

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

Young Persons Handbook...



Coanwood Children's Home

22 Coanwood Drive

Cramlington

Northumberland

NE23 6TL

Tel: 01670 712203

How to Find Us

Directions from A1

Take **A19** exit from the **A1** sign posted Cramlington/Blyth/Ashington.

At the roundabout take the exit sign posted **A19**

At the roundabout, take the **1st** exit onto **A1171/B1505**

Continue to follow **B1505** going through 1 roundabout

Turn left onto **Clifton Road**

Take second left onto **Coanwood Drive**

Directions from A189 (Spine Road)

Take the exit toward **Cramlington/Town Centre/East Cramlington**

At the roundabout, take the **1st** exit onto **B1326**

Turn right onto **B1505**

Turn left onto **Clifton Rd**

Take the 2nd left onto **Coanwood Drive**

Young Person's Booklet

Welcome to Coanwood Children's Home!

As a team of carers we are aware that maybe you are feeling sad, confused, angry and possibly frightened. You may have a number of questions that you need answering, so we have produced this booklet that will hopefully answer most of them. However, if you have any more questions you need answering, approach anyone of the staff team, as they will be only too pleased to help you.

The Staff Team

We are a large group of adults, both men and woman, who are here to care for you. All of us have a different role to play, but all of our roles are equally important to your care and general well-being.

Coanwood Children's Home has a Home's Manager and a number of care staff. We have domestic staff who keep the home clean and tidy. That does not mean they will clean up after you, as there is an expectation that you will respect the home and keep your bedroom and living areas reasonably tidy.

Linkworkers

While you are staying at Coanwood Children's Home, we provide you with two or three of the staff team who will be your Linkworkers.

What are they and what do they do?

They are adults who will work closely with ***YOU***. They also have a key responsibility to work with your family, your Social Worker and any other services and professionals that you are involved with.

You will have a Care Plan, which is a detailed plan of your support and needs that we all have agreed to work with while you are with us at Coanwood Children's Home.

All of the team will ensure that your plan is working for you, but your Linkworkers will be the ones who will ensure that appointments, meetings and contact with family are made on your behalf and with your knowledge and participation wherever possible. They will also work with you in an I.P. session (Individual Programme), which tries to ensure that you understand what is happening around your stay with us and also to work on areas of your care that you may be having difficulty with or equally doing well with.

Remember all the team are here to help you. You don't always need to go to your Linkworker.

Privacy and Confidentiality

At Coanwood Children's Home we respect your privacy. You will have your own room and somewhere to keep your personal belongings. Your room is your personal space, but we would prefer that you do not allow others into it. We will knock on your door before entering, but there may be occasions when we need to go into your room without your permission, but we will let you know when this happens.

Rights and Responsibilities

Group living may be a new experience for you, and it does come with certain expectations.

WE WILL

- Provide you with the best possible care
- Treat you with respect and dignity
- Listen to your views
- Try to be patient and understand your frustrations
- Keep you safe at all times
- Answer any questions you may have
- Make sure you get the support you need

YOU SHOULD:

- Treat others with respect, recognising the opinions and views of other young people and staff as they may differ from your own.
- Try and be patient and tolerant with the other young people living in your home.
- Avoid behaviour which may offend others e.g. swearing, talking about offending, name calling, bullying and use of mobile phones inappropriately; for example inappropriate videos, music etc. This also applies to personal music played on C.D.'s, MP3's or computers.
- Take pride in your appearance and respect yourself as an individual.
- Keep yourself safe at all times.
- You are strongly advised not to swap, give away or sell your personal belongings.
- Stick to the rules and routines of the home.



- Try to engage with your staff team and attend your Individual Programme Session.
- If you are not sure of anything - [ASK US](#).
- Try not to get involved in situations that do not concern you.
- Respect the building in which you live, furniture, decoration, carpets etc. Help staff keep your home clean and tidy.
- If you accidentally damage something try not to worry, however deliberate damage is not acceptable and you may be required to pay towards the cost of repair or replacement.

Being Heard

There are lots of other ways to make sure your views are heard. Northumberland's Children in Care Council, Voices Making Choices, meets regularly and you are welcome to get involved. The group is made up of young people aged 15-21 who are all in care or care leavers. There are also groups for young people under 15, Young Voices making Choices and for care leavers, Future Route.



Every 6 months we will ask you to take part in an online survey which is confidential. This gives you the chance to tell us exactly what you think about the service we give you and to tell us how things can be made better. We then tell you what we are going to do in response to your views.

Young People's Meetings

Once a week there is a Young People's Meeting where everyone is encouraged to attend. Please participate, they are very important, they are ***your*** meetings.

The meetings give you the opportunity to voice your views about home routines, activities, meals, group living and just about anything you think is important to you or the others you live with in the home.

Staff also attend the meeting; they are there to support you put your views across if needed.

Complaints

You have a right to complain if you feel you are not being looked after properly.

If possible, talk to your link workers or your case manager first, or raise your concern at your young person's meetings; it's likely they will be able to deal with your complaint. However, if you feel you can't talk to them, speak to your Social Worker.

If you need to make a more formal complaint there are lots of ways to do this:

- Use the "Have your Say" form; this is a form that the Homes Manager or senior staff respond to.
- Use the 'How to make a Complaint' form; this enables you to talk to the Client Relations Officer in Northumberland, or you can ring them free on 0800 373615.
- Situated in your home is a pay phone where you have open access to a free direct telephone line to Childline, the Client Relations Service, the Advocacy Service and Action for Children.
- You can also write to Ofsted at:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231



Advocacy Service



We have two Participation and Advocacy Officers, Anya Proud and Robin Craig, who are available to support looked after young people if they feel they are not being listened to, or who need help to get their views across to others. Young people can also express their views about the services they receive. Anya and Robin and can be contacted by:

- Mobiles 07768658436 (Anya) or 07785573426 (Robin)
- E-mail voicesmakingchoices@northumberland.gov.uk

If you would prefer to speak to an independent advocate who does not work for Northumberland County Council, you can ask support from Action for Children. They can be contacted by:

- Freephone 0800 0850621
- Email necrs@actionforchildren.org.uk

You can also ask a member of staff to contact them on your behalf.

Children's Commissioner

Maggie Atkinson is the Children's Commissioner for England.

She has a legal duty to promote and protect the rights of all children in England with a particular focus on children and young people with difficulties or challenges in their lives, and in particular those living away from home, in or leaving care, or receiving social care services.

Her work focuses on making sure that adults in charge, or making decisions, listen to what children and young people say about things that affect them. She encourages adults, including the people making decisions about children's lives, always to take their rights, views and interests into account.

If you feel that the people responsible for care are not valuing your rights you may contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner using the contact details below and ask for some help in addressing any concerns you have.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Free Tel: 0800 528 0731
Email: advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 020 7783 8330
Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk



Meetings and Independent Reviewing Officers



Within three days of your admission we will have a Placement Planning Meeting to discuss what needs to be done in your best interest and how we do it. Once again, your family, Social Worker and anyone else who is working with you will be invited.

All young people who are looked after in either foster care or children's homes have an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). This person will hopefully be your Reviewing

Officer for all of your LAC reviews and will try to meet with you on an individual basis, so that you can talk freely about how you are feeling and if you are happy at Coanwood Children's Home. Your first review will be within four weeks of your living at Coanwood Children's Home. After this you will have another review after three months, then six monthly after that. This meeting is for you and everyone involved in your care plan. The meeting will discuss how you are doing and what we need to do in the future to help you achieve your goals.

Your Independent Reviewing Officer's name is:

.....

Contact telephone number is:.....

Remember it is important you participate in your meeting, as your views are important to your continuing care and planning.

We do have other meetings such as Care Team Meetings (CTM), which are held four weekly and everyone involved in your care planning is invited to discuss your progress.

Visitors

Family and friends who are agreed by your care team to visit you, are welcome to visit at reasonable times during the day and evenings, however we encourage these visits to be arranged through the staff team, but we also need to try and avoid visits during education or work times. As the home is accessible by public transport, we normally would not transport family or friends unless it was agreed in one of your meetings.

All visitors are expected to behave appropriately while in the homes or they will be asked to leave. There is an area within the home for private visits to take place, as it is not really appropriate to allow visits to take place in the general living areas, especially as other young people live in the home.

Telephone Calls

Use of the homes phone system is available to all residents. Calls can be made freely to family members or related professionals at a reasonable time. All calls are to be finished before 9.30 pm. Calls to mobiles need be limited to around 10 minutes and other calls to 20 minutes.



There is also a coin operated pay phone situated in the home which you have open access to. This phone is fitted with free direct dial buttons to Child Line, Advocacy, Action for Children and Client Relations Officers.

Incentives

You will have an incentive plan, to help you understand and manage your behaviour more successfully and identify how you deal with certain situations. Your plan will be unique to you and, basically, the more positive your behaviour the more you achieve.

You will be encouraged to identify areas of your behaviour you wish to improve upon and agree rewards for achievements.

Your Link workers will discuss this in more detail with you.

Education



Everyone who comes to stay at Coanwood Children's Home has a right to education. Whether you are in full time education or on a reduced programme with the school, or even if you are not in school at all, you will be expected to participate in some type of learning.

An education representative will meet with you and your Link workers to make a plan for you which is called a Personal Education Plan (PEP).

This is **YOUR** individual learning plan, and the staff team will aim to support you in achieving this plan regardless of the education setting.

Some examples of work based placements that young people have been involved in are mechanics, hairdressing, painting and decorating and plastering.

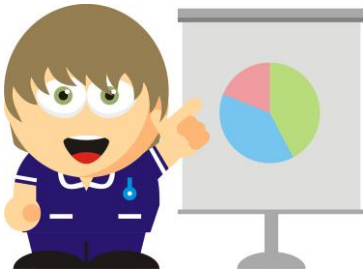


We also look at health as a part of your educational programme; some examples are swimming, gym, trampoline and horse riding. We will also listen to you to find out what interests you have and do our best to fit this into an educational programme.

At Coanwood Children's Home we accept that you may be worried about taking part in education, but we understand this and will always listen to what you have to say.

As we value the importance of education, we will provide you with the opportunity to gain some nationally recognised qualifications in areas like sports and leisure, the environment, independent living, and work related learning and vocational preparation.

Health Care and Fitness



When you arrive at Coanwood Children's Home you will be offered a Health Assessment through our Health Adviser. This is an examination just to make sure that you are in good health and to offer advice on any treatment or medication you may need.

If, after a year you are still with us, we will offer you the opportunity again.

This annual health check does not take away your right to see a doctor when you feel you need to. We will register you with a local doctor or, if you prefer and it is practical to do so, you can stay with your own doctor.

Regular appointments with the dentist and optician are encouraged and arranged through your Linkworker.

A reasonable amount of money will be allocated for haircuts; however any special "hairdos" can be saved up for using this allowance.

There are lots of opportunities to take part in sport and exercise. We have staff in the home that are trained to deliver different sports including martial arts, basketball and dance.

If you want to go along to a local leisure centre, staff will support you and help you to find out about the activities which take place there.

If you have any worries about your health, please speak to your link worker, social worker or another adult.

Smoking

Coanwood Children's Home is a "smoke free" area. We actively discourage smoking and if you are a smoker we can offer you help and support to quit.

If you feel the need to smoke you must be 18 years of age or have your parents/carers permission and must smoke in the designated smoking area.

Staff are not allowed to buy or give you cigarettes.

Clothing

We have a clothing budget which is based on individual needs. If you need clothes please speak to your Link worker.

Alcohol and Drugs

Alcohol and drugs are not allowed **at all**. If you do bring alcohol or drugs on the premises they will be confiscated and destroyed. The Police may also be informed.

Bullying

This type of behaviour towards other young people or staff is not acceptable. We take the issues of bullying very seriously.

Bullying comes in many forms, it does not have to be hitting or pushing someone around. It can be threats or intimidation, name calling, damaging others' property or taking other people's belongings.

Staff will challenge any behaviour that makes someone feel threatened or frightened. If the behaviour persists then this may involve others such as parents, social workers and anyone else involved in your care.

If you feel you are being bullied don't be frightened to approach any of the staff and discuss your concerns or feelings. We take bullying very seriously and, with your help, we can "**get it stopped**".

Pocket Money

You will be entitled to receive pocket money while you live with us. The amount will depend on your age. Pocket money is usually given out weekly.

Birthday Allowance

To help celebrate your birthday you will be entitled to an additional "birthday allowance". This money will be used to buy a present for you of your choice.



Gifts

If you receive any gifts from family or friends, it is best to inform the staff so that they can add this to your personal possessions list. If the gift is money, then staff will

be happy to add this to your pocket money until you need it. This reduces the problem of losing it or someone else asking you for money when you don't want to give it to them.

Keys

We can provide you with a key for your own bedroom but as the keys are expensive to replace, we will expect you to pay for a new one if you lose it.

Sanctions

If you misbehave you may be given a "sanction". A sanction can be a restriction on things you like to do or a way of putting things right. The sanction will be appropriate to the behaviour - for example if you misbehave in the car you could be excluded from going in the car for a period of time.

Unauthorised Absence

To help keep you safe we would like to know where you are and who you are with as much as possible. If you are out without permission you may be unsafe, so we will do our best to try and find you. This will include contacting people you may know, even visiting places you go to. If we are unable to find you then you would be a missing person and we would have to let your family know and possibly inform the Police too.

Restitutions

This is an agreed amount of money that will normally be paid out of your pocket money if you deliberately damage property or misuse money given to you. For example, if you are given money to get the bus and you spend it on something else.

Religious Observance

If you follow a particular religion or faith and wish to continue to practice this, then please inform your Linkworker so that we can support you the best we can.

Behaviour Management

There may be times when young people become upset and act in an aggressive or unsafe way. They may try to hurt themselves and/or others or damage the property. If this happens staff will try hard to talk to the young person, however if they do not stop acting in this way and their action may become harmful, staff may physically intervene with the young person.

All staff are trained in managing this type of behaviour. The aim is to help the young person regain control of their emotions and calm down to discuss their feelings and reasons for their actions. Please do not worry about this as staff will avoid taking a

physical hold if at all possible. If you want to talk about this issue more, then see your link workers who will be pleased to discuss this with you.

Risk Assessments

"Risk assessment" are two words you may hear at Coanwood Children's Home.



Basically, what it means is that if anyone's safety could be at risk by using a piece of equipment, doing an activity, being with another young person or persons, then staff may not allow the activity to happen, or may have to put in restrictions/extra support to allow things to be done as safe as possible.

Risk assessments work like traffic lights. If one of your risk assessments is Red it means STOP - the activity can't go ahead. If Amber then the activity may have some restrictions and staff will manage this. If it is in Green then you can go ahead without any problems.

Your individual risk assessments are there to support you and these are reviewed regularly by Link workers.

Home Safety

Coanwood Children's Home has two flights of stairs which lead up to the bathrooms and your bedroom. These stairs are quite steep. Please be careful when using them. Walk up and down them rather than running and use the hand rails if necessary.

CCTV

There are CCTV camera's monitoring the entrances and exits to the home. This is to keep you safe. There are no cameras in the main living areas of the home, i.e. bedrooms, bathrooms and lounges.

Overnight Stays

These will normally be agreed within your individual plans by your Care Team. However, if it has not been planned and you wish to stay over with your family or friends, these requests will be looked at by your care team.

If we do not know your friend, then your social worker may have to undertake some checks, including a possible visit to their home, to make sure that everything is okay and you will be safe there overnight.

Food/Meals

At Coanwood Children's Home we offer a wide and varied menu to which the young people contribute in setting. The food is nutritious and healthy, however if it is not to your taste an alternative can be provided.



If you have any special dietary needs because of health or religion, please let us know and we will try to provide it.

Fire Procedure

Should you hear the fire alarm - do not panic, stay calm and walk to the nearest exit and meet at the designated point at the front of the building. All of these exits and the procedure will be explained to you when you arrive. Remember do not return to the building unless you are told to do so by staff.

Room Checks & Searches

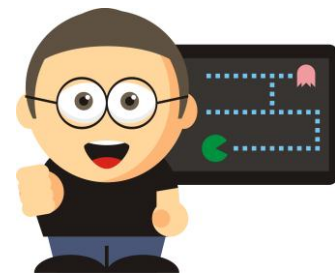
We will check your room on a regular basis to ensure it is safe and that we are taking good care of you. At times, it may be necessary to search your room, as we may have information or suspect that you have illegal substances/objects hidden. We understand that this may be an invasion of your privacy and you may be upset and even angry about this, but we have a duty to keep you and others safe. Your co-operation and agreement will be requested as part of this process.

Bedtimes

Everyone is normally expected to be upstairs and settled in their respective rooms by 10:15 pm, unless otherwise stated in your care plan. You will have access to a variety of items in your room to help you feel settled and comfortable.

These can include:

- A television with built in digi' box and DVD player
- A hi-fi CD player
- A radio
- Various reading books
- Basic art materials e.g. pens, pencils and paper



We hope that we have given you all of the information to help you settle into your new home. If you have any questions about the information in this booklet or anything else, please ask your link worker or another member of staff.

Regulation 33 Inspections

The home has to have an independent person visit once a month. This to ensure that we look after you to high standard and that all people living in the home are safe. During these visits the independent person will inspect the home by looking at our paperwork and talking to the young people, carers and staff members. Northumberland County Council has asked the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) to carry out these visits. The independent visitors can be contact by:-



Email: steve.percival@nyas.net

Tel: 0808 808 1001

Web: <http://www.nyas.net>

COANWOOD CHILDREN'S HOME GALLERY