

# Location Risk Assessment

Windows  
for Children





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## Introduction

The home is a modern 11 bedroom house set well back from the road, in a suburban area of Chatham. The road consists of residential properties and is nearly a mile long and has a substantial hill at one end. It is approximately 2 1/2 miles from the town centre and the train station. It is within easy reach of many schools, playing fields, leisure centres, shops and healthcare services.

The home is based in Medway, which is a unitary authority on the north coast of Kent. It benefits from an excellent rail service into London and easy access to two major motorways giving quick access to London and other placing authorities. The home is about 20 minutes from the Dartford Crossing giving access to counties north of London.

The house stands in a plot of one acre with a large driveway that can accommodate 16 cars. This means that the running of the home does not impact on the local neighbourhood traffic/parking. This also means that there is limited risk of a potential accident when young children are getting into and out of vehicles. The house does not look particularly large from the road and has no signage or indication that the property is used as a children's home. This is because we do not want our children to feel they are different to their friends at school.

The building is in excess of 4,000 square feet and provides ample accommodation for the children that are cared for. There are sufficient bedrooms for ten children to have individual rooms, plus a small room for the sleeping in member of staff. There are gates either side of the property to ensure the children are safely contained in the very large rear garden. There are sheds that store bicycles and play equipment, a school facility and open areas for group games.

Windows for Children is an individual therapeutic children's home that cares for severely traumatised and emotionally damaged children with complex needs. The admission age range of between 5 and 10 years. Because the children are so young, they are never unsupervised either inside or outside the home. This is the major contributing factor to ensuring our children are kept safe at all times. The home employs waking night staff to monitor children are safe and their whereabouts are known at all times. The home has developed a sound and movement monitor for the first floor. This ensures that staff know where children are twenty-four hours a day. This system does not use cameras, and its use is approved by placing authorities and Ofsted. When children attend external schools and clubs, they are escorted into the site and picked up from the school or club. No child is allowed to wait outside the school or club premises, as this could potentially compromise a child's safety.

## Risk Assessment

Windows location is considered ideal as the crime and instances of sexual exploitation are extremely low. Due to the age range of the children accommodated within the home, they are never unsupervised by the staff who are charged with their care. Most of the children would have come from a deprived area, where crime and exploitation would almost certainly have been a cause for concern. Therefore, moving to the home would represent a positive influence, and a substantial reduction of risk.

Windows have never had a child runaway or go missing, this is because of the age of the children and they are supervised at all times. However, we never become complacent and need to remain alert to all possible risks

The local crime map suggests that the area surrounding the home is considered to have a low risk factor. In addition to this due to the age range of the children that reside at the home, they would never be allowed out unsupervised. Therefore the likelihood of being drawn into gang crime or anti-social behaviour is virtually zero.

The home specialises in therapeutic interventions that help young children that have generally suffered from abuse and neglect. It is our firm belief that the neighbourhood is a safe and positive environment. This statement is justified by the numerous examples of children that have benefitted, and have had their lives positively improved and enhanced by the home and its local environment over a twenty-three year history. Due to the fact that very few of our neighbours that live in Dargets Road even know what we are, or what we do; is a significant indicator that the existence of the home has a zero impact on the local community.

There are no obvious factors that would represent unusual hazards to the children. The home is on a reasonably busy road, assessed at probably 4 vehicle movements per minute. This would be considered low in built up areas. The home is set back about 150 feet from the road and children would only use the road under close supervision from staff. This would happen normally as life skills training. The home is considered to be very safe.

## Accessibility

The home is situated in the conurbation of Medway and is well served by a full range of local services. Within a twenty-minute walk of the home there are, seven primary schools and two secondary schools, a leisure centre, a bowling alley, a supermarket, 5 parks, woodland areas, an optician, a dentist, a surgery as well as a host of local shops.

Within a twenty-minute drive of the home further amenities including an ice rink, historic dock yard, a range of museums, a cinema, three shopping complexes, several train stations offering excellent connections to London and the South East, a range of clubs and evening activities, sport facilities including several swimming pools and tennis courts. The home runs two seven-seater vehicles which are used to access amenities beyond the immediate vicinity and to enable the children to have access to the broader benefits of living in the south east of England including, sandy beaches, historic castles and beautiful countryside.

## Relationships with the Community

The home has been in situ for 23 years and over this time has developed and maintained excellent links with the community. We frequently have local emergency services visit the site to interact with the children to develop their understanding and trust of services. The Lions Club and Rotary Club support us through giving the children presents at Christmas and providing a Father Christmas who visits the home on Christmas Eve.

## Highlighted risks

The home receives a monthly crime report from the Police outlining the type and frequency of crimes committed within the vicinity of the home.

Crime rates are low although the most common category is violence and sexual offences. Figures given are average numbers of incidents per month in the Dargets Road area during the months January-September 2017 Information provided by Kent Police and is available at [Police.uk](http://Police.uk)

- All crime - 10.67
- Anti-social behaviour - 1.56
- Bicycle theft -0.22
- Burglary -0.56
- Criminal damage and arson -0.89
- Drugs -0.00
- Other crime -0.11
- Other theft -0.56

- Possession of weapons -0.00
- Public order -0.22
- Robbery -0.00
- Shoplifting -0.44
- Theft from the person -0.00
- Vehicle crime -1.56
- Violence and sexual offences -4.56

Whilst taken out of context this would appear alarming it is important to consider that two wide ranging categories have been amalgamated and this distorts the actual figure. That said we cannot ignore the risk that the data identifies.

## Risk Scores

- Anti-social behaviour **Low**
- Bicycle theft **Low**
- Burglary **Low**
- Criminal damage and arson **Low**
- Drugs **Low**
- Other crime **Low**
- Other theft **Low**
- Possession of weapons **Low**
- Public order **Low**
- Robbery **Low**
- Shoplifting **Low**
- Theft from the person **Low**
- Vehicle crime **Low**
- Violence and sexual offences **Low**

## Strategies

To mitigate the risk children are constantly supervised and do not leave the site without appropriate risk assessment, staffing levels and risk management planning. Additionally, appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the site is secure including a perimeter fence and gates, double glazed lockable windows and doors, a security coded side door and awake staff on site at all time.

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