



Welcome

# guide

Children's handbook



Forge  
Care   
Homes for Children

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# Hello

This Book belongs to .....

We hope that this book will be helpful and answer some of the questions you may have about being at The Forge.

If there is anything in this book you don't understand, your Focal Carer will help to explain. No question is a silly question, so never feel embarrassed to ask!

## The Forge

The Forge has been developed to help children and young people who have been through some very tough times.

We are here to help children and young people who sadly, can't live at home, or with the people they love.

Children and young people who were unable to change their difficult circumstances and didn't have a voice or choice in what happened to them or those around them, may need extra care to feel safe and to grow into confident adults.

We acknowledge that children and young people who have been through these kinds of experiences may find it difficult to trust new people, or to live somewhere new. That's why we have designed our buildings, bedrooms, daily routines and opportunities, to help you feel safe and develop trusting relationships.



We recognise this may feel frightening or hard so there are lots of people who will help you with this.

Within our community children and staff live within in each of the four homes and collectively we come together and live as a community. Everyone is treated with respect and care, and is given opportunities to express themselves help you with this.

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# Your new home

Our homes are large, modern buildings, made up of six bedrooms, you will have your own bedroom and private bathroom. Your carers are here to provide you with the love, respect, safety, fun and care you need.

The homes have lots of light, cosy and quiet spaces for you to enjoy, including games room, lounge, quiet space, and kitchen diner.



# Who is going to look after you



Hi, my name is Victoria, people call me Tor, I am the manager at the home. My role is to ensure that children and adults get what they need to make your time at the Forge a positive experience.

To help you, there is a group of adults who make our community feel warm, fun and safe. One of these adults will be your Focal Carer. They make sure that they get to know all about you, what you need and work with the other adults to help meet these needs.

Because it's a caring community, where everyone's contributions matter, you may also end up helping the adults with certain things like gardening or looking after the animals, cooking, cleaning, or how to get a higher score on the Xbox!

We want to give you as many great experiences and opportunities as possible, and we want you to be as big a part of the community, as you can be.



# Our aspirations for you...



Our aspirations are for you to achieve the best you can. It's our job to help you do this.

Coming to a new home can be scary and you might be worried how we will look after you. As part of living at The Forge we will talk to your Social Worker to help us understand what is important for you and to you.

Your Focal Carer will go through the information provided, get your opinions, and work together with you, to develop a plan for the future.

It is important to us that we all agree on how to make living at The Forge a positive experience for you and how we help you achieve your wishes and dreams.



# Your education



All children at the Forge go to school and this may look quite different for each child. Your Focal Carer will be central to helping you and making sure this happens.

Going to school or being involved in learning can sometimes be difficult if you have had disruptions to attendance or struggle with the school environment. We will find a way through these challenges with you and your school or college.

Learning is different for everyone; we will help you to access and take part in learning or training opportunities that build on your skills and interests. We even have opportunities for work experience and can help you to build your confidence.

We will always work with you and others involved in your education to understand what you want to do when you finish school, or how to give you the most options for your future. We will be beside you, to help you with your goals and develop your plans to achieving these.

We make sure you will have everything you need to get the best out of your education for instance uniforms, stationary, learning spaces, computers, internet access and equipment at home to support you.



# Living with each other

At Forge we believe living as a group we are stronger as we can support each other better.

To help this it is important that we have boundaries that are respected as this helps everyone to feel safe and enjoy living together.

We would like you to always feel like you can contribute towards our Living Together Charter and will feel like the values support all of us.

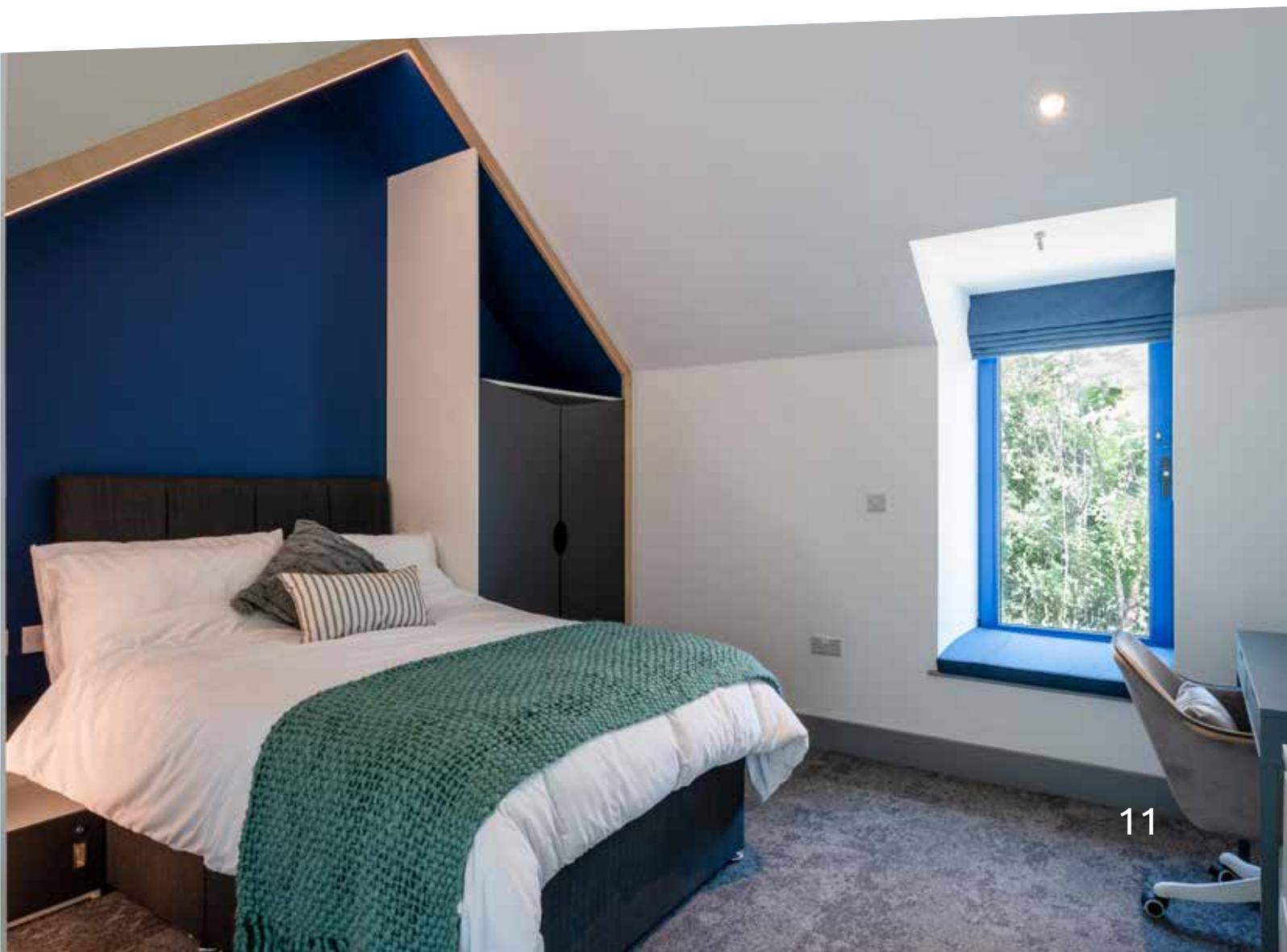


# Your room

You will have your own bedroom and we hope you will let us help you to make it feel like yours. Within your room there is an en-suite private bathroom with a walk-in shower.

We want your room to feel like a safe space so adults will always request to come in before doing so. If we are worried about your safety, we may enter your room as part of your care, but we will always let you know when we have done so.

To promote everyone's safety children are not allowed in each other's rooms or the adults room.



# Your therapy and life story

All children at the Forge, when ready, will go to Life Story and Therapy.

We all have a history, but sometimes it is hard to remember everything, put it in the right order or it might upset us. This might be because we have moved home lots or we don't want to think about what has happened to us. When this happens we can get confused, angry and sad, which can be difficult at times.



Life story and Therapy is a chance for you make sense of what has happened to you and stop it interfering in your life.

At The Forge everyone can help you with big feelings you might have day to day. Your Therapist and Life Story Worker will know about some of your experiences and feelings that might come from the past.



# Your health

At Forge we really want you to be healthy enough to be able to take part in and enjoy all the great activities and opportunities going on here.

At the Forge your Focal Carer will make sure that all your health needs are understood and supported. This means visiting a doctor, optician and dentist but also checking out your health plans to ensure that your overall health is promoted.



# Your food and mealtimes

At The Forge we think a lot about food and mealtimes.

We want mealtimes to be an enjoyable experience where we all take part. However, we understand that sometimes this might be difficult. If mealtimes are difficult for you then your Focal Carer will think about what will best help.

We also believe that it is important to eat a healthy, balanced, and nutritious diet. We will take care to make sure your cultural or religious dietary needs are met.

We will encourage and enable you to take part in preparing and cooking meals and daily snacks as this will also help you to learn life skills.



# When you go to bed



We want you to enjoy getting ready for sleep, feel safe and have enough rest.

Your Focal Carer will think with you about a bedtime routine and ensure all adults help you feel safe by following this.

There will always be two adults in the home overnight to ensure that you have everything you need.



# Living space





One of the quiet spaces within your new home, a space for chilling with a book, or working through some homework or connecting with friends online, a reflective space for you to enjoy.

# Your pocket money...



## ...clothing and other things you need to buy

You get pocket money every week. How much depends on your age. It is given every Saturday morning and we could go to town to spend your money or you could save it for something special. All young people will have a bank account, and we encourage you to save some of your pocket money to buy things you would like.

Like all children you need clothes, shoes, school uniform and other things. When you need something, you just talk to your Focal Carer.

If you want to earn more money to spend on things, you can do extra tasks around the house or community such as hoovering the cars out or cleaning rooms in the house.

# How we all stay safe



Adults will try and talk to you and help you feel better and safer. This can be done by sitting together and talking or adults will wait until you're ready to talk.

Sometimes your feelings may become too upsetting for you and you may not be able to put words to your feelings, so you might 'act out' the feelings, rather than describe them and understand them with us. If these big feelings put you or others in danger, the adults will be there to help you give words to how you are feeling and help you to stop any harm from happening. You may need a hug or a walk, or a talk, or have a grumble that you want to share, which might help us to resolve your upset.

When the adults feel it is necessary to stop any actions that might hurt you, others or the home's belongings, there may be a need to respond physically by holding you. All of the adults are taught how to use these physical responses safely.

At The Forge we believe that talking about the things that bother us is important. Each day we will make time for everyone in the community to talk about anything on their minds, especially if it's making you sad, scared or upset. In addition to the adult carers, there are other people you can talk to, from outside of The Forge, so that you will always feel like you have a voice that gets heard and valued.

Staying safe is not just about talking. There are things we all need to do in the home to make sure we all stay safe.

Your Focal Carer will show you what to do and once a month we will have a fire drill, just to make sure we all know what we are doing and can keep each other safe. Staying safe is not just about talking. There are things we all need to do in the home to make sure we all stay safe.

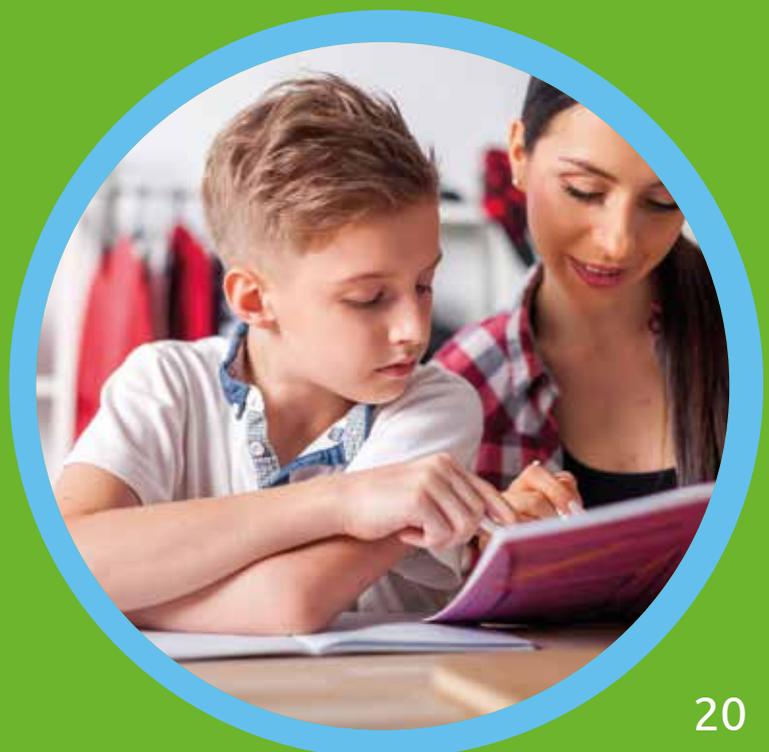
# How we record things

Your private information will be kept safely and will only be read by people who need to read it. To ensure that other young people do not know anything about your history that you have not shared, the adults will not talk about you with them and no young people will be allowed in the adult rooms to ensure your information is kept safe.



We have to record information about you, so we know we can keep you and others safe. When we can, we want you to know what we are writing about you, the adults will ask you to read and / or sign things to say you've seen them.

If you are not comfortable reading or signing things, the adults can do this for you if you ask them. There are things in your files that we need to ask permission for you to read or see. If ever you wish to read your information we can talk to your Social Worker and work out the best way of doing it.



# Your family and friends

At The Forge we have a house phone that you can use to call your family, friends or social worker. As you share the home with others, we need to make time for everyone to have this option, but everyone will get a chance if they need it.

Some young people have their own personal phone. You will be responsible for keeping that safe, but during certain times it will need to be kept in the office. Your Focal Carer will be able to explain more about how phones are used in the home.

Whilst at The Forge we would like to help you to see you family and friends where it is safe to do so. We may also call or visit you whilst you are out to make sure you are doing ok.

It may also be ok to have friends to come see you at The Forge if this is safe, they can come over for dinner and you could maybe cook for them.

# Your voice

For everyone at The Forge and involved in your care, we want to know that you feel things are going OK for you.

Part of living at The Forge, you will have a meeting called a Child looked after review. This will be attended by your Independent Reviewing Officer, your Social Worker and other people you feel are important in looking after you. These normally happen every 6 months and we want you to feel it is a chance for you to say how you feel about your care and if there is anything you would like to change.



To help that we can get you an Advocate. Your Advocate will be able to help you say the things you need to say, as sometimes this can be really difficult.

# Relationships



Living together with other people can be hard at times, and we don't always get along. Sometimes you may feel like you are being targeted or picked on by someone. At The Forge it is never acceptable to target someone in a nasty way, and it is important that we do everything possible to make living together feel safe.

You should never be scared to speak out about feeling bullied. Remember there are lots of people who care about you and don't want you to ever feel scared of speaking up. If someone is picking on you, calling you names, getting you into trouble, starting fights with you, spreading rumours about you, sending you nasty messages or stealing your things, this is called bullying.

Whether it is happening at school, in the home, on the internet, or by phone, it is still bullying. Even if you don't know who they are, there are ways to find out, and lots of people who can help.

Bullying is not acceptable at The Forge. If you feel you are being bullied please tell us straight away so we can look after you. We will come to an agreement on how we are going to stop it. If you don't feel comfortable telling us you can let your social worker know. The most important thing is that you tell someone.

# If you want to complain about something

Living away from home can be difficult and sometimes it is hard to get everything right. If you feel unhappy about something and you wish to complain, then talk to any of the adults or your Social Worker and we will help.

Sometimes it might just be a 'grumble' that the staff can sort out for you. Other times it might have made you upset or afraid, and will be looked at by the Manager and sometimes your Social Worker.



# Your rights



At Forge we believe that every child should be supported to understand their rights and be empowered to access information and advocacy that ensures their voice is heard and valued.

When you live at Forge Care we will ensure that you are cared for in a way that respects your rights as a child.

**Basic Essentials:** Shelter, food, care, clothes, money and healthcare.

**Privacy:** Own space, letters, telephone calls, confidentiality.

**Protection:** From abuse or violence from other young people or adults.

**Identity:** Family, language, nationality, culture, religion, to be yourself.

**Freedom of expression:** Choice, views, opinions, an active role in decision making.

**Respect:** To feel good about yourself, be praised, have good experiences.

**Education:** To develop life skills, develop social skills, plan for future career.

# Making sure everything runs properly

To ensure the home is providing you with the right type of care we are inspected by a separate organisation, called OFSTED, twice a year. When they come they will look through the records we keep about you and how we care of you. When they visit they will ask to speak to you about how you find living at The Forge.

As well as Ofsted we also have another separate person, called a Regulation 44 Visitor, and they come to the home each month. Part of their job is to check that everything we should be doing is being done. They are also available for you to talk to if you wish.



# Useful contacts



0300 123 1231



Free and confidential helpline for young people under the age of 19. [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk). 0800 1111. Everyday 9am-3pm



Advocacy Helpline 0808 800 5792



Provides support to anyone under the age of 25. [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk). 0808 808 4994



0808 808 1001



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<https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre>  
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>



<https://mindofmyown.org.uk>  
Thousands of young people like you are using Mind Of My Own to talk to their workers. What are you waiting for?



Free crisis messenger, 24/7 support for all ages. [www.giveusashout.org](http://www.giveusashout.org). Text SHOUT to 85258



Online counselling support for ages 11-25. [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)



Provides advice and support to young people affected by mental health. [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk). 0808 802 5544. Mon to fri 9.30am-4pm

