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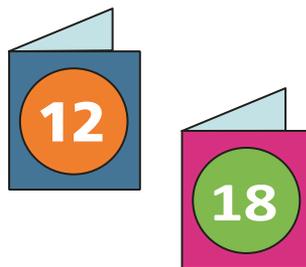


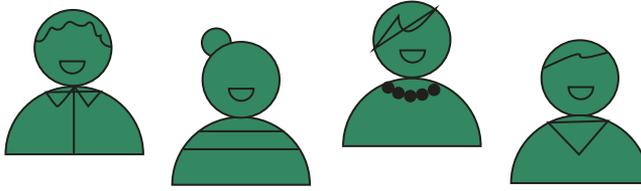
Welcome

We understand that right now, you've probably got lots of different feelings and emotions to contend with. We hope that the information in this folder will answer some of your questions about life at The Ride and remove your doubts, worries and confusion. This guide also explains the daily routines at The Ride, so you'll know what to expect and we'll talk about the care and support that you'll receive. Above all, we want to welcome you! This is your home and we want you to feel safe, supported, valued, taken care of and listened to.

The People who Live Here

The Ride is a shared house and the people who live here are usually aged between 12 and 18. Although The Ride isn't always full, there's enough space and bedrooms to comfortably accommodate six people at any one time.





The People Who'll Look After You

Asides from the people who live here, there are some other people who'll always be here to look after you, to look out for you and to help run the house. These people are here day and night and they include managers, support workers, keyworkers, a cook, a cleaner and a handyman.

This probably sounds like a lot of people to have visiting and helping out in your home! But they won't all be here at the same time. You'll have your own keyworker who'll be your main go to for support and they'll be in contact with your social worker and the important people in your life.

They'll also attend meetings with you and answer any questions you have or help you with anything you're not sure about.





The Ride: What it's Like

This house is on a residential road and looks just like all the other houses on the street. There's CCTV on the outside of the house, but not on the inside. You'll soon become familiar with The Ride, but because it's a big house and to help you get a feel for things, the layout and the space we have looks like this:

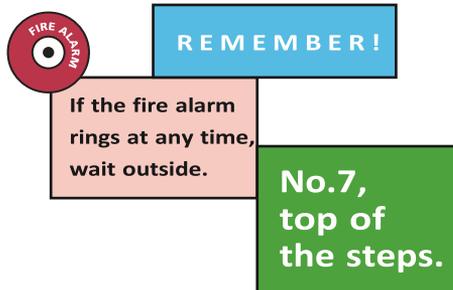
Downstairs

- Front porch
- Communal lounge
- Dining room
- kitchen
- Computer room
- Visitor's room
- Manager's room
- Laundry room
- Toilet
- Garden

Upstairs

- Six resident bedrooms
- Two resident bathrooms and toilets, one on each side of the house
- Two staff bedrooms with separate bathrooms

It's good to know that we do have a fire alarm to keep everyone safe. If the fire alarm rings at any time, it's really important that you leave the house and wait outside number 7, just at the top of the steps. When we've checked for any risks and we're happy that it's safe to go back inside, we'll let you know.





The Ride: front



The Ride: back







Your Bedroom

It's really important to us that you feel comfortable, safe and at home in your room. You can put your things up on the wall and if you prefer to have your own things around you, you can have your own bedding. For privacy, **you can lock your bedroom door from both the outside and the inside.**

There's a TV in your room and of course, you can also play music. As the bedrooms are fairly close together and this is a shared house, all we ask is that each person keeps the volume of their TV and music down to a level that won't disturb others.

Your privacy matters to us and we respect it. Staff will always knock on your door and wait for you to answer before they come into your room. This also goes for the other people who live here.

The only time that staff will come into your room (using a spare key) is to check that you're ok if you haven't answered. They'll also enter your room if there's an emergency, or if you won't answer the door because you're doing something that's against the house rules. As part of health and safety and to check for electrical items that may have been left on, room checks are sometimes carried out when you're not here.

As it's your home too, **you're welcome to have your family over or have a friend hang out with you in your bedroom during the day.** Although, there are certain rules about this which you'll need to know before you have any visitors to your bedroom. Your keyworker will explain these to you.

Unless it's been agreed by the staff on duty, during the week, we expect everyone to be in their own bedrooms by 10.30 pm. This is for your safety and to make sure the house isn't noisy at night when people are trying to sleep. At the weekends and during school holidays this time may change. **Speak to us about it and we'll try to be as flexible as we can.**

When it comes to keeping your room clean and tidy, that's your responsibility. You also have to wash your own bedsheets each week too.

SEE HOUSE RULES



Go to page 19

Bedroom



Bathroom





Food, Cooking and Mealtimes

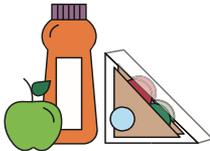
There's a cook who works at The Ride and they'll prepare your meals for you. Make sure you let us know what food you like or if there's anything you can't eat! You're also welcome to get involved in menu planning and food shopping. **If you're aged 16 or over, we'll support you to plan, shop and cook for yourself on some days.** This is because learning how to cook is an essential life skill.



Breakfast

On weekdays, we usually have cereal and toast.

At the weekends, we have a bigger breakfast. This is a cooked breakfast and you can have it as brunch if you prefer.



Lunch

We usually have lunch at 12.30 pm.

If you're at school and don't have a school lunch, you can take a packed lunch.

If you're at college and have a bursary, you'll need to use some of this money to pay for your lunches.



Dinner

We have dinner between 5 pm and 6 pm.

Everyone is encouraged to eat dinner together. Sometimes we'll get a takeaway.

The kitchen can be used until 10 pm and staff are always around to help if you want to cook. You can cook until 9 pm and just help yourself to drinks snacks.

Kitchen



Dining room





Having Visitors

This is your home and of course, you're welcome to have visitors! Just check with us first and let us know who's coming to visit you and at what time. This is because we all share this house and it's important that we know who's coming and going.

Unless there's a reason why they're not allowed to visit, members of your family can visit you after school or at the weekend. **We have a visitor's room too** and you can spend time together without being disturbed.

You can have a friend to visit between certain hours too. The times they can visit during the school termtime is from 3 pm to 9 pm. During school holidays, it's 11 am to 9 pm. But please check with us first. Also, **if you want your friend to stay for lunch or dinner just let us know** the day before.

Anyone who visits our house is expected to be respectful towards you, everyone else in the house and the house itself. If they aren't respectful, they'll be asked to leave and you need to make sure that your guests understand this.

Unfortunately, we can't have guests staying here overnight. But **if you want to stay over at your friend's house that's fine**. Just as long as you've agreed this with us first and we know where you are.

Visitor's room



Phones, Internet and Computers

If you don't have a phone when you first move in, we'll give you a phone so that you can keep in touch with us and the important people in your life. **There's also a house mobile phone that you're welcome to use** until 10 pm. You can also give people this number to call



you. Just ask your keyworker for the phone number and make a note of the number in the back of this guide.

There's also a landline phone in the office and you can use this up until 9.30 pm. Just ask us before you use it. There's WI-FI at The Ride and we also have computers for you to use in the computer room.

Computer room



Money and Rewards

Below, we've drawn up a chart to show you a breakdown of the money and rewards you'll receive while living here. If appropriate, the money will be paid into your own bank account.





Pocket Money	You'll receive an amount of pocket money each week.
Rewards	You can earn weekly rewards for positive behaviour and goals that you've achieved. These goals can be set out by both you and your keyworker.
Educational Attendance	You'll get extra rewards for attending school and leaving home on time. These include things like cinema tickets, a takeaway treat, something for your bedroom, games or an activity.
Clothing	After you've lived here for one month, you'll get a clothing allowance every month. However, you're only allowed to spend this money on clothes, so your keyworker will need to know what you're buying. If you urgently need clothes and don't have any money, speak to your keyworker or social worker.
Toiletries	You'll get a monthly allowance to spend on any toiletries you may need.
Haircare	You'll get a monthly allowance to spend on haircare.
Phone	You'll get a monthly allowance for your mobile phone top up. If you don't have a mobile phone when you come and live here, you'll be given one.
Savings	Each month, money will be paid into a trust fund for you, until you are 18 years old and after you've been in care for one year.

Getting a Job

As long as it doesn't affect your education **you can also have a part-time job.**

There are rules on this and these are:



- On a school day, you can only work outside of school hours and not before 7 am or after 7 pm.
- You can only work for two hours (or less) on a school day or on a Sunday.
- During the school holidays you can't work for more than five hours each day, or more than 25 hours each week.

Communal lounge



Celebrations

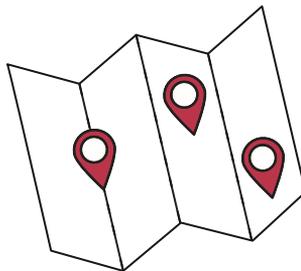
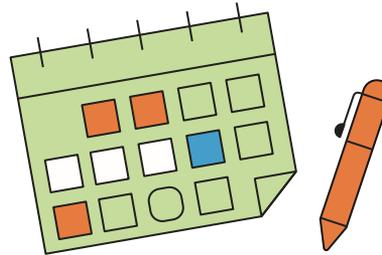
We want to make everyone who lives here feel extra special on their birthdays! To celebrate, we'd love to give you a present and if you'd like, you can help to choose your birthday present. Although, it's important for you to know that we don't give money as a present. **You can also choose the way that you'd like to celebrate your birthday.** Perhaps with a cake or by doing something fun?





Depending on who's living here and their beliefs, we also celebrate Christmas, Eid and Diwali. We always welcome you and your family (if you want) to get involved in planning any celebrations that are important to you.

If you also celebrate a religious festival or a holiday, we'll help to plan something for you. Just tell us in advance.





Activities

Once a week, your keyworker would like to take you out to do something that you'll enjoy. During the school holidays, we arrange group trips out with staff. Sometimes, during the summer, we even go on a holiday together.

Tell us about your ideas and what you think would be fun to do! We'll also support your choices when it comes to any organised clubs or activities that you'd like to be involved in. Just let us know what interests you.



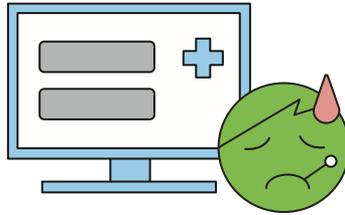
Your Health

When you come to live at The Ride, we'll help you to register with a local doctor, dentist and an optician (if you need it). We'll do this if you haven't already registered or if your usual ones are too far away.

You'll have a check-up once a year with a doctor or nurse who specifically works with young people in care.

For more information about the services and support available to help you look after your health and well-being, go online and visit: <https://careexperienced.hounslow.gov.uk/get-information/being-in-care/your-health/>





If You're Unwell

If you're not feeling well, tell us. If you need to see a doctor or if you just need some medicine from the pharmacy, like painkillers or cold remedies, we can help you. We can go with you to the doctor's or the hospital if you need or want us to.

Any medication that's been prescribed by a doctor, might need to be kept in a locked cupboard by the staff—depending on what medication it is. **We really encourage you to look after your own health.** But if we're worried about you, we'll talk to you first and try to find out what's going on. Although sometimes, we may need to let other people know so that you can get the right help.

If you catch a bug or an illness that's contagious, we expect you to do everything you can to reduce the risk of spreading it to others. This includes things like regular handwashing, cleaning communal things that you've touched and if necessary or advisable, isolating in your room.

Your Information and Privacy

The only information that the other young people living in our house are told about you is your name. It's up to you what else you choose to share or tell them.

Keeping You Safe

The staff here will know about your circumstances, because they're responsible for your safety and wellbeing while you're living here. **We're always available for a chat if you're worried or upset about something** that's either happening now or has happened in the past.

If you tell us about something that's harmed you or others, or if there's a risk of harm, we'll need to share this with your social worker and possibly other staff here. We'll tell you first if we need to do this and we'll explain what'll happen next. **Your safety and the safety of others is our main priority.**



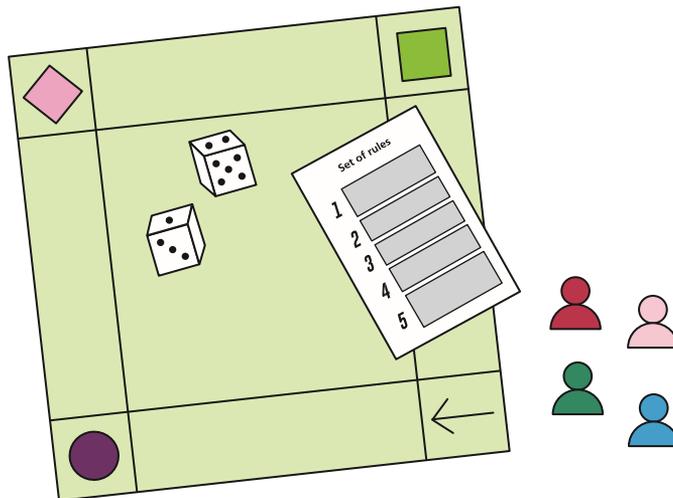
Record Keeping

We keep records about everyone who lives here for a few reasons.

These reasons include:

- So that we can remember any important conversations that we've had and make sure that your wishes and feelings have been recorded.
- To keep track of any decisions that are made.
- To handover important information to staff who are just coming on duty.
- To let your social worker (and any other people who work with you) know about anything important that'll help you or make your life better.

Records are kept in a locked cabinet in the office here and on your personal file on the computer. There are laws that all staff must follow to keep your information safe. You can see what information we have about you by asking your keyworker. If you're aged 16 or over, you can request access to your files. **You can find the form online by visiting: www.hounslow.gov.uk** and then searching for 'Subject Access Request'.



House Rules

As with any house or situation where a group of people live or work together, it's important to have rules and boundaries that keep everyone safe. You have the right to live in safety, comfort and peace and you also have a responsibility to respect other people's rights to this too. House rules help to make your home a nice place to live and help all of us to develop good habits.





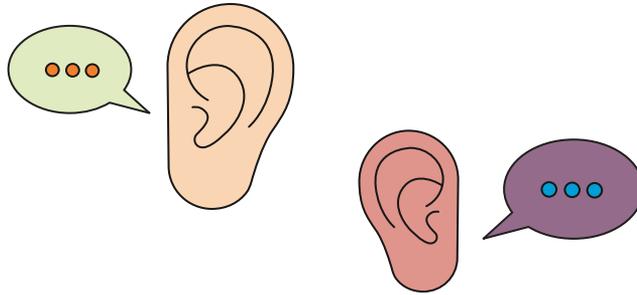
As we explained on page 12, you can also earn rewards and privileges for sticking to the rules. Ignoring or not following the rules can affect this. **We've listed the house rules on the next page and they apply to all residents, staff and visitors.** It's really important that you read, respect and understand them. If anything isn't clear, please let us know.

Certain rules, particularly when it comes to violent and abusive behaviour, deliberate damage to property, illegal activity or putting yourself and others at risk of harm, will result in the police being called. This can even mean that you'll be at risk of losing your place here.







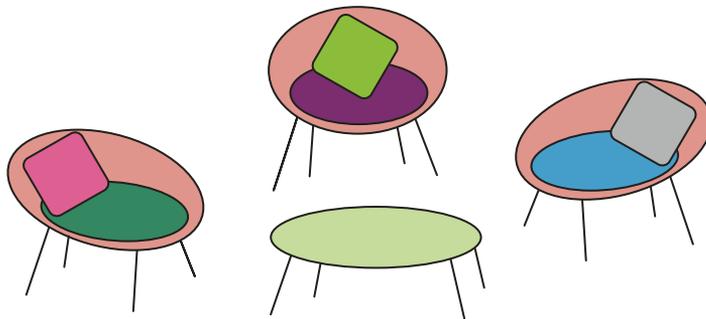


Listening to You

We hold a resident's **meeting every other Wednesday at 5:30 pm** and we want everyone to attend, including the staff on duty.

We talk about the things that we're doing and we discuss new ideas, plan activities and sort out any problems. This also means that you can have your say about the way the house is run, how it's decorated, the meals we have and anything else you want to talk about.

We always write down what we talk about so anyone who can't be there, or can't remember what was decided, can read them. Everyone takes turns to write this down and to chair the meeting.



If You're Unhappy with Your Care

If you're not happy about how you're being treated or the way things are done, we really want you to tell us, so that it can be sorted out. You can talk to your keyworker, a manager, or your social worker.





If you feel that the problem isn't being dealt with properly or that you're not being listened to, there are organisations that you can contact. These include:

▶ **Action for Children Advocacy Service**

Advocacy gives you support from someone who's there just for you. They can talk to social services on your behalf, attend meetings with you and help you to make a complaint.

You can find them by emailing: **London.Advocacy@actionforchildren.org.uk** or give them a call on **020 7254 9408**.

▶ **Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)**

Your IRO is there to make sure that your Looked After Child Reviews are run properly. Also, they make sure that your views are listened to and that your best interests are protected.

▶ **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Contact the LADO if you believe a staff member or other professional is behaving in a way that poses a risk of harm, or has caused harm, to a child or young person.

You can call them on **0208 583 4933** or **0208 583 3423**.

▶ **Participation Service**

The Participation Service is here for all children and young people in care and care leavers. Their job is to listen to your views, experiences and ideas and make sure that these are heard by everyone responsible for your care.

You can find them by emailing: **lacparticipation@hounslow.gov.uk** or by calling **07432 594042**.

▶ **Children's Services Complaints Team**

You have the right to complain if a problem you're having isn't being solved.

You can find them by emailing: **complaintscrt@hounslow.gov.uk** or by calling **020 8583 3333**.

▶ **OFSTED**

All homes like ours are inspected by OFSTED which stands for the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. The inspector will visit us during the year. You can ask to speak to the inspector to tell them about what it's like to live here.



You can also contact them at other times by emailing: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

▶ **Office of the Children's Commissioner**

Get confidential advice, information about your situation and answers to any questions you have. No issue is too big or too small.

You can find them by emailing: help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk or by calling **0800 528 0731**.

▶ **Information About Being in Care**

For more information about being in care, go online and visit the following sites:

<https://careexperienced.hounslow.gov.uk/> <https://www.becomecharity.org.uk/>
<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand/>









