

Fernleigh House Children's Home

Albaston

Cornwall

PL18 9AJ

Statement of Purpose



We provide a caring therapeutic environment for children and young people who need bespoke individualised packages of care to help them thrive

Registered Provider	
HORIZON CARE	
Registered manager	Responsible Individual
Patricia Smith.	Abhay Shah

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Flexible child centred care and support

Fernleigh House provides care and accommodation for up to 3 children at a time. The children who live at Fernleigh have a learning disability and may have autism or other conditions.

Children often have a combination of needs and at times more than one diagnosis. We provide a comprehensive assessment of need and design a plan of care which is child centred. This plan will look to draw in the services around a child alongside their family and give holistic support that is future facing and child centred.

Our assessment process ensures that the child's needs can be met through the parameters set out in this statement of purpose.

We are a therapeutic service with a highly skilled staff team. We provide robust governance and monitoring systems. This governance enables children in our care the best possible outcomes in a therapeutic and safe environment. We look outwards for our quality assurance and strive to always be reflective and learn.

Sequel support services are driven to provide robust quality services to children who would otherwise be at risk of repeated placement breakdown. Many of the children and young people we support need a range of interventions and packages of care and support.

We understand the local need in our area and strive to work with local authorities to deliver the best possible services.

We are fully committed the South West Peninsula's joint aspirations of;

- Permanency
- Family based care
- Quality and stability
- Sufficiency
- Partnership and Integration



We have a clear ethos that every child deserves the best support to be happy and thrive. To help the child achieve this, we identify changes we can make around the child's environment to help reach this target. We believe the adults around the child can make adaptations to enhance the child's quality of life. We approach from a

social pedagogy (learning) perspective and place the focus on the adults around the child to provide change.

We foster positive relationships and empower children to improve their sense of self-worth, self-confidence and their self-esteem.

We do this through;

- ❖ Getting to know the child and using the people who know them best to guide us.
- ❖ Robust assessment which collates background information from the child and parents, social workers, teachers and others involved in the child's life.
- ❖ A therapeutic residential environment to provide for the psychological needs of the child.
- ❖ Positive role modelling by skilled staff to help the child learn skills to maintain safety and to be able to grow.
- ❖ A robust, governance led, reviewed care plan to provide risk management.
- ❖ Positive endeavours to maintain and grow relationships, with family and the community.
- ❖ Commitment to the parents, Local Authority and education services to be engaged and involved in the care planning of the child.
- ❖ Open, transparent, therapeutic, residential environment for the benefit of the child to grow and learn towards adulthood.
- ❖ Developing a learning environment for the child at home and supporting attending formal education to enhance knowledge and skills.
- ❖ Positive, happy and fun environments that children want to be in and want to come home to.
- ❖ Providing the child purpose and giving them a valid role to improve their feelings of importance.

Stakeholder Relationships. Working with the wider community

Successful placements for children in care are often dependent on excellent partnership working. We are committed to ensuring everyone in the child's life plays their role and is encouraged to do this to the best of their ability.

We will strive to have good relationships with the child's family and wider network.

We will endeavour to have honest and reliable relationships and engage with local authorities for appropriate monitoring and supervision of the child and the care delivered.

We will encourage supportive relationships with the education authority.

We will build relationships with local health services (primary and secondary health services).

We will always strive for the best support for the children in our care and will always challenge others should we feel the child is not safe or being supported appropriately. We would expect this challenge to be reciprocated.


We are committed to being transparent and engaging with every service to allow collaboration in the best interest of the child.

Sequel support Services – Our Purpose

From the foundation of **safety**, we aspire to support each and every child and young person within our services to develop positive **lifestyles** and **grow** as individuals.

- **Safety** - We all have a right to feel and be safe. We support individuals to have the opportunity to learn and understand how to be safer.
- **Life** – From a foundation stone of safety we will support individuals to lead positive lifestyles in their own communities
- **Growth** - Through our service will support individuals to become safer, improve their own quality of life and thrive.

The people we support need us to understand them not to fix them. We ensure we have a 'power with' attitude not a power over. Continual reflection, professional challenge and discussion ensures we are true to this.



"When a flower doesn't thrive, you fix the environment it is in, not the flower."

Securing Safety, Life and Growth – Our Foundation Stones



The young person safety, life and growth is directly underpinned by

Positive **Relationships** and high-quality interactions delivered through **enabling environments** that we create around the needs of each individual

Secured through

Person-centred thinking placing the child at heart of what we do, who are supported by a highly motivated, reflective and **engaged staff** team that know and understand our children and young people, supported by **evidence-based** practice and recognised strategies and approaches

Our Vision

All children and young people should have the option of remaining near to their family and friends and services should be offered that allows this to be done to the highest standard. We will always go out of our way to work with agencies to provide this support.

Fernleigh House provides care to children to a standard of excellence which embraces fundamental principles of Good Care Practice; this is witnessed and evaluated through the practice, conduct and control of quality in the home.

We know that excellent care can only be delivered by a well-supported staff team. We ensure that our recruitment, selection, induction, training and on-going support of staff is to the highest standard and evidenced at all stages.

We will endeavour to enhance our staff team with clinician support and supervision where possible. This may be with clinical supervision, training and workshops or utilising the training and learning from other services.

It is a fundamental ethos that the children who live at Fernleigh should be happy, healthy and well supported.

It is the objective of Fernleigh that children shall live in a clean, comfortable and safe environment and be treated with respect and sensitivity to their individual needs and abilities.

Staff will be responsive to the individual needs of children and will provide the appropriate degree of care to assure the highest possible quality of life within the Home.

Objectives:

1. To support children to feel safe, to enjoy and experience life and be encouraged to grow.
2. To deliver a service of the highest quality care practice that will improve and sustain the child's overall quality of life.
3. To ensure that the care is delivered flexibly, attentively and in a non-discriminatory fashion while respecting each child's right to independence, privacy, dignity, fulfilment and where appropriate, the rights to make informed choices and to take risks.
4. To ensure that each child's needs and values are respected in matters of religion, culture, race or ethnic origin, sexuality and sexual orientation and disabilities or impairments.
5. To ensure that the Care Service in whole is delivered in accordance with agreed Contracts for Care.
6. To manage and implement a formal programme of staff planning, selection, recruitment, training and personal development to enable child-care needs to be met.
7. To manage the Care Service efficiently and effectively to make best use of resources and to maximise value for money for the commissioning bodies

Fernleigh House

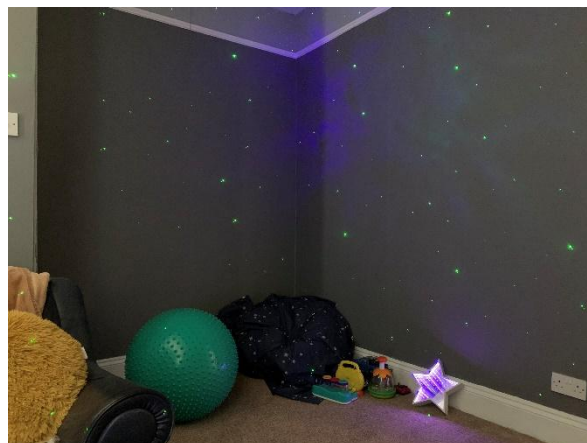


Fernleigh House has been refurbished and updated after being empty for some years. It had previously been used as a care home for the elderly. Fernleigh is a large, building that has a huge amount of internal space that has been developed and adapted to meet the varied needs of the children who live here.

Fernleigh, with a warm and homely feel, has been finished with a view that the home will be personalised with each child that lives here. For this reasons the general décor and furnishings are calm, quiet and gentle. The colours are warm and inviting, the furniture is homely and practical and each of the children's bedrooms will be decorated specific to their wishes.



Fernleigh House has an art room, messy play area, outside area, 3 lounges, play lounges and a sensory room.



Up to 3 children can live at Fernleigh House. The children are aged between 5 and 17 and of any gender. Each child has their own bedroom, all bedrooms have toilets and there are 3 bathrooms available, one on each floor and a shower room. There is enough physical space for each child to be able to move around and enjoy the different areas of the home. There is a lift to support those who may find climbing stairs a challenge at times. Due to the needs of the children the home supports there is enough space for children to stay without having to share space with others, or, if they prefer, enough space to share parts of their days with others.



Location of the home

Albaston

Albaston is a hamlet in Cornwall, England, United Kingdom. It is in the civil parish of Calstock. It is located at Ordnance Survey grid reference SX 423 704. Albaston is about 1 mile from the centre of Gunnislake and half-a-mile from Gunnislake railway station, the terminus of the Tamar Valley Line.

Albaston has a chapel and a church and many areas of natural beauty. It is in the heart of the Tamar valley and houses the archives of the Tamar valley.

There are many outside spaces and green areas, there are walks, forests, woodlands, playing fields, parks and play areas. Gunnislake is on the train line to Plymouth the ocean city of the southwest.

Plymouth

Plymouth is a thriving and busy city with lots to offer from ice rinks to clip and climb, historical walks and boat tours. There are many attractions in and around Plymouth that are suitable for the children who stay over including the aquarium, boat tours, ferry rides, Theatre Royal, The Tinside pool and many more. All activities once identified as possible suitable for the children are thoroughly risk assessed and planned.

We are situated between 2 beautiful counties and have access to a range of National Trust Attractions these include, houses, gardens and woodland.



A full and thorough location assessment has been completed. This can be requested from the manager.

Cultural, religious, linguistic needs

Every child at Fernleigh has full support, assistance and encouragement to follow any chosen passions, beliefs or interests. Whether it be maintaining attendance at groups, clubs or sessions, observing religious practices, following lifestyles or engaging in discussion the staff team will incorporate it into the child's care plans, daily living and experiences.

Where parents and carers encourage different practice, these will be respected and valued.

The child's heritage, culture, history and identity will be celebrated, we endeavour to ensure they know where they are from and what has shaped them (if appropriate). We will help the child find their sense of self through relationships and opportunities to explore.

We will do this through;

- Discussions and research
- Visits
- Foods
- Celebration days
- Role modelling
- Understanding, skin care, hair care
- Understanding dress
- Learning together
- Exploration
- Sensory experiences

Fernleigh celebrates local, national and worldwide events and on a monthly basis will have a topic that children, staff and families can become part of, this may include learning about history, foods, culture, heritage or something that is new to us all.

We invite and encourage parents and carers to be part of this.

Language and communication

Children who stay at Fernleigh house may have a range of communication styles and methods. Some ways children communicate are;

- Verbally
- Through their behaviour and actions
- Using Makaton
- Using symbols and pictures
- Using gestures
- Using BSL (British sign language)
- Using yes/no boards
- Talking mats

In order to ensure that all children can communicate, have a voice and are heard Fernleigh ensures that their preferred communication method is supported. Where a child has a limited communication we will work alongside them, their carers, their schools and therapists to help them learn how to improve their communication. We will do this by finding the right method for them and using our relationships to help them feel safe to communicate with us.

Complaints

We take all complaints very seriously and endeavour to have them addressed as soon as possible. The manager maintains a complaints log, this details all complaints and the action taken.

If you wanted to make a complaint this should be first directed to the manager of the home, if the complaint involves the manager or you are not satisfied with the manager's responses, please contact the responsible individual. Contact details can be found at the end of the document.

All complaints are monitored and are used as learning tool to improve the service and our practice. We review all complaints within our quality systems.

We strive to ensure transparency and learning through every element of our service. We welcome professionals and others involved in a childcare to view, comment on or audit any of our policies, procedures or guidance. These can be found in the office at Fernleigh or are available on request from the manager.

Views, wishes and feelings

Fernleigh strives to ensure that each child finds and has a voice. This is a core belief of ours and one that we will uphold vigorously. Having and using a voice can be particularly difficult with children who communicate in different ways. We are proactive and ensure we use the skills and experiences of our team and others to provide the best child centred support to help children use their voice.

Fernleigh encourages all children to be as involved as possible in their care and care planning, this is from the assessment and transition phase of the placement to ensure best fit with the child's wishes and the service.

The voice of the child can be seen through the home, its operation and its systems. The home currently is a blank canvas and will evolve through the journey of the home and the child, this will be evidenced at Fernleigh and provide a constant reminder of their role within the home.

Children will be consulted and take part in writing house rules, house rewards, menu's, shopping, events and other home-based activities.

More formally, children's voice sessions and this is to be captured in various ways, to ensure their voice is heard.

Children will have the opportunity to meet with professionals from outside the home also and where it is deemed helpful, advocacy will be sought.

Fernleigh is a place that children are respected, honoured and cherished. We pride ourselves on ensuring that everything we do is done with the children. The way we do this will be variable as the children will have different ways of communicating, of expressing themselves, their views, wishes and wants will differ. We will encourage this and show them their voices are heard and listened to.

Every child is treated with respect, with dignity and with a positive approach to valuing them for who they are. This will be modelled by the staff around them and evidenced throughout the systems and practices with the home.

Discrimination and /or practice that could be viewed as discriminatory will always be immediately challenged. The home will seek to understand why the practice has occurred and firstly correct the practice then identify the cause and take action to prevent it occurring again.

Please request the equalities policy for further information.

Children are at the centre of all we do. Fernleigh works alongside the children and their families to enhance and implement and review the 'children's rights promise.

Children in our care will be supported to be responsible and to understand their rights in relation to;

- ✓ Their personal dignity and independence irrespective of their severity of any physical, emotional or learning difficulty
- ✓ Their social, emotional, religious, cultural and political needs and acceptance of these.
- ✓ Receiving skilled, sensitive and understanding care to enable them to achieve the highest possible quality of life
- ✓ Having their personal privacy respected.
- ✓ Being consulted about daily living arrangements in the Home, and to participate in discussions about proposed changes to these arrangements
- ✓ Being involved in, and be kept informed about, their individual assessment of need.
- ✓ Having a regular review of their individual circumstances, and to have the right to be present at any review meetings.
- ✓ Making informed choices about their Care Plans.
- ✓ To be kept informed of all the services offered by the Home.
- ✓ Having access to a formal complaint procedure

The only restrictions will be the legal and regulatory requirements necessary to protect the health and safety of children, family, visitors and staff, and to ensure that the proper level of care is provided.

Education

Education is a right afforded to all children and plays a significant part of growing older and maturing as a child. We aspire for all children to have the same experiences and opportunities as those who are not children in care. We believe education is fundamental to the well-being of the child.

Children under our care might require alternative and adapted education to best meet their needs. We will work with all educational establishments to ensure the best possible provision is provided to them.

Children under our care are likely to require the support of staff to succeed in their learning- We expect and plan for this to ensure the child's emotional needs are met and they are better able to cope with the transitions and challenges attending different establishments may bring. We will provide the support the child requires to access their education if this is appropriate.

Fernleigh has created links with local authorities and will work closely with the virtual schools and if required. This education provision would require the support of local virtual schools to provide targeted educational programmes for the children.

Fernleigh will support children to complete their homework or other home learning and work in partnership with education services to ensure a supportive holistic approach is delivered.

Enjoyment and achievement

We believe that happiness and personal growth are a key outcome. We encourage all children to explore and take opportunities to try new things and grow as individuals. This is done within a simple relational model of enjoying doing things together.

It is the aspiration of Fernleigh that the children within the home have the same opportunities as others, we encourage and support school trips, meets with friends, self-expression and encourage talents and areas of interest.

Existing hobbies are forward planned for and new experiences will be identified and carried out with key staff.

Fernleigh utilises the skills and interests of the staff and looks to encourage staff to share their hobbies with children and children to share theirs with the staff.

We encourage the learning of new skills together and participation in activities as a crucial way of developing positive relationships, improving self-esteem and self-confidence.

Health

Children will be supported to access universal health providers. Where additional health provision is required Fernleigh will work with the child's placing authority to ensure all health needs are met.

All children will be registered with a GP, dentist, and optician. All children to receive support with their personal health care if required and If specialist health input is essential, for the growth and development of the child, we will engage with the local services and communicate with placing authorities.

We have good links with local services that can offer a range of therapeutic services.

Children are educated about healthy minds and bodies; our staff will model healthy minds and healthy bodies as a way to teach. While there will always be a focus on health and well-being, the delivery of this knowledge will change for each child depending on their needs, language and understanding.

Fernleigh seeks to work closely with local authority health professionals such as

- School nurse
- Dietician/PEG care
- Autism teams
- CIC nurse
- Local CAMHS

We invite all professionals involved in a child's journey to attend regular meetings and updates.

Fernleigh will seek to engage with the localised CAMHS services in Devon and Cornwall, in the first instance. We are aware of the challenges of this and their availability. In some cases, it may be required (for risk reasons) to access our independent Mental health partners to overcome any barriers. We will do this, in partnership with the placing authority.

Positive relationships

Contact with family and friends is of primary importance and is fostered within Fernleigh. The staff seek to understand each child's relationships and support in all ways possible.

This may include

- Transporting to and from contact
- Encouraging phone contact
- Support to use social media
- Direct work around relationships
- Modelling positive relationships

We seek to ensure all children's family and friends can visit and spend time with them at the home, (based on risk assessment and risk management advice). This would be done in partnership with all involved as we will strive to ensure that children have space and time to be away from their family or carers.

Every member of staff will provide a different role model to the children, this will allow them to understand different relationships and navigate the boundaries of them. Every member of staff will receive support to ensure they understand the importance of building and maintaining the features of good relationships. This will be done both formally and informally and using Cope's trust analogy as a foundation for discussion and monitoring.

TRUST (cope 2001)

- Truthful** – show integrity and honesty
- Responsive** – openness, willing to share, empathic
- Uniform** – consistent, reliable, available
- Safe** – protect, support, and encourage, positive regard
- Trained** – competent, capable, knowledgeable

Alongside a comprehensive induction and competency framework staff are introduced to and led through understanding who to support children using a well-recognised trauma informed practice called PACE Parenting.

PACE is a way to therapeutically engage in conversation with a child. It's about building up a positive relationship and reminding them that you'll always be there for them. It helps promote secure attachments and allows children to reflect on their thoughts and behaviours without being judged.

Playfulness: Being playful together helps the bond between the two of you grow. It's about having fun with the child and shows them it's okay to have fun with trusted adults and promotes a positive connection between you both. Playfulness can allow them to feel safe without any of the scary feelings that the child is used to accompany safeness.

Acceptance: The adult shows an understanding of the child's behaviour and accepts them, even though they are behaving this way. You're showing them that you are not judging them. So, this means accepting the *motivation* of their behaviour, not their negative behaviour itself.

Curiosity: Being curious will help gather an understanding of the child's behaviour, which in turn will help with *acceptance*. Having a good knowledge of their history allows you to accept who your child is and understand why they might behave the way they do.

Empathy: Being empathetic allows the child to feel safe with you and share their deeper feelings without the threat of being judged. Real empathy comes from the heart and can be used to relieve feelings of shame instead of concentrating on praise. You could use phrases like "That must have been really hard for you to tell me" Or "I want you to realise I do understand what it is you are going through". Try to reflect how the child is feeling, if the child is sad, be sad with them. This shows that you understand how difficult what they are going through is, and that you are with them.

Fernleigh provides a home from home and staff show traditional family values and habits, we want all children to feel part of the Fernleigh family when they can't be with their own.

At Fernleigh we will;

- Eat together
- Relax together
- Play games
- Have fun
- Be affectionate
- Show kindness
- Embrace difference

Protection of children

The foundation of our service is that all children are both kept safe and feel safe.

We encourage challenge, questions, and reflection in all aspects of our care and support and we specifically look for challenge to ensure we are always safeguarding children to the best of our ability.

We do this through.

1. Open discussions and reflection (dedicated sessions)
2. Protected time in team meetings to discuss challenges in delivering excellence in care and support
3. High quality training, safeguarding level 3 and level 5 for manager
4. Effective supervision
5. Clear processes and procedures.
6. Developing supportive relationships with local services

There are monitoring devices at Fernleigh House

These are for the safety and security, monitoring devices are only be utilised after agreement that they are in the best interests of the child. They would be placed with due regard to legal and ethical frameworks and decisions would be taken from a collective around the child.

While we do not wish to restrict the children's environment, we do need to keep them safe, the children and young people who live here, often because of their learning disability will have little or reduced awareness of danger, therefore the only door accessible to them to leave the home is the door into the garden.

This environmental restriction will be noted in all care planning, and should children live at Fernleigh not require this safety measure it will be removed as appropriate.

Behaviour support

Our approach to behaviour is one of understanding and acceptance. We understand that the children use their behaviour as a form of communication, we understand that if they are using their challenging behaviours this is likely because they find this to be the most effective. We understand it is our responsibility to change something for the child to help them to control their own behaviour approach is not stand alone and is seated within a positive behaviour support framework.

Staff practice will be underpinned by “Restraint Reduction Network Training Standards” and challenging behaviour modification follows the principles of positive behaviour support.

Positive behaviour support is a person-centred approach to improving the persons quality of life by understanding the function of their behaviour, using evidence-based practice. We combine this with a central focus on positive relationships and enabling environments to create our strategies for reducing the likelihood that the child will use challenging behaviour. There is a clear link between challenging behaviour and quality of life. If a person’s quality of life is reduced, their challenging behaviour increases. Where possible we will always choose to focus on improving quality of life.

We ensure every child has a clear positive behaviour support plan that details their current presentation and the expected staff response. Our focus will always be changing the child’s environment so they do not need to use challenging behaviour, but we must plan for these events happening given the complexities of the children Fernleigh will accommodate.

Should children need to be supported with physical interventions or any restrictive practice in order to keep themselves or other safe we will train staff in how to do this safely and ensure the dignity and safety of the child is paramount. These will be delivered by **HOLDING HANDS Ltd** and certificated through BILD ACT in compliance with the restraint reduction network training scheme.

Please see the behaviour policy for further information.

Leadership and management

Home Address-
Fernleigh House
Albaston
Gunnislake
Cornwall
PL189AJ

Responsible Individual- Abhay Shah
C/O Fernleigh

Registered Manager- Patricia Smith
C/O Fernleigh

The staff are supported by effective leadership and management. The leadership group of Fernleigh is committed to ensuring the best care and support to children. This group have many years of achieving positive outcomes for children, young people and adults across a range of services. The leadership group have been identified to ensure experience and knowledge cross throughout all aspects of health and social care. This allows us to provide holistic knowledge and experience throughout the home.

Please see appendix for staffing qualifications and experience.

All staff receive supervision from the senior team in line with policy, supervision from supervisor that focuses on the different aspects of their role, learning from positive monitoring against care plans and reflection.

Ongoing informal supervision and support will involve ensuring staff adhere to care plans, policies and procedures, their practice and utilising their knowledge of the children.

The registered manager will receive the support of a safeguarding professional who will audit safeguarding practices, assess record keeping and provide supervision.

The day-to-day staffing structure will be agreed after the assessment of the first child to be placed. Any staff member left in charge of the home will be suitably qualified and experienced.

We will always endeavour to provide both male and female staff to support our children to develop relationships with both sexes of staff.

Care planning

The registered manager and provider only accept children into Fernleigh if they are satisfied, they can meet their needs. This will be done through robust initial assessment and risk assessment.

Where possible part of the assessment will be working alongside current services to get to know the child. The registered Manager then tells the senior team what they need to plan the transition and be responsible for leading the resources around each child.

Every child's care plan will be detailed and thorough but focused on outcomes. Children's assessment will provide us with the core staff skills and experience needed and where required we recruit and train staff to the child's needs. We will actively seek out staff if we have a gap in skills or experience.

Staffing

A full list of the staffing structure at the home can be provided at any time by the manager.

We ensure that there are always suitable qualified and competent staff, this includes ensuring they are trained to a high standard and have ongoing learning opportunities. A full breakdown of the staff qualifications and training is available.

The staffing requirements of the home are set depending on the needs of the children staying at the time. We will always ensure there are 2 staff members overnight and at least 1 person during the day if children are using the premises.

Staff Members working at Fernleigh House March 2025

Trish Smith – Level 5 – 17 Years' experience working with SEN children, first aid instructor, Safeguarding DSL, AI assessor, Level 3 Education and Training.

Cory Jones – Level 5 EQ, 18 years experience in supporting children with learning difficulties and in school as Thrive practitioner.

Neil Taylor - Level 4 enrolled and local disabilities football coach.

George Blyth – Commenced level 5 - 2 years adult care & 2 years childcare experience.

Madeline Thomas - Experienced residential support worker, currently undertaking Level 5.

Kayja Cullen - BSc (Hons) Psychology 1st class Degree, with childcare and development and now undertaking level 5

Rebecca Harrington – Degree in childhood development and early years teaching-4 years experience.

Rob Bates – Undertaking psychology degree.

Shannon-Lee Kirkpatrick – Level 3 residential care and now undertaking level 5

Phil Simba - Currently undertaking level 4

Laura Stephens – Currently undertaking level 4

Archie Coultas – Currently undertaking degree

Freya Beavis – About to start level 4

Tamsin Eldred-Farrant – About to start level 4

Earl Newton – In probation

Alex Kratky – In Probation

Tony Searle - In Probation

Emily Davidson – In Probation