



THE MAPLES

YOUNG PERSONS GUIDES



ACORN
GROUP

INNOVATION IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

WELCOME FROM THE MANAGER OF THE MAPLES

Hello, I'm Tiffany but you will probably call me Tiff. I have been at this home since September 2000 and feel really comfortable; I want you to feel the same way.

My job is to make sure you are cared for, feel safe, secure and happy. I can only do this with your help by you telling us how you are feeling and how we can do things better.

We all do this job because we love working with young people. We respect and understand that you are an individual coming to live with a new group of people and this can be difficult. We too are all very different and we will all help you in different ways and our aims are the same: to support you to overcome barriers and enjoy positive life experiences.

We will not always agree on everything, but together we will find ways for you to achieve good things by working closely with you. We have lots of sports and activities to offer you but if we don't already do what you would like to do, we will try to find something you like and arrange this for you.

This will be your home for a short time or maybe a long time but either way all we ask is that you give us a chance to help and support you reach your goals.

Details of how to contact me or David Knowles, the person in charge & Managing Director of Acorn Homes, are on the back page.

Welcome and enjoy.

At The Maples we have devised a great way of helping young people to learn to enjoy and get the most from life. We do this through a programme of sports and active pursuits which encourage individual and team work and helps young people feel better about themselves and others.

Young Person's Comment:

"If you are good you can go and play pool, bowling, Costa Coffee and concerts. I have been to see Ed Sheeran at the O2 and the Christmas Pantomime at The Marlowe."

This may be the first time you have lived away from your family or you may have moved here from another placement, therefore this booklet is designed to help you settle in and explain some of our expectations of you, as well as some of your rights as a young person being 'looked after'.



THESE ARE SOME OF THE QUESTIONS WE EXPECT TO BE ASKED BY YOUNG PEOPLE WHEN THEY MOVE TO THE MAPLES.

WHAT POSTERS CAN I PUT UP?

We know that most young people want to put up pictures of their favourite stars, football teams, and celebrities. However, we do not allow pictures of a violent or sexual nature or that promote illegal activities such as drug use in the home.

Young Person's Comment:

"The staff brought me new posters to put up in my room."

CAN I WATCH TELEVISION IN MY ROOM?

Yes, you can have a television, although we would remove this if it helps you get a good night's sleep.

Young Person's Comment:

"I have Freeview in my room too."

WHAT TIME DO I HAVE TO GO TO BED?

Depending on your age your bedtime is something that is discussed and agreed on.

Age Time

| | |
|-----|---------|
| 10 | 8.30pm |
| 11 | 8.45pm |
| 12 | 9.00pm |
| 13 | 9.15pm |
| 14 | 9.30pm |
| 15 | 09.45pm |
| 16+ | 10.00pm |

Young Person's Comment:

"We all have a time to be in our rooms and the staff will come and sit with us to help us settle if we want them too."

WILL I HAVE MY OWN BEDROOM?

All young people have their own room and you will have a key. This is your own private space; a place for you to relax and a place for you to keep your belongings safe. We will always knock before entering your room unless we think you are in danger or unsafe and have to enter without your permission. We suggest that you don't allow other young people in your room, we have four communal rooms where you can spend time together. If you do invite another young person into your room for some specific reason, something that cannot be done in the communal rooms then you should let the staff know and keep the door open. This is to keep everyone safe.

Young Person's Comment:

"Having your own room means there are no arguments. I can leave my key in the office so I don't lose it."

CAN I BRING MY PERSONAL BELONGINGS?

Yes, we think it is important that you bring your personal items to the home. Any electrical items have to be tested to make sure they are safe. Most young people like to personalise their room and can go out shopping with staff to choose their duvet cover, lamp, clock and canvas among other things.

Young Person's Comment:

"It's good to bring your own things with you, you may have had them for a long time and make happy memories."

MEALTIMES

These tend to be set so that a routine can be kept to and we encourage eating as a group.

We like young people to try new food as well as enjoy the foods that they are used to. If there are certain foods you don't like or are allergic to, tell the adults who look after you and they will work with you to find the foods you do like. Everyone is invited to choose a meal each week. You are also welcome to help prepare and cook the meals.

MEAL TIMES

Breakfast: 07.00 - 09.30am
Lunch: 12.00 - 13.30pm
Dinner: 17.00 - 19.30pm

Young People's Comments:

"Food times are not really strict."

"We all eat together and have a lil chill out."

CAN I BRING MY MOBILE PHONE?

If your Social Worker agrees that you are able to have a mobile phone and you can use it sensibly then it's ok to bring one with you. You can leave it in a safe in the office when you are at school, college or with your Tutor. We will look after it during the night because we want you to have a good night sleep. You can make an agreement with your keyworker about how you are going to earn credit.

Young Person's Comment:

"It depends if Tiff and your Social Worker think its best decides if you can have one or not. If you show you are mature enough to have one you can earn one."

CAN I MAKE TELEPHONE CALLS?

Yes, you have the right to make calls to friends, family and other people involved in your lives, at reasonable times.

KEY WORKING

Each young person is allocated a key worker. These adults will make sure that all your day-to-day needs are met, for example: you receive the appropriate health and medical care and keep in contact with your Social Worker. They will also help you develop your living skills and prepare you for leaving care, but most of all they are there for you to talk to and confide in if needed.

Young People's Comments:

"I think keyworking is good because you can talk about your feelings."

"The staff treat everyone fairly. And they help you if you're feeling bad. They help kids who feel like they are going to hurt themselves."

AM I ALLOWED TO SMOKE?

For the benefit of your own health and in line with the law you will not be allowed to smoke inside The Maples or anywhere within the grounds. If you have permission from your Social Worker or parent then you may, at certain times, smoke outside the building in an agreed area. However, if you are a smoker then staff will help you to give up, together with support from the local GP or Nurse.

Young Person Comment:

"The staff try to help you stop."

WHAT IF I USE ILLEGAL DRUGS?

The Maples are committed to providing a healthy and safe place for all the children and young people who live there. Therefore, the use or storage of illegal drugs in the homes is not allowed.

The Maples has a zero tolerance policy towards illegal drugs. You have the right to privacy for yourself and your property, however, if staff believe you are carrying drugs they will ask you to turn out your pockets. If they believe you have drugs in your room they will search this. Two members of staff will carry out any searches.

Young Person's Comment:

"I agree that no child should take illegal drugs."

DO I HAVE TO WEAR A SCHOOL UNIFORM?

If you attend a school where uniforms are worn then you will have to wear one along with everybody else.

DO I GET POCKET MONEY?

Yes, what you receive is dependent upon your age.

WILL I GET MONEY FOR CLOTHES?

Yes, everyone receives a weekly allowance for clothing. We will also pay for you to go to the hairdressers or barbers regularly.

| Age | Pocket | Clothing |
|-----|--------|----------|
| 10 | £5.00 | £10.00 |
| 11 | £5.00 | £11.00 |
| 12 | £6.00 | £12.00 |
| 13 | £7.00 | £13.00 |
| 14 | £8.00 | £14.00 |
| 15 | £9.00 | £15.00 |
| 16 | £10.00 | £18.00 |
| 17 | £12.00 | £20.00 |

We also want you to be able to buy nice things. We have an incentive system which enables you to earn extra money over a period of time to buy something special that you have chosen in advance.

Young People's Comments:

"I think that the pocket money we get is enough."

"I struggle to settle at bedtime so I went to bed on time and earned enough money to get some walkie talkies."

Young Person's Comment:

"By sticking to the targets on my incentive chart I earned enough money to buy all my family Christmas presents."

WHAT HAPPENS IF I BREAK THE RULES OR MESS UP?

Staff will discuss these with you and listen to you before making a decision about any consequences. Behaving poorly or breaking rules can result in sanctions below.

Staying in the house (grounding), loss of free/trust time, early bedtime, loss of privileges e.g. not allowed to go on a trip or out for a treat, loss of electrical items from your room, e.g. removal of your television or game console etc. Sanctions are not intended to be a punishment, they are put in place to encourage young people to behave positively and succeed.

We want to provide a homely and welcoming place for you to live in and we think it is important for everyone to respect the home furnishings inside it. If you intentionally damage or break something in the home, you will be expected to pay for or help repair it.

Remember we would prefer to be rewarding positive behaviour rather than sanctioning unacceptable behaviour.

CHARTER OF RIGHTS

As a young person at The Maples you have the following right to:

- Have your personal dignity respected.
- Be treated as an individual.
- Have personal independence, personal choice and responsibility for your actions.
- Have your religious, cultural and emotional needs promoted and respected.
- Be treated fairly by those around you.
- Have an advocate or advisor present when your care is planned or reviewed in meetings.
- Be spoken to when changes are to take place and have your say.
- Be supported to complain when you need to.
- Be involved as fully as possible in the writing of your own care plan before and during your stay.
- Stay in touch with people that are important to you and hobbies you enjoy.
- Be able to request to look at your file and what has been said about you.
- Always be valued and listened to.

ADVOCACY

Staff can also arrange an independent advocate to come and meet with you.

An advocate ensures that the views, wishes and feelings of young people are heard when decisions are made about their lives. Advocates are independent of the home which means they don't work for us or have to do what we say.

The advocate will ensure that you have a voice in decisions that are made about your life and, they play an important role in helping you access services that you may need, this may be a school, a social worker or somebody else. Remember, it is your right to contact an advocate.



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Your safety and protection is the most important thing for us and we will always try and prevent you feeling that you are being treated unfairly. Bullying is unusual in our home, but sometimes young people can feel bullied for a number of different reasons. Staff are quick to respond to any signs that bullying may be taking place and will support you if you feel unhappy about the way other people are treating you.

We will also ask you to think about how you treat other people and it is just as important that other people do not feel that we are bullying or being unfair to them also. If there are occasions when young people fall out, disagree or feel unhappy with one another, staff will work with you to get you through this. Relationships and friendships can be difficult for all of us and all our staff are reminded that they too were once young people and understood how difficult relationships can be at times. At this home, you will be helped to understand how to build and keep relationships with others, the important part you play in these relationships and what you can expect from friendships and relationships.

Finally, remember, you are not alone, we are here to support you and it is our job to make sure we do this properly. We would encourage you to feel that you can come to us for anything and we will always work with you to resolve any difficulties.

Young People's Comments:

"Just because you were bullied in the past don't mean you have to bully another person. I think bullying is horrible, making people feel bad about themselves. We watched a programme about a girl who was bullied on line and it made her want to take an overdose. That is so horrible. We can talk to the staff if we are worried about being bullied."

"You can tell the staff if you feel like you're being bullied and they

UNHAPPY? WANT TO COMPLAIN!

No problem, we take all complaints very seriously and we have a formal complaint system. First speak to your key worker, tell them what's up. Normally they will be able to sort things out, but you will be offered the chance to record this in the 'grumble book'. If you feel it is more serious you will be helped to make a formal complaint. I will be able to deal with your complaint quickly, I will investigate your complaint and ensure you are kept up to date with progress and ultimately the outcome. If this still does not satisfy you, you can raise your concerns with your Social Worker. If your complaint is against me (The Registered Manager), please contact David Knowles, Responsible Individual, on 01843 808454 and he will be able to assist you further.

Once again welcome to The Maples. We are really pleased you have come to live with us and we will do our best to make a difference. If we have missed anything in this guide that you think should be included, do let us know. The space below is for you to write down any ideas and to make notes you may find useful.

Above all, try to remember, the staff are here to help.

YOUR NOTES...

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If English is not your first language or you have different communication needs, we can help you with this. Staff will also be happy to read through this guide with you and answer any of your questions you may have, if you would prefer.

USEFUL NUMBERS/INFORMATION

Home Contact Number: 01843 836562 **Email:** westgate@ahgroup.eu

Your Local Authority Tel No:

Your Local Authority Address:

Your Social Worker Name:

Social Workers Contact No:

Independent Reviewing Officer Name:

Independent Reviewing Officer Contact No:

Child Line: 0800 11 11

NSPCC: 0808 8005 000

Kent Safeguarding Children Board: 03000 421126

Independent advocate – Coram Voice: 0808 800 5792

Children’s Commissioner: 02077 838330

**Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services
and Skills:** Amanda Spielman

Ofsted: 0300 1231 231 **Textphone / Minicom Users:** 0161 618 8524

By Post: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Home Managers Name: Tiffany Healy

Direct Dial: 01843 836562

Acorn Homes Head Office

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Northdown Park Road

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Responsible Individual: David Knowles

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