

**Cypress House Stakeholder Meeting**  
**11<sup>TH</sup> March at 11am**  
**MS Teams Meeting**

<b>Services in Attendance</b>
KCC, UAS Children’s Service
GBC Councillor, KCC Councillor, MP
Kent Police
Head of Community Support, GBC
GBC, Councillor
Local Charity
Representative for the Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara
KCC, Public Health
Representative for Altheia Academies Trust
AH Prevent

Kent County Council (KCC) – Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) - Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UAS Children)

<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>
Introductions made and agenda shared.
<b>Update</b>
<p>A KCC representative mentioned that Cypress has been gradually opening since December. Since then, 22 young people have been supported, with 15 having moved on and 6 currently residing there, plus one more arriving today. The average stay on the NTS is currently 10 days, though some have moved on more quickly.</p> <p>The young people have expressed happiness and felt welcomed by the local community. Since the last stakeholder meeting, the president of the local mosque visited, which was particularly helpful during Ramadan. This visit also helped the boys understand the mosque's offerings.</p>

Cypress currently cares for 3 Christians and 3 Muslims. A KCC representative is aware of an evening prayer at the mosque and is looking into this for the young people. The mosque has invited the boys to join for Ramadan meals, and they are reminded of this offer. The centre's catering company supports Ramadan mealtimes by providing meals at 4 am.

The young people are developing skills for independent living. On a recent visit to the Natural History Museum in London, they learned how to navigate public transportation with the guidance of a higher-level teaching assistant.

### **Stakeholder Questions/Feedback**

A representative from the Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara had no specific feedback but mentioned that someone had informed them about young people seen hanging around outside Cypress House. However, upon further description, these individuals seemed older than the residents. The representative mentioned the offer for the boys to have a tour of the Gurdwara.

A KCC representative advised that this could be arranged in the next few weeks. It was also noted that our young people are allowed to go out independently after they have had a tour of the local area with staff and have learned about the area.

A Kent Police representative had no feedback since the last meeting. Prayer times at the mosque are at 8 PM and 10 PM. The mosque has no issues with staff attending with the boys but will double-check, as the mosque president was unable to join today's meeting.

A KCC representative mentioned that prayer times coincide with staff handovers, so they need to check if this can be done at the mosque without causing issues.

A representative from the Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara, who is also a local councillor, has now joined the meeting. He has no further comments to add to those already raised. He mentioned that he has heard nothing in his capacity as a councillor, as the ward he covers falls outside of Cypress House.

The GBC Councillor, KCC Councillor representative advised they haven't heard anything from the community either.

A KCC representative advised that the Local MP visited Cypress recently and it was a positive visit. A return trip would be welcomed should they wish.

A Kent Police representative also had no updates.

A KCC representative expressed gratitude for a recent visit from Kent Police. It offered the boys valuable insights into life in the UK and helped them have positive experiences with authority figures. Another visit to Cypress for new arrivals would be beneficial.

A representative from Altheia Academies Trust has no updates.

A KCC representative inquired about activities for the boys at the school.

A representative from Altheia Academies Trust advised it might be difficult as it's a primary school. However, they advised the contact details of the KCC representative will be shared with the headteacher.

A KCC Prevent representative also reported hearing no issues from the community.

A KCC representative was pleased to hear that there are no issues currently. They advised that should any support be required, please contact the centre and reach out before the next Stakeholder meeting, which will continue to be held monthly.

A KCC representative advised that the boys are well-behaved and keen to become part of the community. Cypress is collaborating with the local British Red Cross, who will participate in the community meeting. The boys are eager to volunteer, so please share any opportunities available.

**AOB**

None raised.