Children and Young People's Guide







Welcome to Mythos Support

This is your guide to the home and will answer some of the questions you might want to ask when you come here and during your stay.

Introduction



We know you might feel a bit overwhelmed in your first few days here. We have put together this guide to give you answers to some of the questions you might have. We have also included what you can expect during your time here and what we expect from you.

It is important that you feel supported during your time here. Right from day one, you will have a key worker to support you. A key worker is a member of staff who will help you settle into the home and get you familiar with the house's routines.

If you feel you need more help and support, we can arrange for you to have an advocate. An advocate is someone independent who can help and support you to have your voice heard and support you at meetings or when you are making life-changing decisions.

We have house routines and rules to ensure that we all live together peacefully and have a structure to our day-to-day routine. You will find out about this further on in this guide.

What information is included in the guide?

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Important Information

Emma Smith – Care Manager, 07525174306, Esmith@Mythosltd.co.uk

Josh Keeley – Managing Director, 07788258182, Jkeeley@mythosltd.co.uk

Victoria McCabe & David Peoples – House Managers

About Us



Our home is for children and young people aged 8 – 16. You will be in a solo placement by yourself and there will always be a minimum of 2 staff members at a time in the home with you. All young people who have lived with us here have their own story and their own reasons for being here. Some young people might have been in other care situations like foster homes, adoptive parents or residential schools. For others, this might be their first time in care. Some young people have had difficulties in their life and need extra support through this difficult time. We aim to make your time with us a happy time to have time to relax, enjoy your own space, and learn about how to enjoy being independent and getting ready for adult life.

We help all young people who come to stay with us to prepare for the next stage of their journey. For some young people, this will be being supported to return home, rejoin a foster family or move on to college, university and independent living. We will help you plan and prepare for whatever you intend to do in a calm and welcoming environment where you can get the support you need.

We have a team of specialist staff at the home to help you get the most from your stay with us. We have education staff, including a qualified teacher, who are here to support you to achieve even if you have had a rocky ride with education so far. Even if you have had difficulties in the past, our team will work with you to help you achieve great things. We also have staff who work with you on the fun stuff you want to do and the adventures you want to create. If you want to be creative, there are lots of opportunities to do so. Our team will help you eat well and live healthily and work with you to create amazing meals and exciting activity plans.

What to expect while you are here?



All children and young people who come to live here have a care plan. The care plan tells us what you need while you live here. It will tell us about your education, health, well-being, activities, and support you might need to stay safe. We will use the care plan to put together a placement plan for your stay here. We will ask you to be involved in creating this because we want you to understand and be involved in all aspects of your care.

We believe in being active and involved. This means you will have a plan while you are here to be involved in the home. All young people who come here agree to be involved in their daily plan, get stuck in at meetings and work with their key workers on their individual plans.

Your plans are private. They won't be shared with anyone else, but you will be involved in education during term time (if suitable), up and about and active during the weekend and involved in house activities as agreed.

During your time with us you have the right to be protected and kept safe. We will always try to uphold this right and ask that you too help to keep yourself safe. You will get a clothing budget, toiletries budget and activities budget. You will also have the opportunity to earn extras to save for things that you want or to put away for a rainy day. We will help you open a bank account if you haven’t already got one.

You will have a choice of meals and activities and the right to attend and receive an education. You will be treated with dignity and respect and have access to a home which values you as a person and welcomes your contribution.

During the first few weeks we will help you register with the Doctor, Dentist and Optician. A medical will usually be carried out to make sure you are fit and healthy either the GP or a Nurse will carry this out, sometimes we may haven to travel to Alder Hey, the local children's hospital for this. .

Your Space 🚀



You will have your own bedroom. Your key worker will help you to make your bedroom personal. You can choose your bedding and decorations for your room. If you have valuable items you can ask a staff member to put your things in the staff office safe if you would like.

You will have your own room and staff will ask permission before entering. However, there may be times staff to need to enter your room, even if you don't give permission , this may because you have not responded when they are carrying out a welfare check or they are concerned about your safety

The Staff Team



All staff members are here to offer you support. You can speak to any staff member who works here, but you will have one specific staff member to support you specifically and who will meet with you at least once a week in private. This person is called your key worker.

Your key worker will work with you to make a plan every week. The plan will include the details of your education, activities and appointments. Your key worker will also help you set goals in your plan and help you achieve those goals that we call outcomes.

The staff team are here to help, support and care for you. We understand living in a children's home isn't the same as being at home with your family. The staff team have to bridge that gap for a time during your stay, and they will work to support you depending on your individual needs. Staff will be here from morning to night to help you with your day-to-day living, education, activities, hobbies and general well-being.

The staff team has many staff who can help you with different things. There are some staff who will support you with independence skills like cooking and shopping, staff to support you with activities indoors and outdoors and staff who help you specifically with things to do with your health.

All staff team members are here to help you, and we also have a care manager and 2 house managers. The managers will make sure that you have plans in place to make sure that you are properly looked after and have everything you need.

Your Key Worker 🔑

Your key worker is a staff team member who will help you with all the tiny details of your care and support. Your key worker will meet with you every week to discuss and devise your plans. Your key worker is your go-to person if you need anything specific like clothing money or discuss your care and help you make plans. Your key worker will support you in care planning meetings, at school meetings, and anytime you need extra support, your key worker will be there for you to rely upon.

House Routines 

We have set routines around mealtimes and bedtimes. Your key worker will make sure to discuss with you what the routines for the house are. We prefer everyone to eat together at least at dinner time as this helps us come together and share what has been going on with our day. You will have time to assist with cooking, clearing away, and helping around the house, including shopping for the house. You will have a set time that you will be expected tom be settled in your room, this varies for every young person and is dependent upon your needs and age.

Education 🌎

All young people who come to stay here come on the agreement that they will attend education if it suitable for them. Our education team will help you work out where you are in terms of education and what you need to work on. If possible, during your stay with us, we will have supported you to transition to the local school. We will help you with your education, including preparing you for your chosen career pathway.

Activities ⚽ 🏇 🚴



You will have the opportunity while you are here to keep up with your favourite hobbies and to try new ones. Where it is agreed for you to contact your family and friends, we will support you to make that happen. Every week you will make a plan with your key worker called your activity plan to ensure you have plans for the week ahead.

Money and Rewards 💷

You will be entitled to a set amount of pocket and activity money while you are here. The amount depends on your age and agreements. We will make sure you know exactly how much this is before you come to stay.

All young people have the chance to earn extra rewards while they are here. Your key worker will work with you on a reward schedule where you can make extra each week toward saving for your holidays, activities or gadgets that you want. We don't believe in handing out things for the sake of it. You will be expected to contribute to gain. Your key worker will explain more about this to you.

Going Missing 🚓

We have a priority to keep you safe. You will have the phone number for the home on your mobile (if you have one), and you can call at any time you get lost or are going to be late home. If you leave the home and we don't know where you are going, cannot contact you or you don't return when you should we will have to report you as missing to the Police. Police and staff will have to take steps to find you and ensure you are safe and well.

What information do we keep about you? 📖

We keep lots of records while you are here. The reason for them is to make sure we are forming a story of your life while you are here and also because we are required by the law to keep records while you are here. The names of some of the documents we keep are as follows:

Placement Plan

Your social worker will have created a care plan which tells us the goals you hope to achieve during your stay here. We use those goals to develop a placement plan which shows how we will achieve those goals during your stay here. The main areas we will have goals for are health, education, social, psychological and emotional well-being. Your key worker will explain those in more detail during your placement. You will be expected to help your key worker put together your placement plan. The most important thing to remember about any plan is that it is about you and you should agree on whatever goes into the plan.

The plan will outline what will happen in future and the steps we need to take to get there. It will outline any help and support you need, what you want to happen and any things that need to change to help support you like risks or behaviour.

Activity Plan 🎭

You will create an activity plan every week with your keyworker. The activity plan will include details about when you go to education, appointments, and plans to do the things you enjoy. You can have your hobbies on the activity plan to make sure there is time for them every week.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are plans that we put together to help you to stay and become safe. Your risk assessments will be personal to you. If you have particular issues you are working on; you will likely have a risk assessment to help keep you safe. Your key worker will make sure that you are involved in writing your risk assessment. We believe in making your plans with you, not for you.

Daily Diary/Report 

Every day that you are here, the staff will keep a record of your day what you achieved, if you went to school and what activities you did. Your key worker sends the daily diary to your social worker so that they know how your week is going and the progress you are making.

These are only some of the document we keep. You can discuss with your key worker all the records we have and how you can view them.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Your care records are private and confidential. We don't share your records without permission, and they are stored where only the staff can access them. Staff are not allowed to share your records with anyone else without permission, including yours. There may be times it would be helpful to share information with other professionals who work with you, but permission will always be asked for unless for your safety information needs to be shared quickly.

Can I view my care records? 

Yes, you have the right to review the records that are kept about you. We encourage you to read and contribute to all the records we hold about you. If you want to view your entire care file, we will get permission from your social worker to arrange for this to happen.

What is a Review

Reviews are regular meetings which social services must hold for all the young people who are looked after. The review is chaired by an Independent reviewing officer who will make sure the review is fair. The review is all about you. It is important that you take part in your review and that your voice is heard. Your

key worker will work with you to create a report for the review including anything you want to say or what your opinion is. If you don't feel you can speak up then your key worker or a trusted adult will do it for you.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to keep you safe and help you enjoy and achieve during your stay with us. We know that most young people who come here have had problems which are private to them. Our purpose is to focus on how you can progress to meet and achieve your goals from now on. If you need specific support when you are here, for example, to understand what has happened to you in the past, to help you become safe or to work on plans for your future, our purpose is to help you in any way we can.

Fire Safety – 2 Golden Rules

During your time here we will take you through our fire drills. If you ever hear the alarm you must follow the procedure. Never try to put out the fire on your own. Follow the 2 golden rules.

1. **Leave the building immediately**
2. **Go to the fire point**

What Will I Eat? 

You will get to choose from a variety of food. We ask all young people to help set the menus for the week ahead. If you have specific food preferences say vegetarian or maybe you eat a special diet for religious reasons, then we will help you to make a healthy menu for yourself and to cook food that you like and which is good for you.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome but you need to make sure you arrange this with your keyworker. We will always try to make sure there is a private place where your visitors can spend time with you (if appropriate). We help you maintain contact with your family and friends where it is agreed for you to do so.

What is an advocate, and why might I need one?



An advocate is independent of the home and can support you in meetings about your care and when important decisions are made about your life. Your key worker will discuss the benefits of having an advocate with you and arranging for you to have one if you want one.

Your Feedback

We want to hear what you have to say, you can tell us if there is anything you think needs to change or improve. You will have plenty of opportunities to give feedback in key work sessions, feedback forms and other forums where we will encourage you to positively bring your thoughts and wishes into the community to make it thrive and make it better. Your feedback is essential because this is your home, not just the place where you live. We need to hear from you how we can make your home a good and welcoming place to stay.

How to make a complaint? 😔

We will always encourage you to chat with your key worker or staff member if something is worrying you. If that is not possible or you would prefer to make a confidential complaint, you will find forms around the house you can complete and give to one of the managers. If you prefer you can email or call the responsible individual, your social worker, Ofsted or the children's commissioner or contact someone on the list the end of this guide.

Any complaints that you make will be treated in confidence and we will respond to you in writing within 5 working days. There are three stages to any complaint we receive.

Stage 1: Problem solving

This stage is where we try and meet with you to discuss the complaint and whether we can resolve your issues there and then.

Stage 2: The Investigation

If you decide you are not happy with the proposed resolution at stage 1 you can ask for your complaint to be investigated and we will arrange for Independent person to do this for you. They will report on the findings of your complaint and any proposals to resolve it.

Stage 3: Appeal

If you are not happy with the outcome of the investigation you can appeal your complaint. The stage 2 investigator will tell you how to do this and help you to do it if that is what you want.

We want to make sure you are supported to make your complaint and if you wish an advocate to help you or speak on your behalf, we will help you arrange for this.

You will never be in trouble for making a complaint. It is absolutely your right to do so. If at any time you are unhappy with the process you can speak to your social worker or any of the people mentioned at the end of this guide.

Your Agreement



We want all young people to enjoy and achieve while they are here; every young person has an individual agreement that they sign up to before they come. We do this to ensure that young people come here because they want to and are committed to getting the best out of living here.

Just like you, all young people who stay here commit to sticking to these rules while they live here.

We all share a common humanity and everyone, regardless of race; religion or gender has an equal right to be treated with respect and consideration. It is our practice to promote tolerance for each other. There are no problems that are too big for us to overcome. If we work together, we can build a happy home where everyone is happy to live.

As a minimum we expect everyone to abide by the following rules which all young people agree too.

1. **Equality** – We agree that all people have equal status, rights and freedoms, whether male or female. Discriminatory, abusive, dismissive or disrespectful behaviour is not tolerated.

2. **Behaviours** - The following behaviours are not acceptable:

   - Fighting, violence and aggression; Swearing at and/or insulting staff.
   - Physical, sexual or verbal assault; Racial/religious/homophobic abuse.
   - Stealing – taking anything which belongs to someone else.
   - The use and/or distribution of illegal drugs and alcohol
   - Smoking in the house or premises

3. **Religious Observance** - Everyone has the right to practice their religion, free from persecution and discrimination. We do our best to enable and support your religious practice.
4. **Staff Offices** – You may not enter staff offices and rooms. Please knock and wait for a staff member to respond.
5. **Cleanliness** - To ensure the health, comfort and well-being of everyone you are expected to keep yourself, your room and communal areas, such as the lounge, kitchen and corridors clean and tidy, and treat the house with consideration and respect. You will take part in keeping the house clean and tidy.
6. **Mealtimes** – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner – We all eat together, so we must observe appropriate times to eat. You will be encouraged to assist with preparing meals and clearing the tables etc.
7. **T.V.** – The television in the lounge is for everyone to enjoy. Or you may choose to watch the T.V. in your room.
8. **Bedtimes** - We expect all young people to be in their bedrooms by their agreed upon time, this also means noise levels must be kept to a minimum and the wifi will be switched off.
9. **Telephone** – There is a phone available to you at all times for you to make contact with your family, social worker etc.
10. **Education** - You are expected to participate in your education programme as agreed at the beginning of your placement.
11. **Consequences** – We know that everyone messes up sometimes, but there are consequences for breaking house rules and agreements, and these will be agreed with you as part of your plan. A consequence might mean losing out on an activity if you don't attend education or payback for damage to property done deliberately.

Useful Contacts

You can contact any of the following numbers to make an independent complaint or raise a concern about your care.

- Your Social Worker: {Add Number}
- Your Independent reviewing officer (IRO): {Add Number}

- Childline - 0800 1111
- Children's Rights Director - 0800 528 0731
- National Youth Advocacy Service 0808 800 5792
- Children's Legal Centre - 020 7713 0089
- Children's Commissioner - 020 7783 8330

Jargon Buster

It is not always easy to understand some of the words and phrases that you might come across in this guide. We have provided this jargon buster to try and make it a little bit easier.

Advocate

An advocate is a person who can support you to have your say in meetings about your care or when you want an adult to be with you for support.

Behaviour Management

This is part of your plan which tells people how to reward your positive behaviour and how to deal with challenging behaviour.

Best Interest

This is term which means doing what is best for you to keep you safe, healthy and happy.

Care Plan

A care plan is a written document that says where you are going to be lived and how you will be looked after it is provided to the home by your social worker and we then make a placement plan from this.

Care Leaver

A young person who is about to leave care, or an adult who has left care.

You officially leave care when you're 18 and become an adult, but care leavers are counted from the age of 16.

Complaints

If you are unhappy about your treatment in the home or you feel that we have not done what we should have, then you have the right to make a complaint and to have it investigated.

Contact

This is the word used to describe when and how you see your family and relatives.

EHCP

This is a care plan that combines all your care together. Education, health and care.

Foster placement

This is when you are placed with a foster carer or in a care home. It can be short or long-term depending on the reasons for you being taken into care.

Independence/Independent Living

When you move from the home you will likely move to a place of your own this is called Independent living or independence.

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

The job of an IRO is to check on your care plan to make sure it is meeting your needs and that you are safe and well looked after. They will make sure that your views are listened to and chair your Child in Care Reviews.

Key Worker

This is the staff member in the children's home who works with you on your personal plans and supports you in meetings.

Looked After Child

A child or young person who is cared for by their local authority (social worker) and might be in a children's home or foster care or their parent's share their care with the local authority.

Ofsted

Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. They inspect and regulate services that care for children and young people and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. Ofsted will usually visit the home twice a year to check if we're doing well and give us feedback on how to improve our home.

Participation

Getting involved in decision-making to shape the services that affect you.

Pathway Plan

A pathway plan will help you deal with your future when you leave care in much more detail. Your plan will be your own and it will be flexible to suit your needs.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

You complete a PEP with your school and social worker to help plan your education. One of your teachers will be responsible for making sure that what is in the plan happens.

Placement

The place where you are living is called your placement.

If you are going to return to your birth parents, a Placement with Parents arrangement is made and monitored.

Social Worker

This person works for your local authority and is responsible for your care when you are in care including when you are in the home.

Youth Offending Service Worker

If you have been found guilty or admitted to a criminal offence (crime), you will have a Youth Offending Service (YOS) Worker. They will work with you to help you change your behaviour and make sure you complete any punishment