Bluebird House
Forensic Adolescent Mental Health Unit
Admission Criteria and Referrals

Admission Criteria

• The young person is under 18 years of age at the time of referral

AND

• The young person could be detained under either Part II or Part III of the Mental Health Act 1983.

AND EITHER

The young person presents a risk* to others of one or more of the following:

• Direct violence liable to result in injury to people
• Sexually aggressive behaviour
• Destructive and potentially life threatening use of fire

OR

The young person is in custodial care AND requires inpatient hospital treatment.

The referrer can give evidence that serious consideration, and testing where appropriate, of alternatives has already been tried prior to referral, indicating that the case has exceeded the ability of available mental health services to meet the need.

Summary of the financial arrangement

Bluebird House is funded via National Specialist Commissioning. Therefore, following an initial assessment fee, local commissioners are not responsible for meeting the ongoing funding costs of admission.

Responsibility for funding NHS or independent sector care for the young person will return to the responsible area when the young person is discharged from a national unit to another setting.

*it is not necessary that the referred young person should be facing criminal charges for these risk behaviours, but it is necessary that there should be reliable accounts available of such behaviour.
We welcome telephone enquiries to discuss potential referrals (both for inpatient admission and for Community Forensic Risk Assessments).

Referrals should be made in writing by a Consultant Psychiatrist to one of the Consultant Psychiatrists at Bluebird House.

Referrals received by Bluebird House will be considered in a timely way by the multidisciplinary team and, if appropriate, a full assessment will be arranged.

Following assessment cases are discussed with the multidisciplinary team at Bluebird House and also at a weekly video-conference national referrals meeting. Following a decision to admit, arrangements will be made to admit the young person to Bluebird House. Apart from the initial assessment fee, there is no further cost to local commissioners for an admission.

The referrer will be kept informed of progress regarding assessment and admission at all stages.

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Environment

Bluebird House is set on the edge of the New Forest, Hampshire in a tranquil rural setting, but within a few miles of the city of Southampton which provides excellent transport links.

Bluebird House is the first, purpose built, NHS secure psychiatric hospital for young people in the country. The building is modern, highly specified and spacious to help ensure a caring, safe and secure environment.
The unit has three wards with a maximum of seven patients per ward. This helps to promote a sense of community and positive therapeutic relationships. All wards are mixed gender with the aim of aiding adolescent development. However, each ward has single gender areas to ensure the safety, privacy and dignity of each patient.

Within the secure perimeter the unit also consists of a separate but linked learning and therapies centre, a fully equipped gymnasium and fitness suite, several outdoor areas, a relaxation room and a multi-faith room.

Bluebird House specialises in the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of young people within a secure environment.

The presenting mental health difficulties of patients admitted to the unit may include mental illnesses (e.g. psychosis, affective disorders), developmental disorders including autistic spectrum disorders, complex post-traumatic presentations, affective and emotional instabilities, attachment disorders, and emerging personality disorders.
Young people and their families participate in detailed assessments and a range of evidence based psychological interventions are offered.

The interventions are tailored to the needs of each young person and their family and are delivered on an individual, family, and group basis. These interventions address emotional, behaviour and mental health needs, and the forensic needs of the young people. Building a good therapeutic relationship with young people who can be hard to engage and who in the past have found it difficult to trust others is paramount.

All young people are offered a comprehensive Occupational Therapy programme, which helps young people develop the skills and motivation to participate in meaningful activity, and focuses on the relationship between their engagement in occupation and their mental health.

A range of standardised assessments are used, and interventions are delivered in groups and individually. The OT team support the graduated programme of leave, helping young people develop community skills, daily living skills, and ultimately to engage in activities in the community.
Interventions offered to address emotional, behavioural, mental health and forensic needs of the young people include:

- Psychopharmacology
- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) informed interventions - individual sessions and Emotional Coping Skills group.
- Exploring our emotions group aimed to help young people understand and label their emotions.
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.
- Cognitive Analytic Therapy
- Enhanced Thinking Skills group.
- Offence related individual psychological work.
- Art therapy
- Family therapy
- Video Interaction Guidance
- Emphasis on patient portfolios which patients work on with nursing team.
- Sensory integration
- Alert programme
- Wellness Recovery Action Planning

This list is not exhaustive.

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Following admission to Bluebird House, there is a detailed multidisciplinary assessment which looks at psychiatric, psychological, occupational, physical health, social and family context, and educational aspects of a young person functioning.

Assessment concludes with a detailed multidisciplinary and mulitagency care planning meeting held within three months following admission.

An individualised clinical formulation and care plan which identifies the young person’s needs and strengths are jointly created. Recommendations regarding interventions are discussed, agreed together with the young person, carers, and professional network, and formulated into a multidisciplinary care plan.
Young people participate in a structured day throughout their admission, which comprises education and enrichment, occupational therapy, psychological therapy, group work, and structured nursing sessions. The national curriculum is delivered and education is offered to all young people, irrespective of their age.

Outreach Family Therapy appointments are offered routinely to families’ homes, in order to aid initial engagement, and to work collaboratively. Welcome Meetings are offered to every young person and their families/carers. This is an opportunity for families and carers to meet members of the team, tour the education facilities, and to input into the care of their young person during their stay at Bluebird.
Discharge and community integration

Bluebird House has a particular emphasis on community reintegration in the discharge planning of patients admitted to the unit.

Despite the high levels of complexity and risk demonstrated by young people admitted to the unit, positive discharge outcomes have been achieved with approximately one third of patients discharged to the community.

A further one third are discharged to other hospitals (secure settings or to adult inpatient services) and one third are returned to secure criminal justice or welfare placements following successful treatment in hospital.
Discharge Destination
All discharges February 2008 - March 2012

Total Finished Consultant Episodes = 60
- 21%: To other hospitals (secure plus non secure, adolescent and adult)
- 31%: Discharged to community (home, residential care)
- 46%: Youth Offending Institute
In addition to discharge destination data, clinical outcomes at Bluebird House are monitored via validated outcome measures.

Clinical improvements are demonstrated via the CGAS (higher score is better functioning) and HONOS-CA and HONOS-Secure (lower score is better functioning).

Data showing our results can be seen overleaf.
At Bluebird House we strive to offer young people therapeutic interventions and containment in a safe and secure environment, and through the positive relationships that are built with staff.

There is a strong emphasis on young people’s involvement in their own risk management, and we aim to help young people move forward by working collaboratively to take positive risks, and by helping them reconnect with their family and community. There is a strong emphasis on active user and carer participation through community meetings, service user representation and carer forums.

Bluebird house is a member of the Quality Network for Inpatient CAMHS (QNIC), a peer review process developed and managed by the Royal College of Psychiatrists’ College Research Unit.
Bluebird House continues to perform well against the QNIC standards achieving over 90% compliance across all sections. Some excellent work is being undertaken on the unit, and there is a comprehensive programme of care delivered to the young people. (QNIC review 2011)
In addition to our inpatient service, Bluebird House is able to provide community adolescent forensic risk assessments on an individual patient basis within the catchment area. This is an NHS service, but a fee will be charged to the patient’s responsible local area to cover the cost of the service provided.

A Community Forensic Risk Assessment consists of a detailed review of the case, including clinical interview (either at Bluebird House or local to the young person) and obtaining collateral history. A detailed report is prepared together with the option to attend one clinical professionals/case review. Assessments are completed by a Consultant Adolescent Forensic Psychiatrist.

Although it is likely the majority of referrals will be adolescents, one of our psychiatrists (dual accredited in Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Forensic Psychiatry) would be able to assess younger children if required. There is also the availability of Clinical Psychology input into these assessments.

Referrals for Community Forensic Risk Assessments should be made in writing by a Consultant Psychiatrist. Referrals should include a detailed summary of the background to the case and details of the incidents or concerns relating to the patient’s risk behaviour.
Training

Bluebird House offers specific training relating to adolescent forensic psychiatry, often free of charge. Current courses include:

- Structured Professional Judgement risk assessment: SAVRY (Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth)
- Video Interaction Guidance (VIG)
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