

## Freedom of Information Request

**1. Which units within the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (Northern Trust) provide respite care services for children.**

Two units provide residential short break services for children with severe learning disabilities, one of which is specific to children who also present with severely challenging behaviour.

**2. Please provide statements of purpose for each of these units. Have there been any amendments to these since January 2020?**

Rainbow Lodge SoPF for Short breaks attached. Not updated since 2008.

Whitehaven SoPF attached.

**3. Have any units that have provided respite care services for children been closed or repurposed since January 2020.**

Yes, Rainbow Lodge closed to short breaks between March 2020 and Sept 2020 due to Covid, during which it was used for an assessment placement for one young person who subsequently was admitted to full time care.

It continued to run on a reduced capacity due to Covid restrictions and subsequently staffing pressures and was closed again in Oct 2021. The short break service remains closed pending staffing recruitment.

Whitehaven was not closed, the service was reduced due to Covid restrictions and one young person admitted pending assessment and progression to foster placement.

**4. What are the staffing complements for each unit within the Northern trust that provides respite care services for children. Are all the available posts filled? Does each unit use bank/agency staff?**

Whitehaven Funded staffing complement is 27.15WTE.

There is at December 2021 approximately 4 vacancies and as a result the Unit will revert to bank, overtime and agency utilisation.

Rainbow Lodge is NOT a Trust facility and consequently the Trust do not manage the staff. Requestor would have to source staffing details direct from that independent organisation.

**5. Does the Northern Trust have a budget for respite care services for children and if so can you please provide this. What is the budget for each unit?**

Whitehaven funded budget for 2021/22 is £1.328m.

The Trust has a contractual arrangement with Rainbow Lodge for £1.378m for the 2021/22 financial year.

**6. How long are the waiting lists currently for each unit that provides respite care services for children.**

Current longest wait for Whitehaven is 8 months. 5 children are waiting commencement.

Current longest wait for Rainbow is 10 months but has an ongoing short break service. 5 others are pending commencement to short breaks.

**7. Does the Northern Trust provide any alternatives to respite care services for children? If yes please provide details of each of these alternative services.**

Under the SDS framework the assessed need for a short break (respite care) can be provided via Direct Payments, managed budgets, or direct services such as Sharing the care (host family based).

**8. Have any business cases been filed to increase respite service provision within the Northern trust since January 2020?**

No

**9. How many complaints have been made about lack of access to respite care services for children since January 2020?**

Whitehaven – 1 complaint due to short break date being cancelled. An alternative date was provided in addition to outreach support.

Rainbow Lodge – 2 complaints due to short break service being closed.