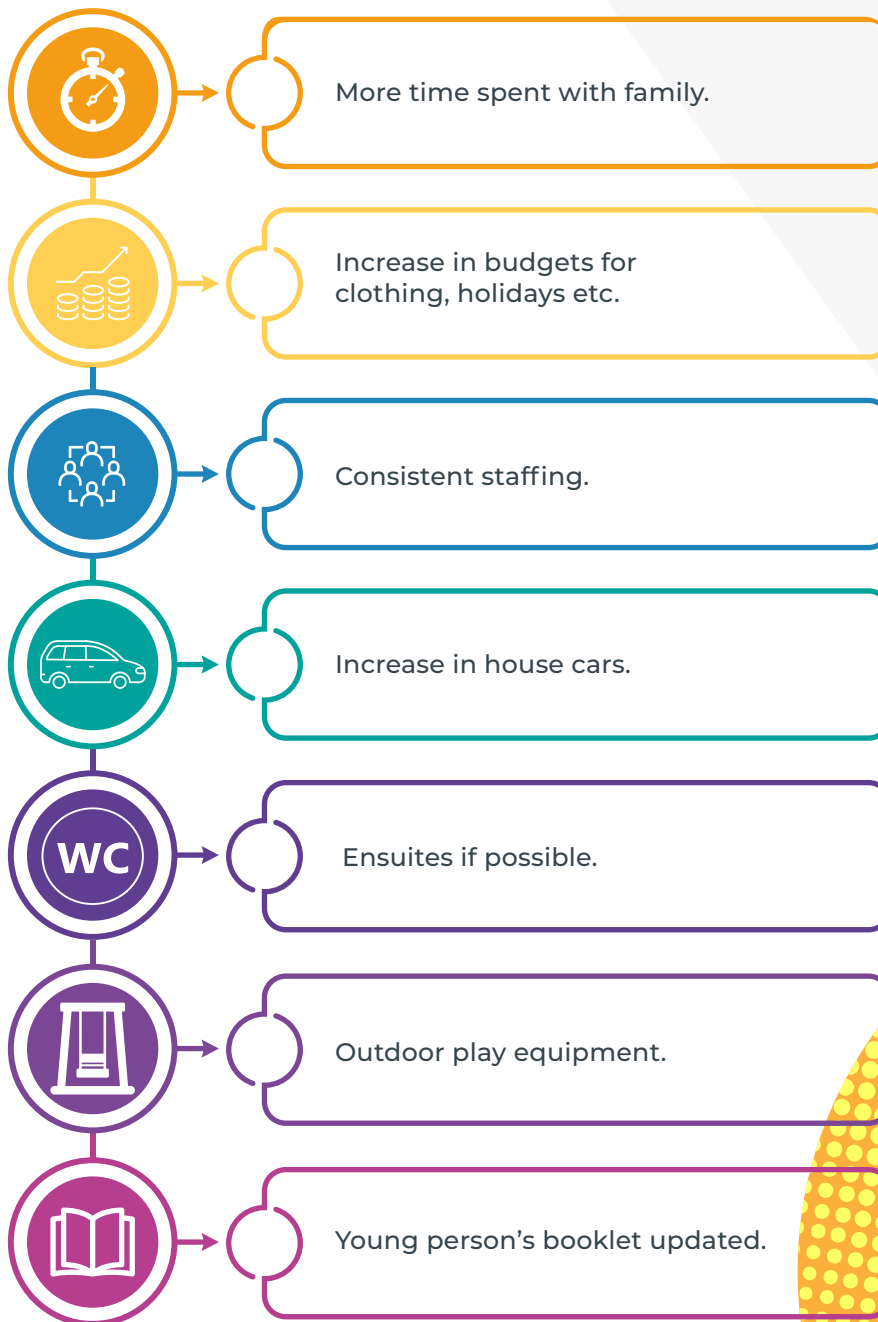
- Ashdale Care received 23 new admissions since April 2021. The number of enquiries are much larger than admissions for the period; given the scale of demand (and waiting lists). Ashdale Care are robust in their decision making about the children they place. Waitlists continue to grow for residential care beds, and Ashdale Care's occupancy remains consistently high. Ashdale Care will generally receive a referral after a bed becomes available.
- Admissions are referred from a range of settings including foster care, residential homes and secure care placements.
- Since April 2021 Ashdale Care has had 20 discharges primarily due to the child or young person turning 18, rehabilitation to a family environment or a child being returned to a NI Trust area.
- Overall average length of stay is in excess of 3 years with Ashdale Care, this is due to the high acuity and complex trauma-based requirements of the children and often relatively young ages at point of admission. There are a number of Ashdale Care's children who have been in residence for 5+ years. Most children stay until they are 18 as there is limited supply of appropriate alternative services of high quality for them to be placed.



Key findings – what do our children want?

We have a track record of resilient and committed care provided to challenging children and young people from a range of care settings.

What children highlighted



Key findings – what do our children want?

Ashdale Care's Response



Discussed through each young person's placement plan meeting and through regular key work meetings



Review conducted and new budget put in place for all young people.



Weekly workforce planning in place to take into consideration views of young people also.



Addition of an extra car to all multi occupancy homes.



Where possible the estates team take this into consideration and additional ensuite's have been added for numerous young people this year



Each home has received adequate outdoor play equipment and resources.



Actioned alongside a parent's booklet also.

Organisational structure

Ashdale Care has significantly invested in its Senior Leadership Team and wider Management Team to support growth and provide an excellent service to young people and placement bodies.

Senior Management Team and staff overview (Mar-21)

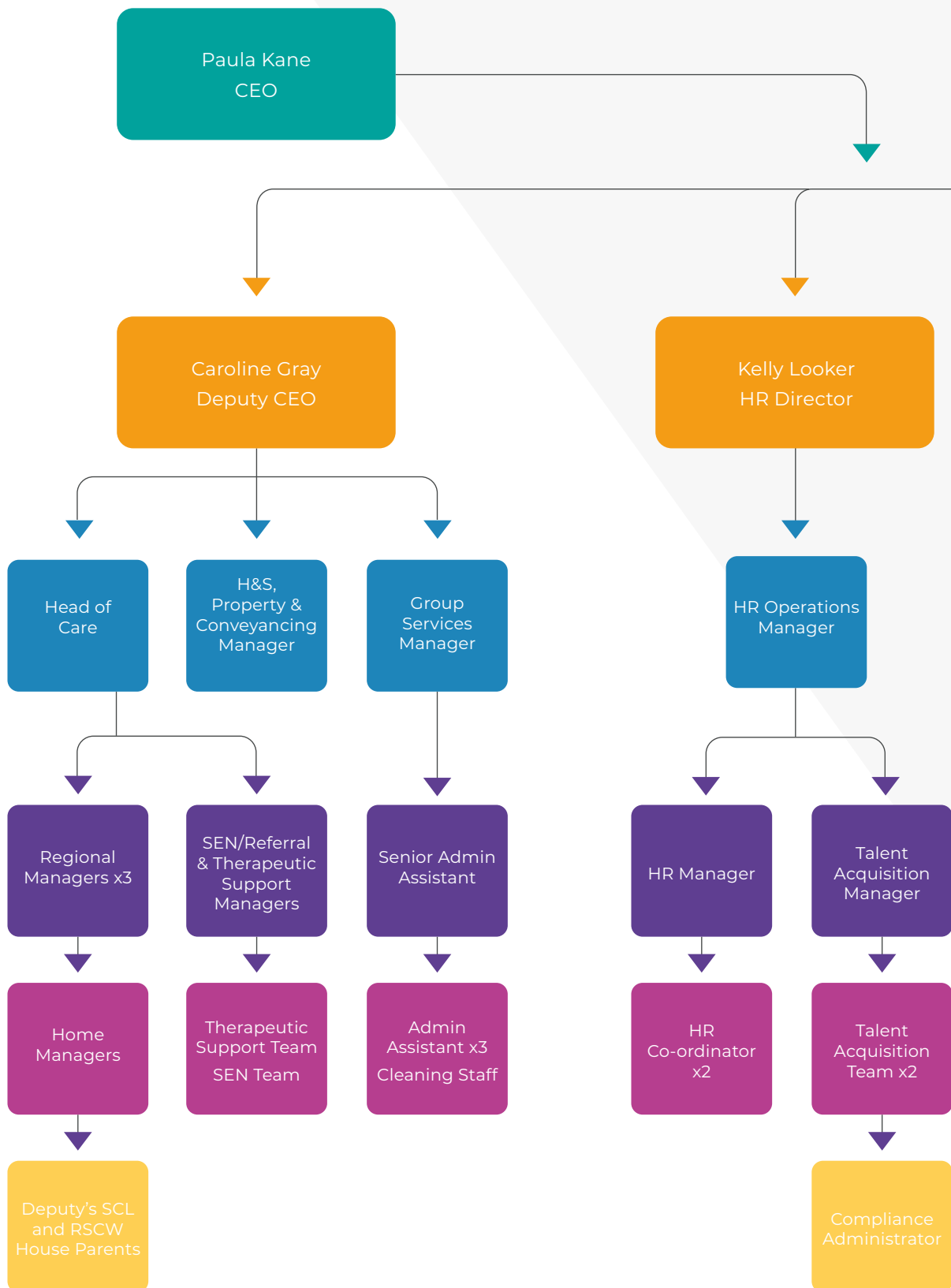
- The Senior Leadership Team and Wider Management Team hold all relevant qualifications required for their roles, and are led by Paula Kane, who has a vast experience in children's residential care.
- In 2018, the team was strengthened by the appointments of Marc Murphy, as a highly experienced Director of Finance, and Caroline Gray, as Director of Services, focused on sourcing and developing properties.
- In 2021, Kelly Looker, an experienced HR Director within the child services sector was recruited. As the organisation grows this will be an increasingly important role and highly valued addition. The team is well equipped for additional recruitment and includes a Talent Acquisition Manager who oversees recruitment alongside an HR Operations Manager to ensure there is a highly functioning HR department.
- The team is passionate about transforming the lives of children with the most challenging behaviours and aims to cover all aspects of care provision, demonstrated by the comprehensive range of roles in the Senior Management Team and their combined depth of experience in children's care.
- There has been significant investment into building out the Senior Management Team with new appointments in 2022 - Caroline Gray as Deputy CEO, Kerry Gildernew as Director of Governance, Quality & Training and Tara O'Byrne as Head of Care.



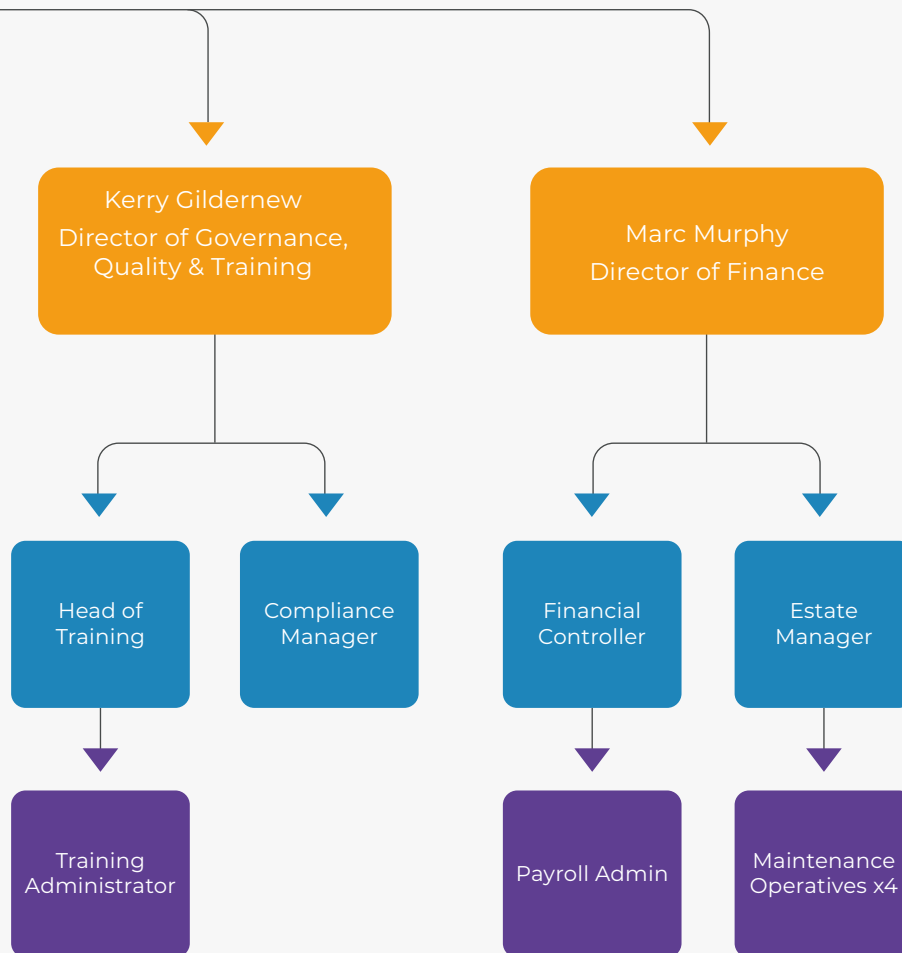
Organisational structure



Organisational structure



Organisational structure



Therapeutic Support Team and Education Team

Centralised Therapeutic Support and Education teams underpin the delivery of an enhanced service to ensure that the needs of the children, young people and the Ashdale Care community are met in house.

Therapeutic Support Team overview and responsibilities



Aims & objectives

- The Head of Care oversees the implementation of therapeutic services
- Occupational Therapy has been introduced to Ashdale's services since 2017 and a Sensory Room has been installed in the Ashdale hubs
- The TST Co-ordinator reports directly to the Head of Care



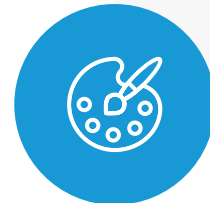
Psychology



Education



Occupational therapy



Creative Art Psychotherapies

- The in-house TST team provide all therapeutic support for children and young people both individually and in small groups dependent on what is most beneficial for the individual
- As part of the admission process the team collate information received from external agencies and develop a Pre-Placement Case Summary providing a snapshot about the current and historic issues associated to the child or young person
- Comprehensive multi-disciplinary assessments are completed by the team providing a snapshot of the individual needs for each child and young person coming into care in liaison with residential teams which looks at every aspect of their neuro-physiological and psychological development
- TST staff ensure that therapeutic activities and interventions in their own Individual Development Plan are consistently matched to developmental ability of the child or young person entering care (based on outcomes of assessment and screening tools in collaboration with key staff observation)

Therapeutic Support Team and Education Team

- Ashdale are the only provider of children's care in Ireland to have an in-house OT offering which is a unique and important aspect of the therapeutic services the organisation delivers and Management consider that this is hugely valuable to the outcomes of children in their care. Psychologists also work with the children and visit the homes on a needs-led basis providing support to both young people and staff
- The team research, develop and deliver training through the experiential TAP workshops. Standards of best practice are maintained through external professional supervision in addition to internal supervision provided by the TST Co-ordinator. CPD requirements are met which is both a professional expectation and an individual responsibility to taking a structured and self-managed approach to further learning

Sensory Rooms





A photograph of four people standing on the steps of a building entrance. From left to right: a man with a beard wearing a tan jacket and a black t-shirt with 'vin Klein' visible; a woman in a dark patterned top; a woman in a black jacket and patterned top; and a woman in a teal and black diamond-patterned top and blue jeans. They are all smiling. The building has a white arched doorway and a window with a decorative frame. A black metal railing is on the right. A teal semi-transparent banner is overlaid across the middle of the image.

Our people – Our Ashdale Community

Our Workforce

Ashdale Care operates a professional structure, with emphasis on ensuring qualified staff are trained to the highest standard on, up-skilling, continuous learning and career progression within Ashdale.

- Onboarding and training is also a key focus and new employees join on an initial probationary period of 6 months. During this period, individuals are mentored by their line manager who conducts fortnightly supervision meetings with them and assesses work performance and alignment with Ashdale Care's culture. Each employee in the home has the opportunity to complete "shadow shifts" during their induction period to gain initial experience and support.
- Ashdale Care has a proven track record for career progression. This is demonstrated by the number of Senior Management and Home Management Teams that have worked their way up from entry level. Financial support and paid exam days are offered to Level 7 qualified employees who want to convert to Level 8.
- A significant emphasis is placed on staff care and promoting a "mindfulness and self-care" environment, which in turn ensures consistency of care for all children and young people.
- Fortnightly supervision is provided to staff in their first 3 months and monthly thereafter.
- All staff have access to the Employee Assisted Programme, a confidential service providing professional and personal support.
- Team building days are organised across departments to support effective team work.

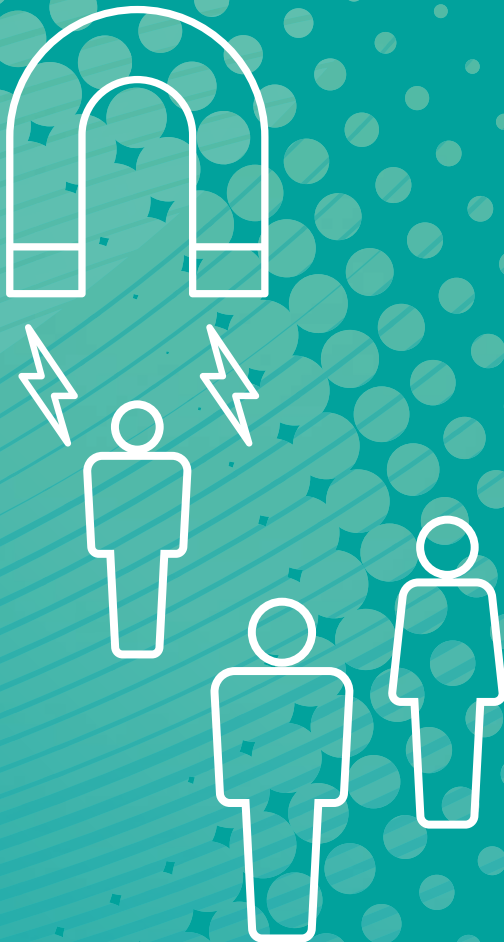


Challenges we have faced



Availability of suitably qualified Social Care staff

The Irish care model has a higher focus on staff qualifications compared to the UK. Regulations require 50% to be qualified in Health and Social Care or Social Work at the point of a home's registration. The remaining 50% is made up of staff qualified in disciplines related to Social Care, namely, Youth and Community, Psychology and Education. Despite very strong links with the Universities and Colleges, there is a reduced number of graduates available due to pending Coru registration, so this challenge is ongoing. We continue to seek consultation with the regulator to overcome this qualification hurdle. Whilst this is still expected to remain above UK requirements, it should broaden the pool of available talent for Ashdale Care, giving us wider access to more suitably skilled and experienced people.



Increased Turnover of staff

Having remained fairly steady during the pandemic and as we moved towards the end of restrictions, we saw our turnover of staff increase, which challenged us in terms of looking after more children. We halted our growth plans and additional admissions while we focused on reducing the number of vacancies across our existing homes. Our staff went above and beyond during this time, while still dealing with Covid outbreaks, to ensure our children and young people enjoyed a stable and memorable Christmas and New Year. During 2022 we have seen our turnover reduce to normal levels, and as an organisation we are focused on developing our engagement and retention strategy.

Our people

Achievements

- Review and uplift to terms and conditions.

While Ashdale Care's culture is key to attracting and retaining our staff, we also recognise that competitive and meaningful terms and conditions are vital. With that in mind we were pleased to be able to uplift staff salaries by 4%, Managers by 5% and increase the sleep in hourly rate as well. We want our staff to feel suitably rewarded for the work that they do and we are committed to improving terms further over time. This is despite a challenging financial landscape which has not seen a fee uplift from TUSLA since 2017. It's not just about the pay rate of course, committed to overall wellbeing of our people, we also have enhanced maternity, paternity, sick pay and income support benefits.

- Launch of Staff Recognition Awards.

We launched our staff recognition awards in 2021, which are awarded in line with our values to recognise those staff who go that extra mile. Awarded quarterly, winners are nominated by their peers for the work they do in transforming the lives of the young people in our care.

Jean's Story

I first joined Ashdale Care back in 2010 as part of a student placement. I initially found the role challenging but the endless support from my teammates and the satisfaction I received from my role made it impossible to leave!

Ashdale Care helped me discover my true potential in management. After working as a residential social care worker for three years I moved into the role of Senior Practitioner in 2013. A role which centres around coaching, supporting and role modelling for colleagues. It's the best of both worlds, enjoying the day-to-day interactions with the young people whilst also being afforded the opportunity to prepare and upskill yourself for future management positions.

Next came the appointment to Deputy Home Manager in 2013 and the exciting new opportunity of opening one of Ashdale Care's new homes. Less than a year later I was back in the home where I first started out on my journey, this time in the capacity of Home Manager where I remained until 2019. Although there are many challenges associated with being a Home Manager, these are far outweighed by the rewarding nature of watching the young people grow and reach their full potential.

This was followed by the appointment to Regional Manager in 2021. A role that focuses on governance and ensuring that the best supports and resources are available to guarantee the best standard of care and subsequent outcomes for the young people in our care.

Ashdale Care places a strong emphasis on 'your' personal development, providing continued training and upskilling of our people. This has created the pathway for Ashdale Care becoming the leading provider of therapeutic residential care in Ireland. Our vision is to try and reach as many children and young people as possible who need the specialised services and supports that we offer.

Providing the young people in our care with a childhood and making lasting memories is unquestionably the most rewarding part of the role. Birthdays, Christmas', significant life events, we are the ones sharing the experiences and supporting the young people throughout, regardless of what position held within the organisation. It's the dedication and commitment of all Ashdale Care personnel that make the service what it is. It really is a privilege to be part of the Ashdale Care Community and the young people's journeys.



Our people

Achievements

- **Launch of Annual Staff Survey**

At the beginning of 2021, we reached out to all our staff with an anonymous staff survey. Having come through a pandemic, we wanted to hear from our people around what we could do better and any suggestions they might have. With 78% of staff responding to the survey, we got meaningful feedback which has informed our actions for the coming year. Some highlights from the survey included how important our team building events are to our people and 90% of our people saying they feel valued with 87% happy with career growth opportunities at Ashdale Care. From the survey we devised an action plan which we pledged to update regularly and commit to achieve the milestones agreed.

- **Launch of Monthly Internal Staff Newsletter.**

Launching the Staff Newsletter was seen as a good way of communicating with all our people towards the end of the pandemic. This has grown into a valued means of communication which celebrates the personal wins of our people alongside the organisational success while also keeping everyone up to date on organisational developments.

- **Recruitment and Onboarding of over 100 people.**

Despite one of the most challenging years from a turnover and recruitment perspective the HR and Training teams successfully onboarded 100 new staff which enabled us to ensure not only vacancies were backfilled but that new homes opened in line with our development plan.

- **International recruitment.**

For the first time we went international as a means of recruitment and had 7 new recruits from Europe join us at the end of August 2022. Our first time in conducting a meaningful campaign outside of Ireland, this has secured an additional pipeline of diverse talent which have been welcomed into the Ashdale Community.

- **Relaunch of Social Care Leader programme.**

We are dedicated to providing career pathways for our people and this year saw the former Senior Practitioner Programme, being reviewed and redesigned to ensure that we are growing our Managers of the future.

- **Leadership Development Programme.**

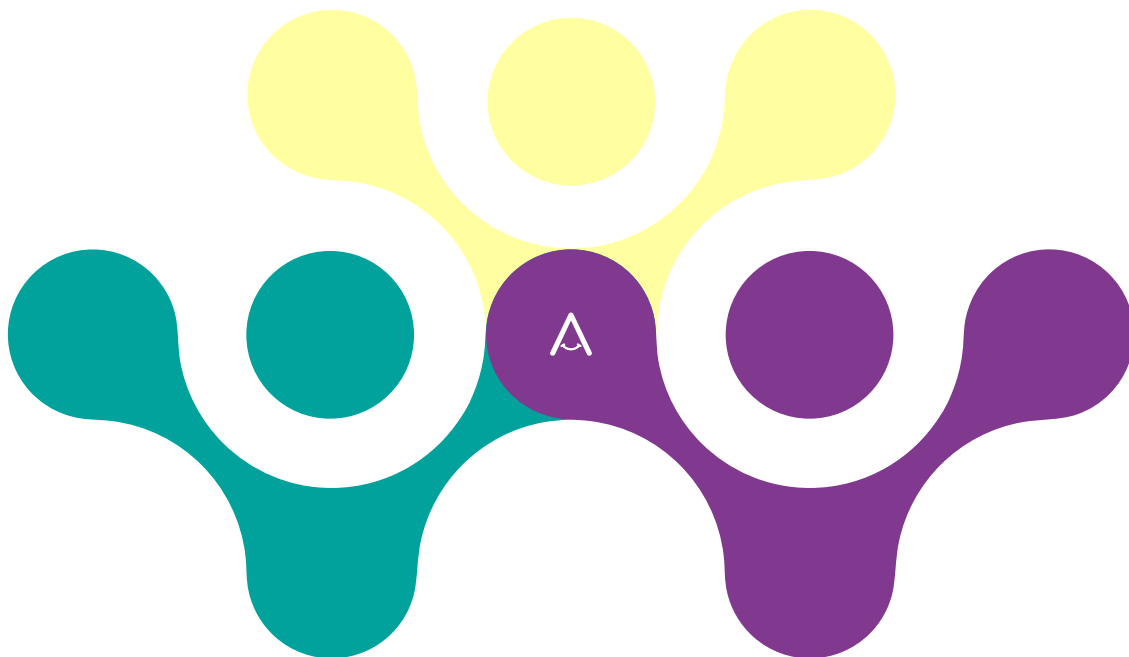
We launched our first Leadership Development Programme for Managers in 2021 which sees all our Managers come together once a month to embark upon some Leadership Development interactive training to assist in ensuring that we are continually improving and challenging our thinking.



Academic Partnerships

Achievements

- Close partnerships have been formed with 6 Universities and Colleges by having an active, on campus presence, delivering guest lectures, offering supervised placements and hosting "A day in the Life of a Residential Social Care Worker" events to drive interest in Residential Childcare as a career. In January 2021, Ashdale Care saw an intake of 26 students on their placement schemes and these students benefitted from a worthwhile placement with bespoke training and development, while also being part of the Ashdale community. A large number of our students enjoyed being part of our community and stayed with us as Bank staff members.
- Ashdale Care has made significant investment into driving College relationships and the pipeline of talent. The locations of the homes and the hubs are strategically close to key Colleges as our commitment to raising the profile of Residential Childcare continues.



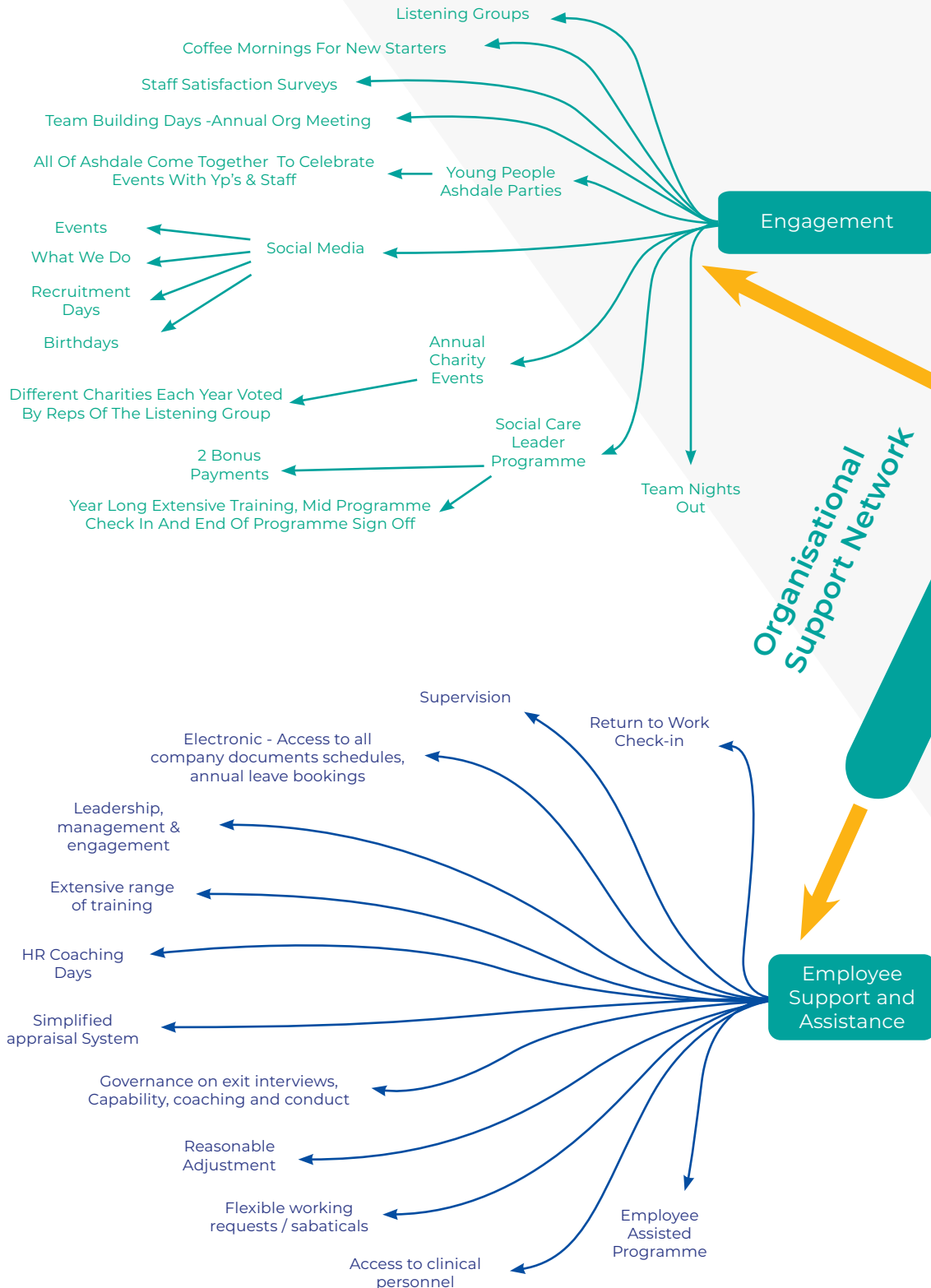
Academic Partnerships



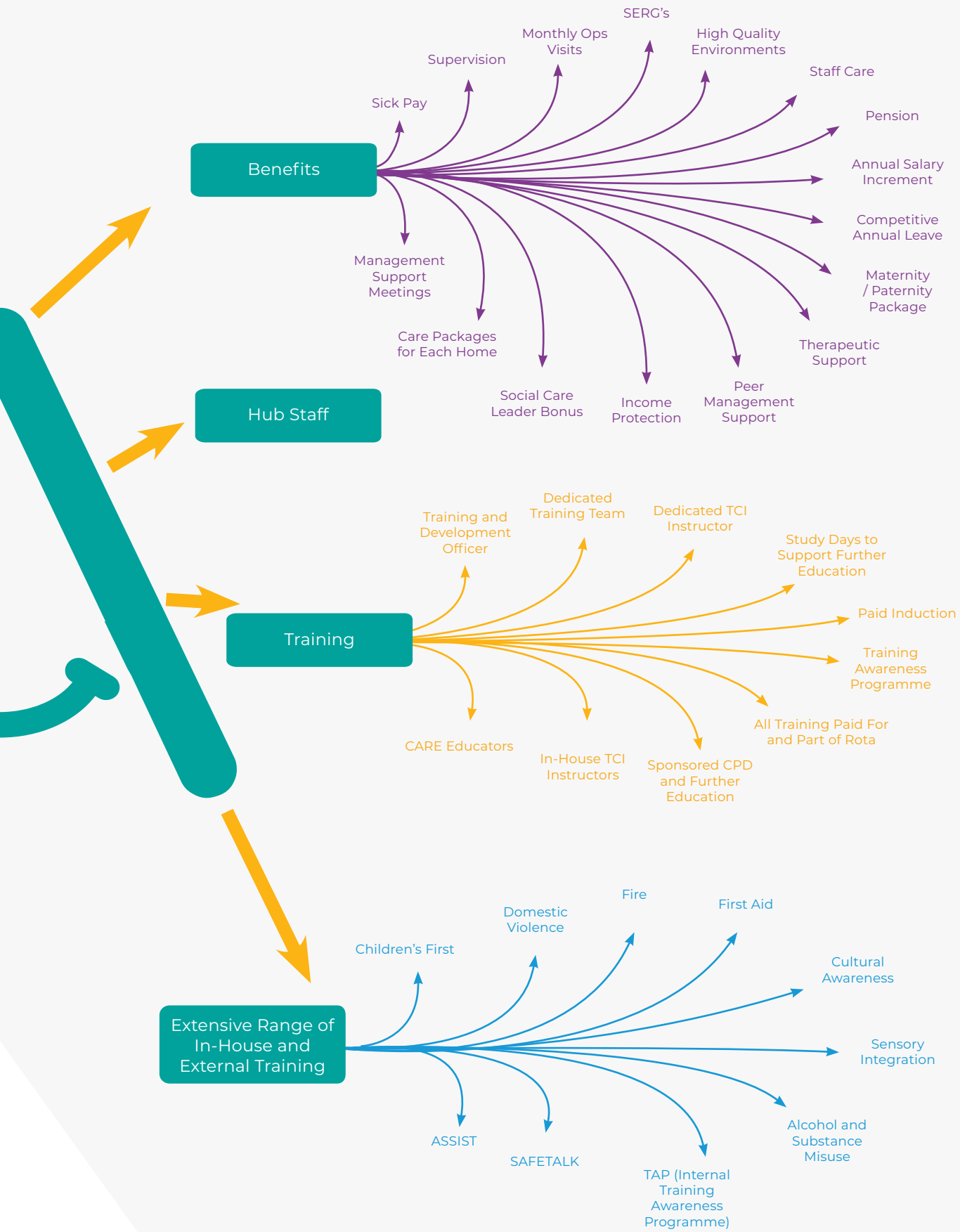
“I found the recruitment experience to be very positive. Communication from the recruitment officer was prompt and the interviewers were well prepared, friendly and created a great sense of Ashdale’s ‘culture’ and ‘community’ which sold the job itself right away to me! Overall, the experience was very engaging and inspiring.”

Ashdale Care's Organisational Support Network

These are just some of the strands of our Engagement Strategy which focuses on putting our people first and supporting their well being as well as their personal development.



Ashdale Care's Organisational Support Network



Ashdale Care's Organisational Support Network

"The in-house Leadership Development programme has really supported me in understanding my role as a manager and leader in the organisation. Each session is based on different elements of leadership, management and personalities and dynamics within teams. What makes the programme unique is that each session provides the theory but is made completely relatable to what we face in our everyday working life. Getting together with other managers across the organisation, for the programme, to share in experiences and discussions has helped me build relationships and understand even more about the full operation of the organisation."



Ashdale Care's Organisational Support Network

**"I genuinely find
the sessions very
supportive and
reassuring for me
in my role"**

Home Manager







Care and Quality

Inspection Reports

As a leading provider of the highest levels of care, Ashdale Care continues to foster strong relationships with the regulator and child placement bodies in Tusla and Health and Social Care Trusts in NI.

Findings from Inspection Reports

- Tusla, (the Child and Family Agency) is Ireland's dedicated State agency responsible for improving well-being and outcomes for children and its formation in 2014 represented a significant reform of child protection, early intervention and family support services in Ireland.
- Ashdale Care has built a long term working relationship with Tusla and its predecessor since formation in 1998
- Tusla comprises HSE Children and Family Services, the Family Support Agency and the National Education Welfare Board, as well as incorporating some psychological services and a range of services responding to domestic, sexual and gender-base violence.
- Tusla is responsible for placing children into residential care in ROI, supporting and promoting the development, welfare and protection of children, and the effective functioning of families. The Agency has over 4,000 staff with an overall operational budget of €809 million (€147m of which is allocated to private residential and foster care) from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.
- Ashdale Care, prior to registering its first home and the first independent registered children's residential centre in Ireland, worked with Tusla to establish registration standards and compliance with the regulations, and continues to have a strong working relationship.
- An SLA is in place with Tusla that places Ashdale Care on an approved list of providers to receive referrals. The SLA is reviewed bi-annually and for each child a 'placement agreement' is drafted and agreed with Tusla. Ashdale Care has a proven track record of exceeding the criteria required to continue its current contract arrangements. Ashdale Care has had a number of positive discussions to date and continues to accept Tusla referrals.
- Ashdale Care also maintains strong relationships with the five Health and Social Care Trusts in NI. These Trusts are responsible for placing Looked After Children resident in NI into care and are funded by the Health and Social Care Board.
- Ashdale Care is highly regarded for its child centric, quality focus, and is recognised by both Tusla and the Northern Health and Social Care Trusts, as the number one provider of choice when placing a child into residential care services. This is due to its therapeutic supports, unique child centric ethos and ability to care for the most challenging children.



Inspection Reports

"All significant events shared. These include positive significant events. The young person has progressed well in the last 12 months and has very positive relationships with the staff in the home"

Inspector Manager
– Tusla

"My young person is a very lucky girl to be placed in such a loving and caring home. The manager is a superb manager in the home"

Social Worker,
Dublin, Tusla

"The staff are doing a great job and the young people are really benefiting from the care"

Inspector Manager
– Tusla

"Ashdale have always provided a good level of service in an area where the services supports needed are niche. The services they provide are not readily available elsewhere in the state."

NPPT employee

"Ashdale is one of the best providers for challenging cohorts because of the comprehensive clinical support...The ethos of therapeutics from the Hub is unique in terms of providing different levels of support"

NPPT employee

Ashdale Care's model of care

Ashdale Care has pioneered a leading model of care in residential childcare in Ireland since inception. In recent years, Ashdale have further developed this model through external support from Cornell University. Children and young people are at the centre of the Ashdale Care ethos and its outcome-focused care delivery methodology.

Care overview

- Locating residential homes in rural and tranquil settings is a strategic decision to ensure the best environment for children and young people to develop successfully, and achieve positive outcomes.
- Emphasis is placed on keeping children and young people in education, providing education in house and helping with transitions to new schools. Facilitating integration into/maintaining attendance in mainstream education, with significant support from Ashdale Care to mainstream schools and the children to achieve this, is a key objective.
- A key focus of the organisation is to make sure they understand each child and young person's requirements and select the right mix of therapies to make the most impact in their development.
- Children and young people are heavily involved in decision making as they take ownership of their own individual placement plan.

"The atmosphere in the house was always warm which was really important. The staff consistently made sure the child who had been placed with them felt welcome, for example they helped her decorate her room. It was a home from home and never felt like a placement for her, she was very comfortable."

Social Worker

"Ashdale's model is one of the only one's in the country that can cater for either really young children or the one's where there's environmental abuse, trauma etc. They would be the one's I would recommend to colleagues when there are no foster placements or the foster placements cases have broken down repeatedly."

Social Worker

Ashdale Care's model of care

Care overview

- Cornell University is a world-renowned American university that runs The Residential Child Care Project ("RCCP") which creates programmes designed to improve the quality of care for children living in group care settings.
- The RCCP includes TCI and CARE.
- Ashdale Care 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 the organisation.
- Ashdale Care 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.

"TCI, in conjunction with Children and Residential Experiences (CARE), a trauma-sensitive therapeutic program model, reduced the rate of aggressive acts that resulted in a decrease in physical interventions by more than 50% "

Nunno et al., 2017

CARE model
roll-out since
2019 (3 year
programme)

TCI Fidelity
status
achieved in
May 2019 (1st
organisation
in Europe)

CARE

Ashdale Care partnered with Cornell University on a 3 year programme in early 2019 to roll-out the trauma-informed, principle-based, multi-component CARE model to further enhance its positive outcomes.

CARE model

- CARE is a trauma-informed, principle-based, multi-component program designed by Cornell University to enhance social dynamics in group care settings and help to create an environment that provides developmentally enriching experiences and better outcomes for children in residential care.
- Since 2007, the CARE model has successfully been implemented for over 50 children's residential organisations throughout the US, Canada, Ireland and Australia. One of the NI Trusts is the only other Irish organisation currently implementing CARE.
- In early 2019, Ashdale Care began a 3 year programme with Cornell University to roll-out the internationally renowned CARE model and will be assessed for CARE accreditation within this timeframe.
- The framework, coupled with Ashdale Care's superior internal governance structure, ensures the organisation can maintain its outstanding quality of care as it continues to scale.
- Ashdale Care incorporates the 6 key CARE principles throughout all levels of the organisation, therapeutic plans for its children and young people, and into daily practice.
- Children and young people and staff are motivated by the culture created by the leadership team to adhere to routines, structures, and processes in order to minimise potential interpersonal conflict.
- The CARE model has been shown to improve the capacity of staff to establish positive developmental relationships with those in care and help provide a "sense of normality".
- Cornell University provide 5 days of CARE training to the organisations CARE educators and conduct evaluations and staff surveys twice annually to monitor progress, implementing the CARE model.



Improve quality of relationships (children and staff).



Improve self regulation.



Decrease use of psychotropic medicines.



Decrease use of physical restraints.



Children And Residential Experiences



Developmentally Focused

All Children:

Have the same basic requirements for growth and development.

Learn best when skills are within their Zone of Proximal Development.

Need support to engage in their innate capacity to grow and develop

Adjust activities so children can succeed.

Family Involved

Contact with family is an indicator of successful treatment.

Planning for community support is essential for a successful return.

The child's ethnic and cultural identity is tied to the family.

'It's easier to blame the victim than to deal with the cause.'

Relationship based

The ability to form relationships is associated with healthy development and life success.

Relationships are central to helping children build competencies.

Children respond to people they trust

'Every child needs at least one person who is really crazy about them.'

Children And Residential Experiences



Competence Centred

Problem solving skills, flexibility, critical thinking, and insight are necessary life skills.

All interactions and activities should be process focussed to teach life skills.

Increasing children's motivations to learn new skills is a care worker's task.

Children do well if they can. If they can't we need to figure out why so we can help.

Trauma Informed

Trauma has a debilitating effect on children's growth and development.

Maintaining an environment of safety and non-violence is essential for children to learn new responses to stressful situations.

Challenging behaviour is often pain-based.

'When we plant a lettuce and it doesn't grow, we don't blame the lettuce.'

Ecologically Oriented

Children learn through interacting with their environment.

The environment is influenced by the interactions with the children and staff.

Children need opportunities to participate and interact in the environment in order to grow and develop.

'A house the smiles, props which invite, and a space which allows.'

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (“TCI”)

Ashdale Care achieved TCI Fidelity Status through Cornell University in May 2019. Ashdale were the 1st organisation in Europe and the 3rd organisation in the world to achieve the accreditation.

TCI model

- The TCI model provides a system that assists in providing care to children and young people who have experienced trauma. It was developed and is run by Cornell University.
- TCI training is mandatory in Ireland for providers of Residential Social Care, therefore all staff must be trained in TCI.
- Achieving TCI Fidelity status involves inviting Cornell University to evaluate the application of the TCI system within a business and involves a rigorous assessment process. This registration process formally recognises agencies and schools whose implementation of the TCI system meets the highest standards. Ashdale Care achieved this status in 2019 becoming the 1st organisation in Europe to be recognised as such.
- The organisation focuses on building learning relationships and a community of practice throughout Ashdale Care to maintain quality care standards and principles.
- Ashdale’s Certified TCI trainers are required to attend TCI updates to maintain certification in addition to an initial 5 day course.
- In house TCI trainers throughout the organisational, with 20 additional trainers in 2021.



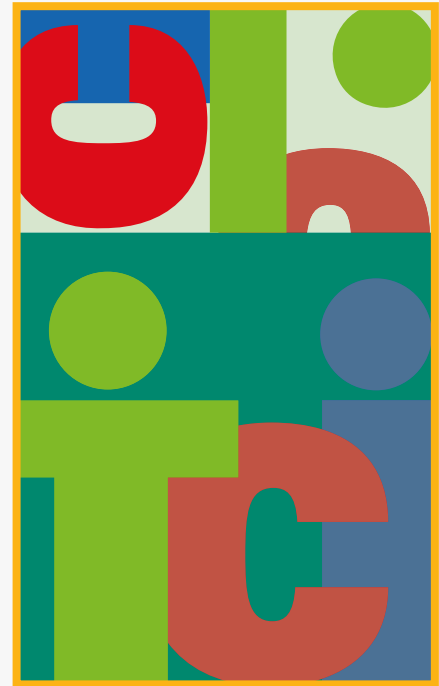
Residential Child Care Project

BRONFENBRENNER CENTER FOR TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH, CORNELL UNIVERSITY

A Child in Crisis Needs Help!

What kind of help and how it is given make a crucial difference between the child's learning from the experience or being set back. Therapeutic Crisis Intervention System programs help adults respond to aggressive behaviors in ways that empower children, recognizing that aggression may be the result of past trauma.

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (“TCI”)



RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE PROJECT |
BRONFENBRENNER CENTER FOR TRANSLATIONAL
RESEARCH | CORNELL UNIVERSITY



Therapeutic services

A wide range of in-house therapeutic services are at the core of Ashdale Care's model of support for children and young people in order to help them achieve the positive outcomes outlined in their Care Plan.



Psychology

- Psychologists frequently interpret / conduct assessments through psychometric tests, interviews and direct observation. In some cases Social Workers will specifically request assessments be conducted. Provide bespoke needs led training to all home staff teams.
- Direct interventions may be performed on an individual or group basis, appropriate programmes of work are devised and monitored, facilitation of counselling, case consultations and reviews are conducted.



Education

- Developed excellent working relationships with local schools and Youth Reach Projects to provide bespoke training and support.
- 'Hubs' have qualified teachers who follow the national curriculum and facilitate one to one teaching for children not yet able to attend a mainstream school.
- Teachers successfully reintegrate young people into mainstream education which Ashdale aims to be 6-12 weeks from admission.
- Homework support, revision clubs, social outings, summer trips, P.E. and art and music classes etc. are also offered.



ASDAN

- ASDAN is an internationally recognised awarding body, offering programmes and qualifications that grow skills for learning and employment outside of the mainstream education environment.
- Co-ordinated by the company's accredited ASDAN practitioners who have scheduled time with each identified young person on a weekly basis.
- Children are rewarded for small steps of achievement regularly and progressively, enhancing a young person's self-esteem, confidence and ambition.



Therapeutic services

- Art Psychotherapists use art material to encourage creative expression and provide an alternative means of exploring, expressing and communicating, difficult feelings and experiences in a safe space.
- Proven method to positively address emotional, behavioural and social challenges, and improve emotional and psychological wellbeing.



Art Therapy

- Outdoor activities are provided externally in conjunction with Awaken Adventures (1 dedicated co-ordinator) located in Co. Donegal.
- Each Placement Plan will reflect the specific aims and objectives surrounding the rationale for using Awaken Adventures as a therapeutic medium.
- Other activities young people take part in include football, hurling, kayaking, rock climbing, horse riding, drama, boxing etc.
- Enhances children's trust-based relationships with carers, health, wellbeing and development.
- Partnership with existing social farm commission.



Experiential Learning Activity Based Programmes

- Each child is assessed to identify sensory processing skills and deficits, to formulate a Sensory Skills programme utilising the sensory rooms located in the hubs.
- Strong association between sensory processing difficulties and the problems with learning, development, emotions and behaviours.
- Ashdale Care are the only children's care provider in Ireland with in-house OTs. They work with children to improve tactile sensitivity by introducing different textures into play-based treatment e.g. making scented play dough, weighted vests under clothes etc.



Occupational therapy



Therapeutic services

Ashdale Care cares for children and young people between 8-18 years old, ensuring they are involved in the decisions to help shape their personalised journey.

“

“If the child didn't have Ashdale's facilities as a doorway back into education he never would have gone back to school. He had a lot of problems and is doing really well now.”

Social Work Team Leader.



“Ashdale really care. They are very thorough and child centered and tailor the package around the needs of the individual child.”

Senior Social Worker.

”

- Ashdale Care provides specialist residential services to children and young people with complex, emotional and behavioural needs. Each child and young person receives their own Placement Plan according to their needs outlined in their Care Plan. They are assigned a Key Worker who is a residential Social Care Worker from the home they will be joining.
- Placement Plans integrate the therapeutic services which are offered from within hubs to best suit each child's needs and achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Children are phased into their new homes so they do not become overwhelmed by introductions with new people and settings all at once. Two to four weeks before a child moves into their new home they meet their allocated Key Worker who helps the child to understand their home and surroundings as well as provide information on items such as pocket money and allowances, meals, family time, personal belongings, laundry, transport etc.
- On their second visit the child meets another member of staff, this is usually a member of the therapeutic support team (i.e. a psychologist or teacher) who they will regularly be in contact with throughout their stay at Ashdale Care.
- Following visits involve a day at their home and overnight stays. The child gets to meet more staff members and the other children they will be sharing the home with and can feel comfortable upon joining. Children will tend to have two overnight visits before joining their homes permanently so they can fully experience what living in the home will be like.

Therapeutic services

- The Key Worker helps the child or young person to understand life events which led to admission to their new placement, enhance self-esteem, develop personal abilities and strengths, address and respond to pain based behaviours, manage past trauma and create platforms needed for forming positive attachments.
- Risk assessments and management plans are carried out and reviewed by Key Workers in liaison with external professionals and internal staff within the Therapeutic and Operations team.
- The Key Worker coordinates the child or young person's care plan to ensure they are task focussed and working directly in line with their Placement Plan. They are responsible for preparing reports for Placement Plan meetings and help the child so that their voice is heard within meetings. The staff team from the child's home and members of the TST associated with the child will attend Placement Plan meetings to make sure that everyone is congruent on the child's goals.
- Children and young people are encouraged to become involved in decisions regarding their daily life within the home from these initial stages and continue to develop these skills. Programmes of Care and support are for a minimum period of 12 months to allow an effective therapeutic journey with no upper time limit.



Therapeutic services

Positive outcomes achieved for the most challenging children and young people.



16

Gender: Male

Support needs: Behavioural and Emotional Dysregulation, Gender Identification.

Age 0-3 Physical domestic abuse.

Age 4-8 Emotional trauma.

Age 10-13 Involved in drugs, targeted by gangs, intermittently living on street, failed to meet developmental milestones, victim of physical and sexual domestic abuse by foster father, left education.

- Requested sex change.

- Endured in excess of 30 placement breakdowns, prior to joining Ashdale, including foster care, statutory residential care and secure accommodation due to inability in managing high-risk behaviours.

- Entered secure care at age 13 initially, then went into residential care at Ashdale Care.

Moved into Ashdale aged 14

Clinical team input:

- Weekly Psychology sessions with monthly clinical guidance given to staff.
- Encouragement to speak openly about gender identity and provision of sex education.
- Intensive input with mainstream school regarding bespoke training to support their needs, and after school sessions with education team.
- Psychotherapist work for resident's family, in order to aid rehabilitation.
- Ongoing independent living skills training and support.
- Continued offering of Art Psychotherapy and Occupational Therapy.

Outcomes

- Reintegrated into full time education.
- Sibling contact reinstated and fully supported with joint therapeutic work completed.
- Stays with sibling regularly.
- Development of positive professional attachments and an ability to manage emotional dysregulation.
- Provided with intense after care support to enhance independence skills.
- Cessation of sexually dangerous behaviours, absconding and self-harming behaviours.

Therapeutic services

Positive outcomes achieved for the most challenging children and young people.



17

Gender: Female

Support needs: Trauma and Attachment, Sensory and Emotional and Behavioural Regulation.

Age 3-5 Serious sexual abuse.

Age 6-7 Physical and sexual abuse.

Age 8 Physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

Age 9 Couldn't communicate in court and the prosecution failed to get a criminal prosecution against the perpetrator.

Brought into Ashdale aged 10

- Attended CAMHS before entering an educational facility for c.18 months.
- Family member has applied to restart contact so the resident must appear in court every 6 months to oppose this contact.

Clinical team input:

- Facilitated private meetings between the resident's social worker and guardian ad litem (GAL).
- Weekly Psychology sessions with monthly clinical guidance given to staff.
- Support with College applications and Homework club.
- Continued support to develop strategies to understand, name and regulate difficult emotions and utilise helpful coping strategies.
- Continued offering of Art Psychotherapy and Occupational Therapy sessions.

Outcomes

- In full time education, achieving excellent exam results.
- Sibling contact reinstated and fully supported with joint therapeutic work completed.
- Placement stability that is supported by positive attachments.
- Ability to manage emotional dysregulation.
- Significant reduction in high risk violent and aggressive outbursts.
- Decrease in use of anti-psychotic medications.
- Cessation of episodes of dissociation.

Quality and governance

Our in-house Quality Team rigorously implement robust systems and processes to ensure that the highest quality care standards and regulatory governance are maintained.

Quality overview

Director of Governance Quality & Training



- Kerry leads on all areas of governance and training. Kerry's roles include Chair of the Governance Committee, organisation lead with Registration and Inspection, Contracts with stakeholders and organisation representative for external stakeholder forums and groups.

Operations



- Consists of the Head of Care, Regional Management, Senior Social Workers and the SEN Co-Ordinator - this department management the day-to-day management of care within the organisation and ensure that high levels of quality are maintained by the oversight of significant incidents and risk management.

Compliance



- This team ensure regular auditing of all the organisations homes, in order to maintain the high levels of compliance in line with the National Standards for Children's Residential centres.

Training



- This department maintains oversight of all training throughout the organisation and ensures that staff receive the training required to fulfil their role. This team are key to the induction programme of all new staff and ensure and maintain high levels of quality training is being delivered.



Quality and governance

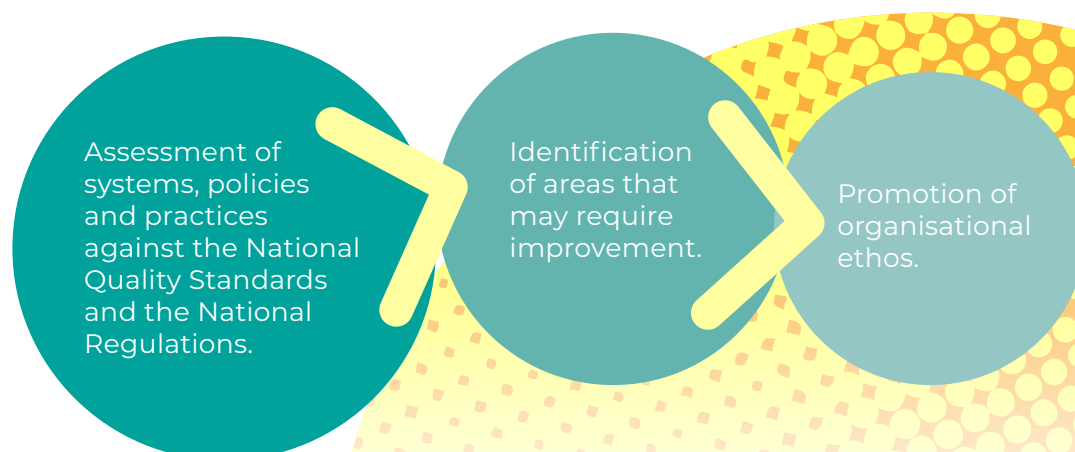
Governance Committee

- The Director of Governance, Quality and Training chairs the Governance Committee (membership is made up of Heads of Departments, Senior Management, staff representation and an external representative, Dr Edwina Dunne who has extensive HSE governance experience) and reports to the Senior Management.
- The Governance Committee identifies issues and risks within Ashdale Care and implements and monitors the necessary systems and policies to rectify them, consequently ensuring operational quality and safety across the organisation.
- Monthly meetings occur to discuss operational, clinical, training, health and safety, administration, GDPR and updates to the Group Risk Register.

Other governance procedures

- Daily communication with management, backed up with detailed daily logs, monthly audit tools, and accompanying action plans, utilised by Home managers provide a platform for a complete suite of effective measures.
- Regional Managers hold management support meeting meetings on a monthly basis and every team conducts team meetings twice a month. There is a weekly Leadership meeting where all matters concerning governance, risk, safeguarding and complaints are reviewed.
- Each Home completes a weekly Operations Report which covers all aspects of service. These are submitted to the Director of Governance, Quality and Training, CEO, Deputy CEO, Director of HR and Department Heads.
- Monthly audits are conducted in-house by the Compliance Manager who attends all homes to assess them against each compliance within the National Standards for Children's Residential Centres. Reports with recommendations and action plans are circulated to Home Managers, Regional Managers and the Governance Committee.
- Ashdale Care monitors the homes keeping an up-to-date monthly tracker. This tracks home visits, audits and management plans. Any significant events and issues of non-compliance to required service delivery are highlighted in a weekly Significant Event Review Group meeting with appropriate personnel, associated home manager, registered manager, therapeutic support team and SEN Coordinator.
- All key policies and procedures are reviewed annually. Policies cover a range of areas; individual care of young people; management of behaviour; child protection; health and wellbeing; significant events; leaving care; staff support; report writing; record keeping and sharing of information.

Governance Committee Continuous Quality Improvement Plan.



Governance Committee

The Governance Committee oversees and implements the systems and processes that ensure that the highest quality care standards and regulatory governance are maintained.

Clinical Risk

Inspection
Reports

Operational Risk

Training Risk

Health &
Safety Risk

Admin Risk

GDPR Risk

Audit &
Compliance Risk

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Director of Governance, Quality & Training, Deputy CEO, Director of HR, Independent Member, Therapeutic Support Team Co-ordinator, Head of Care, Regional Management Representative, Health & Safety Manager, Compliance Manager, Training/TCI Lead, SEN team representative, Home Management Representative.

Training
Recommendations

Policy & Procedure
- new or updated

Root Cause Analysis
Recommendations

Risk Register

Restrictive
Practice Review

HR
Recommendations

Core Data

Recommendations
from Inspections

SERG Reviews

Feedback to Board
Members



External quality ratings

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

Overview of inspections

- 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 our homes have been inspected against these standards, all were announced inspections.
- Ashdale Care have received inspections in the last 24 months and have been registered without conditions, therefore reflecting favourably on Ashdale's ability to achieve positive care delivery and integration with education for Young People in its care.
- Tusla, has inspected all of the organisations homes in line with a new focused inspection regime and based on the most recently available reports which date from 2019-2021, the organisation has performed commendably well, with only a modest number of requirements and no major breaches in compliance.
- In line 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 continue 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 managers 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 team work which ensures effective service integration is achieved.



External quality ratings



Training

Ashdale Care has developed a successful, encouraging and transparent learning environment – with a dedicated in-house training team – that is conducive to effective residential care interventions and techniques.

Approach to training and development of staff

- Ashdale has a dedicated in-house training team focused on maintaining and improving the standards of care given to children. This high-quality comprehensive training offered is part of the reason for strong staff retention particularly within management and has been recognised in external inspection reports.
- A 3-week induction programme is provided to all new staff and includes mandatory training and bespoke training on CARE and TCI.
- All staff receive mandatory training on TCI, Children First, first aid, health and safety, fire safety, drugs & alcohol, safe talk, administration of medicine and Ashdale Care's internal policies and procedures.
- The five-day CARE training programme is completed by all staff in line with the rollout of the CARE model and is facilitated by in-house educators who have been evaluated by Cornell University. There are currently 20 trained CARE educators within the organisation.
- TCI training is provided to all staff with 6 monthly refresher courses provided by in-house TCI facilitators. There are currently 3 TCI trainers within the business. A further 20 staff were trained by Cornell to be TCI instructors within Ashdale Care in order to maintain the governance of TCI in the homes as well as to support growth and development.
- Training usually takes the form of 1-2 sessions per month, supplemented where the need is identified through staff supervisions.
- Ashdale Care offers employees the career pathway programme ("Social Care Leader Programme") to aid career progression. A number of the Senior Management Team have been promoted through this training.
- The organisation has recently introduced training for staff expected to progress into home management. The training focusses on the Ashdale Care ethos of management and is especially aimed at external joiners.
- Ashdale Care's ethos and quality of care is reinforced through its staff training programmes which will ensure that these core principles are maintained within the organisation as it scales.



Training

In-house training and awareness programme (TAP)

- In 2013 the Therapeutic Support team initiated a comprehensive in-house programme to promote a deeper understanding of the developmental, clinical and neurobiological impact of complex trauma and highlight the importance of self care, resourcing and resilience building when working with impacted children and young people.
- The programme includes experiential workshops, needs-led presentations, induction training, and the development of a range of psycho-educative, informative and relevant theoretical handouts for staff.
- Staff are contractually required to undertake TAP sessions annually on key modules including Trauma and attachment, Boundaries, Resilience and Sensory integration.
- The Therapeutic Support team continues to research, develop and deliver the programme, which includes Trauma and Attachment-informed workshops for local schools.



“To develop my skills and knowledge base, I worked as a residential care worker with Ashdale, whilst gaining an honours degree in Social Work over a period of 5 years, which was fully supported by Ashdale. I have continued to progress in my development and was offered ample opportunities from the company progressing to a Deputy Manager role then onto the role of Home Manager.”

Home Manager

“After 2 years in the organisation I was given the opportunity to apply for the Senior Practitioner Course. This course is a wonderful foundation for residential staff who are interested in progressing into management. After I completed the program I became a Deputy Manager and I have now been working as a Home Manager for two years. Throughout my time in Ashdale I have been provided with excellent training opportunities that have supported my career progression and ensured I have the correct skillset to support the young people in our care.”

Home Manager

Ashdale Care has adapted to the current pandemic, recognising the unique needs of the children and young people and continues to provide positive experiences.

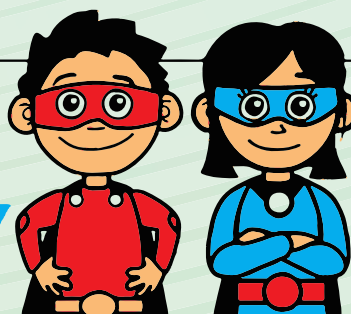
Impact of Covid-19 on Ashdale

- Ashdale has safely and successfully navigated the Covid-19 pandemic with very limited impact to the organisation.
- The organisation had to adapt operationally following the various restrictions put in place on both sides of the border.
- During the periods of isolation staff members initially formed social bubbles so they could continue to provide care to all children and young people.
- Ongoing policies were adapted and the organisation continued to operate effectively with a limited number of Covid 19 outbreaks.
- Waiting lists in ROI and NI increased following the pandemic, resulting in increased level of demand for children's services – with a continued increase in demand for residential care over time.

Ashdale Care's response to Covid-19

- The organisations Business Services Manager was designated as the Covid Lead for the organisation.
- Regional Managers held regular check-ins with each home and conducted weekly operational reports. Any safeguarding issues were reported to the Senior Leadership Team to enable a swift response and ensure quality governance.
- The Therapeutic Support Team worked with the Regional Managers, Education and Residential teams to continue to provide therapeutic support for all homes through:
 - Needs-led online training
 - SEN review video-links
 - Handover feedback reports
- The Therapeutic Support Team developed young person friendly resources including:
 - Social stories
 - Toolkits for managing anxiety
 - Psycho-educational booklets
- The Business Services Manager provided weekly COVID bulletins across the organisation.
- Monthly care hampers and packages were sent to each home and each young person.
- Testing was offered to all residential home staff and young people with 100% uptake.
- PPE was supplied in all homes including visors, masks, gloves and hand sanitiser.
- Temporary closure of hubs with schedule based reopening in line with government guidelines.

**HOW TO FIGHT
CORONAVIRUS**



Our commitment to Sustainability



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



Aim 1: Reduce single use plastics in our homes - Short Term

- Install fresh water filters across all homes to replace weekly purchase of bottled water.
- Encourage staff to use their own 'bottle for life'.

Aim 2: Improve Efficiency of our homes - Medium to Long Term

- Increase Renewables, Reduce Oil Consumption, Install energy efficient Heating systems, Install Thermostatic controls, Upgrade Windows, Install / Future Proof Car Charge points, Maintain & Improve sewerage system, Install Sensor lights in communal areas, Improve Insulation.

Aim 3: Electrify Fleet Cars - Long Term

- Seek to introduce electric cars to fleet in a phased approach with long term goal of electrifying entire fleet.

Aim 4: Achieve Energy Self Sufficiency at our Hubs - Long Term

Aim 5: Improve Biodiversity across all sites- Short to Medium Term

- 'Don't mow let it grow' initiatives. Introduce wild meadow areas, bee gardens, etc.
- Ashdale Care will monitor our progress against the above aims and the UN Sustainability Goals and provide annual updates regarding the same.


Development Plan for 2022/2023

- Support Tusla as they manage the practice of unregulated placements by developing services and safe places for young people.
- Further development of our Therapeutic Support Team by expanding the disciplines attached to this team.
- ESG – to make provision for energy saving in new homes including EV charging points and services for PV panels which can be installed at a later stage.
- TCI fidelity in March 2023.
- Completion of the CARE project.
- To develop more bespoke training for the upkeep in upskilling our staff which will support our retention policy.
- Develop ongoing governance systems throughout the organization in line with expansion.
- Develop an independent role in the form of an external visitor to the homes, for a young person who has been through the care system, so this provides an extra layer to the voice of a young person being heard.





you'll



“Teaching kids
to count is fine
but teaching
them what
counts is best.”





AshdaleCare
Ireland

Transforming lives > Transforming residential care



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