



ASH COTTAGE

# YOUNG PERSONS GUIDES



ACORN  
GROUP

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INNOVATION IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## WELCOME FROM THE MANAGER OF ASH COTTAGE

Hi my name is Ben, I am the Manager at Ash Cottage and I have been working with children and young people for over 15 years. I have worked with children from 10 years to 18 years of age with a variety of needs including emotional and behavioural difficulties, autism and down syndrome.

During this time, I have developed good communication skills, which has enabled me to work with young people to develop coping strategies around issues or concerns they may have, and to aid young people in better managing their own behaviours.

Here at Ash Cottage I work with a team of staff who are here to help and support you.

I am happy to talk with you and answer your questions, but I would encourage you to also talk with the staff team too, as they are here to help, guide and support you whilst you live at Ash cottage.

I typically work Monday to Friday and our deputy works days and evenings. The other staff follow a rota system and there will typically be at least 2 members of staff on duty and two sleeping in at night.

I ask that you respect Ash Cottage. The home and its contents are supplied to make your stay and the stay of others as comfortable as possible. I believe that all young people staying at Ash Cottage should respect one and others privacy and belongings too and we will endeavour to ensure that you and the other residents respect this. Education is a huge thing in your life and we will work to ensuring that you have access to education and that you are supported to have your educational needs met.

The staff and I would like you to take part in lots of fun activities and to be happy and healthy. We have lots of sports and activities to offer you and if we do not have something that you are interested in, we will try to find something you like and arrange it for you.

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 different and our aim is the same, to support you, to provide a stable home and to feel cared for. We may not always agree on everything, but together we will find a way for you to achieve good things by working together with you. All we ask is that you give us a chance to support and help you reach your goals.

Details of how to contact me or Carol Bradley, Responsible Individual, are on the back page.

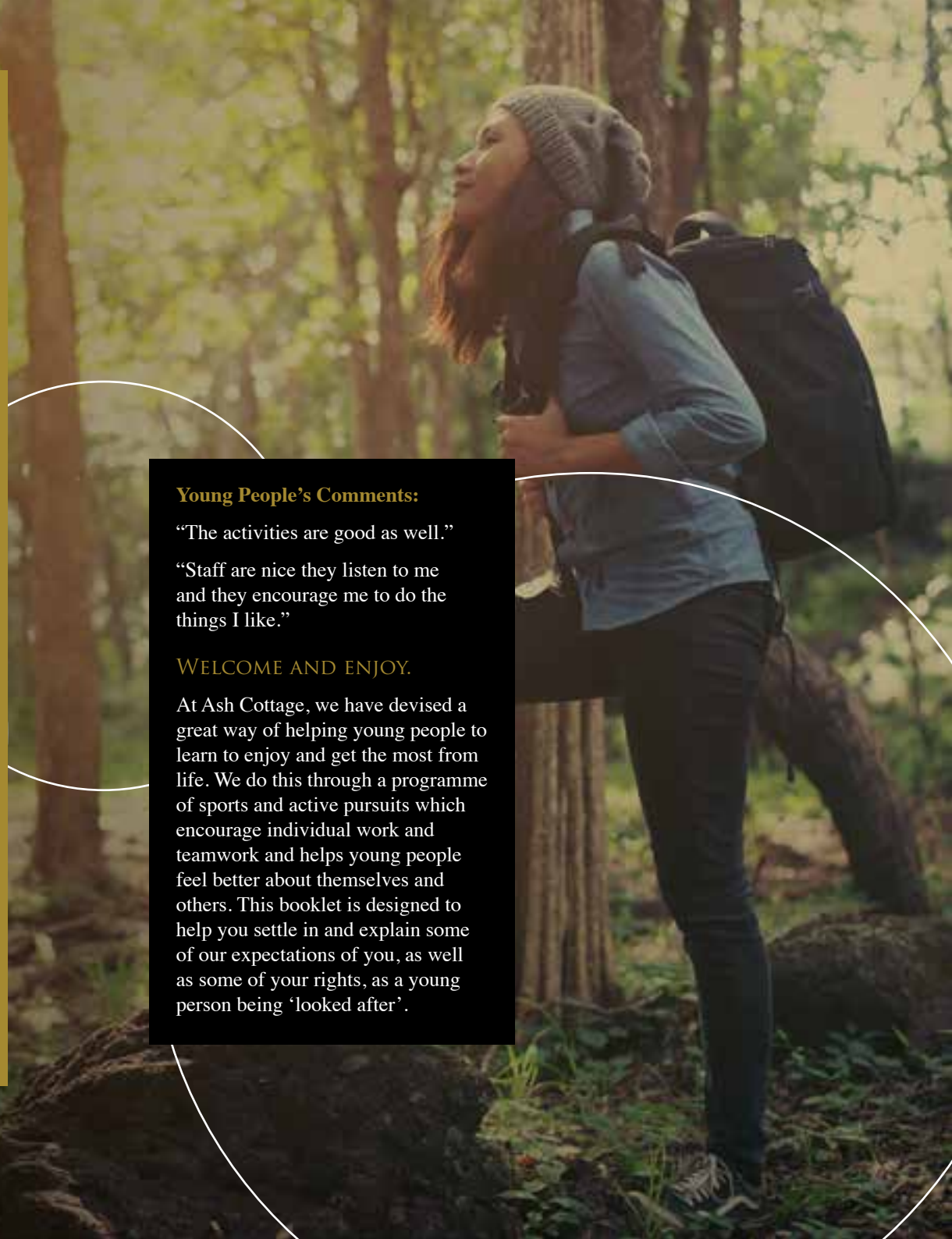
### Young People's Comments:

“The activities are good as well.”

“Staff are nice they listen to me and they encourage me to do the things I like.”

### WELCOME AND ENJOY.

At Ash Cottage, 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 work and teamwork and helps young people feel better about themselves and others. 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 ASH COTTAGE.

#### 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 in the homes or that promote illegal activities such as drug use in the home.

#### 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.

#### WHAT TIME DO I HAVE TO GO TO BED?

Depending on your age your bed time is something that is discussed and agreed on but typically bedtimes are:

Age	Time
10	8.30pm
11	8.45pm
12	9.00pm
13	9.15pm
14	9.30pm
15	9.45pm
16+	10.00pm

#### WILL I HAVE MY OWN BEDROOM?

All young people have their own room and you will have a key. We don't let children go into each other's bedrooms. You will receive £50.00 to personalise your room and get to pick a colour to have the walls painted.

#### CAN I BRING MY PERSONAL BELONGINGS?

Yes, we think it is important that you bring your personal items to the home. Any electrical items must be tested to make sure they are safe. Most young people like to personalise their room with pictures and books etc. At the point of moving in we even provide you with a special allowance to help with this.

#### MEALTIMES

These tend to be set so a routine can be kept to and we encourage eating together. Everybody needs a healthy, balanced diet. 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 has a say in weekly menus.

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

#### CAN I BRING MY MOBILE PHONE?

Phones are allowed, but you may be expected to hand it in during school time and before you go to bed, but if you can manage your phone positively, you may be allowed to keep it with you, so it is down to you. Otherwise, If you are not able to manage a phone the adults will help you manage this.

## KEY WORKING

Each young person is allocated a key worker and a co-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, talk to your social worker and youth-worker if you have one and arrange home-visits when needed. 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.

## 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 Ash Cottage. If you have permission from your social worker or parent then you may, at certain times smoke outside the building where the children's smoking area is, however, if you are a smoker then staff will encourage you to give up, together with support from the local GP or Nurse.

## WHAT IF I USE ILLEGAL DRUGS OR ALCOHOL?

Ash Cottage 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. Ash Cottage 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.

## DO I GET POCKET MONEY?

What you receive is dependent upon your age. We also provide you with the opportunity to earn more money by completing extra chores or tasks around the house.

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

## WILL I GET MONEY FOR CLOTHES?

Everyone receives a monthly allowance for clothing to have more to spend. There is also an allowance for toiletries and hair care.

## 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.

## A SCHOOL UNIFORM?

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

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I BREAK THE RULES OR MESS UP?

Staff will discuss these with you and listen to you before deciding about any consequences. Behaving poorly or breaking rules can result in sanctions below, but we will try to resolve things restoratively.

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.

## CHARTER OF RIGHTS

As a young person at Ash Cottage 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 must 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.

## 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 Carol Bradley, Responsible Individual, on 01843 808454 and she will be able to assist you further.

Once again, welcome to Ash Cottage, 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 on the next page 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:** 01227 860016 **Email:** ashcottage@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:** Ben Blackwell

**Direct Dial:** 01227 860016

### **Acorn Homes Head Office**

Northdown House,

Northdown Park Road

Margate, Kent CT9 3TP

**Tel:** 01843 808454

**Email:** info@ahgroup.eu

**Web:** www.ahgroup.eu

**Responsible Individual:** Carol Bradley

**Direct Dial:** 01843 808454 / 07590 640533

Northdown House

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