



A Guide to Oak Lodge

Young Persons' Booklet

Giving young people opportunities others take for granted.

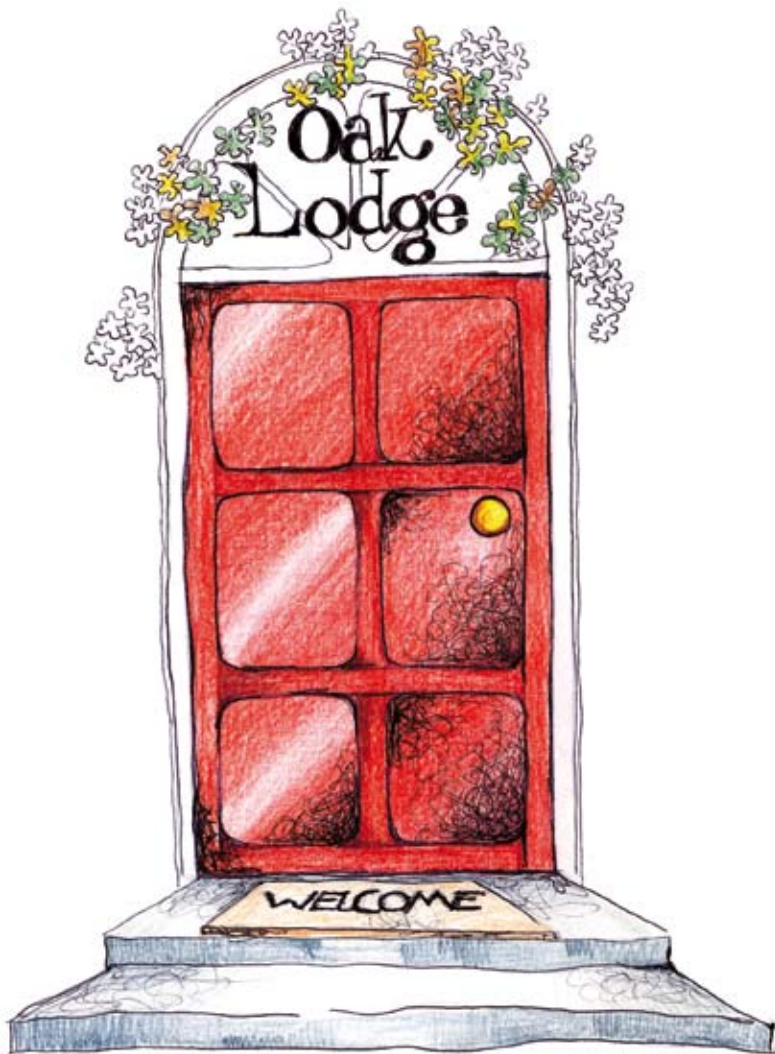
Hi

Welcome to Oak Lodge we look forward to having you come live with us. We will care for you as best we can and with everybody's help, we will make you feel as safe and happy as we can.

We know that coming to live with us can be upsetting for you

because you are coming to live with people you do not know yet. Also it can be sad for you because you will miss living with your family and friends.

We hope this booklet will answer some of your questions about us and our home. One of our childcare workers will go through it and explain it all.



WHO WILL BE CARING FOR ME?

At Oak Lodge we have a staff team of Child Care Workers who will care for you. The Child Care Workers will provide you with all your basic needs for example food, clothes.

You will be assigned a specific Child Care Worker known as a key worker who

will work with you on a one - to - one basis. In Oak Lodge you will be lucky and have two Key workers!

Staff are present at all times and have a lot of experience and training as Child Care Workers.

We will be meeting with you, your family and social worker to make sure all your needs are met.



WHO WILL BE LIVING WITH ME?

There will be other boys and girls of different ages living in Oak Lodge. These other young people have had to leave their families too for many different reasons.

Everybody has different reasons for coming to stay with us. These are private and only the staff, your family and social worker know why you are living with us.

WHAT WILL I BE DOING EVERYDAY?

There are lots to do in Oak Lodge. Within Oak Lodge there are three different daily options. These include:

- ☺ Mainstream school
- ☺ Employment
- ☺ Outdoor Education Programme



The Outdoor Education Programme

It provides an educational and outdoor activity programme to young people who find it hard to stay in school. Learning will be done through fun activities such as kayaking, rock climbing, surfing and other outdoor pursuits. Not all learning happens in a Classroom!!

In the evenings and weekends young people will get a choice to plan activities. Staff will encourage lots of sports and outdoor pursuits.

In the unit there are board games and art and craft materials. You might even get time to watch TV, DVD or play some play station.

In Oak Lodge you can phone your family throughout the day as you please, listen to music, spend time in your room or have visits from family and friends.



HOW WILL I BE CARED FOR?

Staff will make sure you are safe and healthy. Your Key workers will act as a spokesperson for you. He/She will make sure that everything that has been planned for you will take place when you come into Oak Lodge. When you first arrive, a meeting (called a Care Plan Meeting) will take place, and everybody that cares about you will decide how we can best care for you.

At your Care Plan Meeting we will talk about:

- ☺ Why you have come to live with us
- ☺ Your health
- ☺ Contact with your family, friends and Social Worker
- ☺ Your school/work
- ☺ Things you need help with
- ☺ What is happening for you over the next few months
- ☺ How long you might be living in Oak Lodge
- ☺ Your exit plan from Oak Lodge

My Rights

The title 'My Rights' is written in a decorative, golden-brown font. The word 'My' is smaller and positioned to the left of 'Rights'. The letters are surrounded by several green and yellow leaves with black outlines, some of which are integrated into the lettering.

WHAT DO 'RIGHTS' MEAN?

Everybody in the whole world has rights, these are things that everybody who cares about you makes sure you have.

They are that:

- ☺ You are cared for in a safe way
- ☺ You are cared for by staff who are able to do the work
- ☺ You are treated with respect, kindness and understanding at all times.
- ☺ You are wanted, loved and accepted for who you are and that you are a special person.
- ☺ You know about your past life and are helped to understand it and deal with any problems because of it.
- ☺ You know why you are in care and what is happening in your family while you are in care.
- ☺ Your family are treated with respect and dignity and you are seen as part of your family.
- ☺ Any information about you or your family is

confidential and not talked about with people who it does not concern.

- ☺ You have privacy regarding your property.
- ☺ Your family are giving the opportunity to have a say in any decisions about your care.
- ☺ You feel safe and cared for and that the good aspects of your life will be kept up.
- ☺ You have Key Workers and a Social Worker.
- ☺ You can complain and be listened to and have a complaint investigated.
- ☺ You are helped in being ready and able to move on when the time comes and are supported after leaving.
- ☺ You are provided with After Care if you need it.
- ☺ You have proper food, proper clothes, proper education/work.
- ☺ You have opportunities to make friends. Join clubs, practise your religion, praised for good effort.
- ☺ You are to be kept healthy in mind and body.

All these things are called your "RIGHTS". You are entitled to these no matter where you live, and whoever is caring for you has to ensure that you get them.

All of the people in our house have these rights. This means that you also have to respect other people's rights so all can live happily together. This in turn means that you have responsibilities.

My Responsibilities



What do responsibilities mean? Everybody has responsibilities in Oak Lodge to make sure that your rights and other young people rights are kept.

These are;

- ☺ You cannot hit or threaten a staff member of another young person.
- ☺ You should not shout or verbally abuse staff or other young persons.
- ☺ You should not bully other people.
- ☺ Staff or another young person cannot touch you in a way that is not acceptable.
- ☺ Staff or another young person cannot talk about you or your family to anyone else.
- ☺ Your room is your private area. Young person's are not allowed into each other's bedroom without staff permission. You are expected to keep your room clean and tidy.
- ☺ You should let staff know if you want to go out, where you are going and what time you will be back.
- ☺ Staff members cannot stop you from making contact with your family as has been agreed in the Care Plan.

- ☺ Young person's are not allowed to break any property in the house.
- ☺ The Young person is not to be put out of the house.
- ☺ You will not be left somewhere where you will be unsafe.

If any of the above happen to you, you should complain immediately, how to do this is explained on page 11.

There are general rules. There will be other ones made up from time to time and we will be asking you to help us with them.

Staff will explain to you what each one is and explain to you how to get it right. You will be encouraged to make a good effort. There are times when we all make mistakes and remember it is always best to talk about things.

REMEMBER that in order for everybody to try and live as happily as possible in the house then everybody must remember their rights and responsibilities.

We do not expect you to know all of this when you come to live with us.

WHEN THINGS ARE GOING WELL AND YOU ARE MAKING A GOOD EFFORT

- ☺ You will be praised by staff and your progress will be highlighted to your family.
- ☺ You feel much better about yourself and you will be able to see the good that you can do.
- ☺ If things are not going well, staff will be able to explain to you what needs to be done in order to make things better.
- ☺ Your Key Worker will explain the rule of the house and also the consequences if these rules are broken.



CAN I SMOKE OR DRINK?

There is no smoking or drinking of alcohol or drugs allowed in the house for staff and children. If you want to smoke, and you are over 16, then we can discuss this. You can not drink alcohol until you are 18. Drug taking is illegal.

WHO DO I TALK TO WHEN I AM WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING?

There are staff in the house 24 hours a day. You can ask to speak to any member of staff that you wish, you may also want to speak to your Key Worker. Your staff will listen to you and try to help you sort out your worries. If you do not want to speak to staff then you may choose to speak to your parents or your Social Worker or the Manager of the house. We can also arrange for you to speak to a person whose job it is to meet and talk with you maybe once a week.

WHAT IF I WANT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT SOMETHING?

REMEMBER, you have a right to complain, we treat all complaints very seriously.

You may complain in two ways:- 1. By speaking to somebody 2. By writing down your complaint and handing it to the person that you wish to complain to.

Do not be afraid of speaking out, if you are not happy about something while in our care then you should say it.

You can speak or write to any of the following people if you want to complain:-

Key Worker or Staff Member Name:

Telephone No: _____

Address: _____

The Manager Name: _____

Telephone No: _____

Address: _____

Your Social Worker Name: _____

Telephone No: _____

Address: _____

Your Parents: Name: _____

Telephone No: _____

Address: _____

Your Area Child Care Manager Name:

Telephone No: _____

Address: _____

Your Area Child Care Manager Name:

Telephone No: _____

Address: _____

Your Counsellor (if you are in counselling) Name:

Telephone No: _____

Address: _____

The Gardaí Name: _____

Telephone No: _____

Address: _____

THE STAGES OF INVOLVED WITH A COMPLAINT

STAGE 1

Your concern will be written down (we have a special form for this) by the person you have asked to speak with. It may be the case that following this meeting that your concerns can be dealt with e.g. if you are being bullied, then that person will see that it is dealt with properly and that it does not make the situation worse for you.

STAGE 2

If your concern or complaint needs to be investigated then the person you are speaking to will have to inform the manager and social worker or possibly the Gardai if they think a crime has been committed.

The Health Service Executive (HSE) will carry out an investigation. This will be done by two people, possibly your Social Worker and the Manager. They will find out the facts by.

1. Talking to anybody mentioned in the complaint.
 2. Let your parents and/or social worker know that you are not happy about something.
 3. Read any relevant log book etc.
- It may be carried out by people who are not involved in your care.
 - If the Gardai need to be informed then they may carry out their own investigation or may wait on the outcome of the Health Service Executive investigation.

- You are entitled to be supported and advised by an adult during the investigation. This could be your parent, Key Worker or Social Worker. You will be told what the outcome of the investigation is by the Manager and Social Worker and what things need to change, if any.

WHAT IS MY FILE AND WHAT'S IN IT?

In our house the staff write down all important things about you and any things that were decided at the meetings about you. They will do this each day. This is all kept in a private folder called a file with your name on it. Also in this will be reports from your social worker, school, doctor etc.

It is your right under law to read things in your file. There may be some reports which you cannot see until you are older and this will be in a section of your file marked confidential. Only the Child Care Workers and yourself can read the file. You will be meeting with your Key Worker often and can use this time to read some of your file. You will be told about the 'Freedom of Information Act', which tells you about your right to read your file.

WHAT ARE ALL THESE MEETINGS ABOUT?

Meetings are the best way to make sure that everybody is involved in caring for you. There will be different types of meetings.

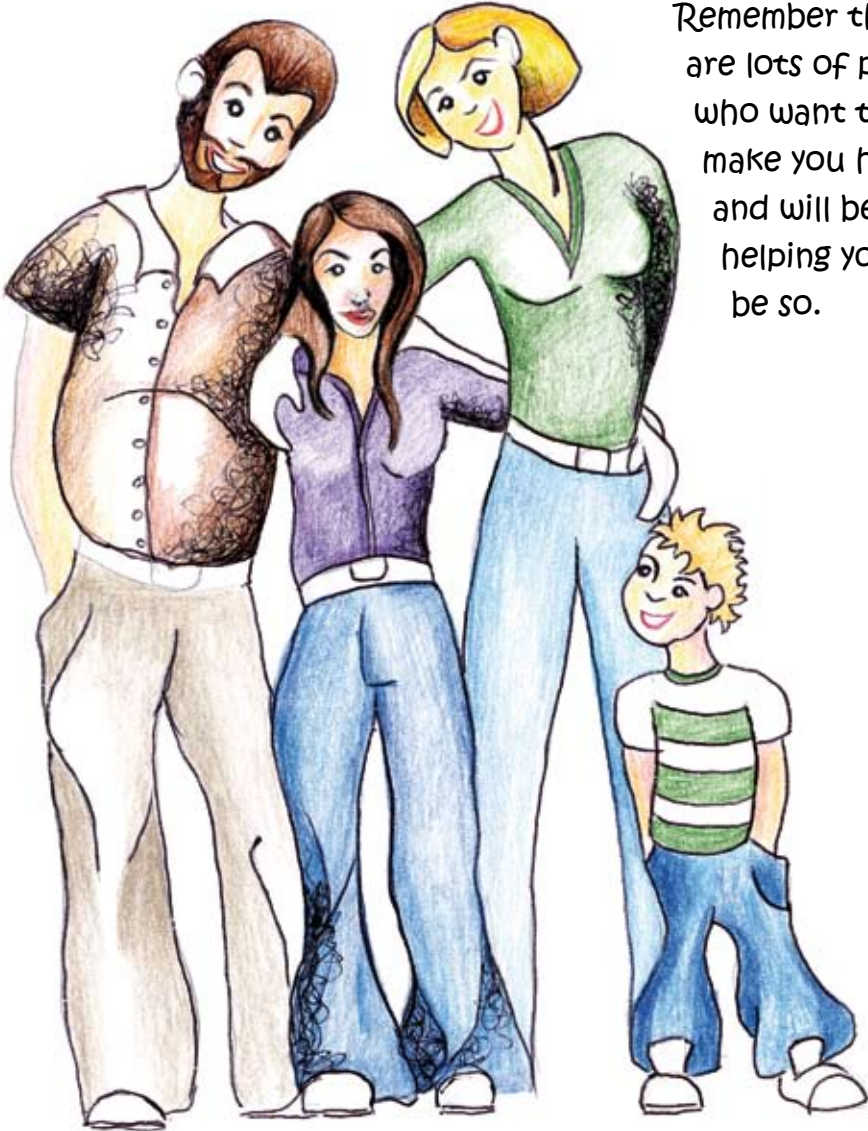
1. Your Care Plan Meeting
2. Your Review of Care Plan Meeting
3. Meeting with Key Worker
4. Meeting with Social Worker
5. Young peoples meetings in house
6. Staff meetings in house

You will be involved in most of these. You will be encouraged to attend your meetings, or if you do not want to then your Key Worker will talk with you beforehand and represent you at the meeting. You will be told about what was decided at the meeting.

WHEN WILL I SEE MY FAMILY?

You will see your family as often as is decided at your Care Plan Meeting. We want you to see your family as often as possible as long as it is good for you. We will talk about how often you can visit them, they can visit you and how often you can phone them.

Remember there are lots of people who want to make you happy and will be helping you to be so.





MISSION STATEMENT

**GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE OPPORTUNITIES
OTHERS TAKE FOR GRANTED**

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