



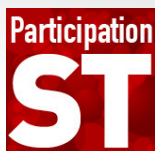
South Tyneside Council



Welcome to



**WHITELEAS
WAY**



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Welcome to
Whiteleas
Way!

This guide will help with any questions, queries or worries you may have when moving into your new home. We understand that moving somewhere new can be daunting. We want to make you feel as comfortable as possible by giving you all the information you need before you start living with us at Whiteleas Way.

There will always be carers to support you and our aim is to make you feel as safe and happy as possible while you're with us. If there's anything this guide doesn't cover...please ask one of us!

Meet your Carers!



Laura Brennan –
Registered Manager



Stephen Kell –
Interim Manager



Natalie Clark –
Deputy Manager



Julie Wardale –
Deputy Manager



Aaron Mpofu –
Deputy Manager

About your home

Wi-Fi

Whiteleas Way has Wi-Fi throughout so you can use the internet for social media, studying, finding out information, and staying connected with your family and friends.

THE PASSWORD IS:

We want you to stay safe online so we will ask you to sign a 'safe-use agreement' to make sure you're keeping yourself and others safe. If you need any help staying safe online carers will also be on hand to help you.

Money

Everyone who lives with us at Whiteleas Way will receive pocket money - this is money you'll receive each week. Pocket money is paid according to your age in two instalments (Monday and Friday).

We want to help you save towards your future. We will pay £5.00 each week into an individual savings account. You will be able to access this money when you are 18 years old.

Clothing, Footwear and Toiletry Allowance -

Everyone at Whiteleas Way is given clothing allowance on a monthly basis. This will help you to buy new clothes and help you to start managing your own money. If you need to buy new clothes, just ask your Key Worker. You can even go shopping with your Key Worker if that is what you prefer... and make a day of it!

Additional Information

- £48.00 per month clothing and shoe allowance
- £12.00 toiletry allowance
- A weekly bus pass will be purchased for you, if you are able to travel safely
- A monthly phone top up of £10

Basic toiletries will be provided for you when you're at Whiteleas Way. However all other toiletries will have to be purchased using your monthly allowance.



"Cosy Room"

We have recently renovated this room at the request of one of our young people. This room can be used to relax and to enjoy a calming environment. There is a cooker, sink, microwave and all the things you need to make yourself something to eat and drink.



Sitting room

There is large lounge which overlooks the garden; it has a large Smart TV, DVD player and comfy sofas.



Dining room

There is a dining room where everyone can eat their meals; carers also have their meals in the dining room with our young people.



Kitchen

There is also a large kitchen where evening meals are prepared.



Garden

We have recently been improving the outdoor areas at Whiteleas way. There are gardens to the front and rear; we love to have BBQ's in the summer months and are hoping to start growing some fruit and vegetables with our new vegetable plots.



Bedrooms

Everyone has their own bedroom at Whiteleas Way, which can only be entered with a key. You will be given a key when you arrive – though the staff will also have one. The rooms are all nicely furnished including bed, chest of drawers, wardrobe and a flat screen TV on the wall. All bedrooms have their own en-suite shower room and toilet for privacy. Before you come to Whiteleas Way, and once you move in, there will be an opportunity to buy or bring your own things to decorate your room, like pictures, quilt covers, curtains etc. Each bedroom has a discreet buzzer on the door – this can be used to alert carers if you need support during the night.



Laundry

Carers are here to care for you and this means we will help you to do your washing and look after your clothes. You will be expected to learn to do your own washing and ironing as you grow up and this will depend on your age and ability. We will encourage and help you to do this when you move in - don't worry if you don't know how, carers will be happy to help you to learn.

Some of the rooms in Whiteleas way are locked, such as the office and storage rooms. This is to keep your important information safe and secure.

People about the house

WHAT IS AN INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO)?

- Your IRO will:
- meet with you
 - ask how you feel
 - make sure Social Workers, teachers and other adults in your life are doing a good job for you.
 - Your IRO, will also organise your Review Meeting, make sure any plans are being followed and in school support, from the Virtual School, if you need it.

REGULATION 44 VISITOR

Someone from NYAS (National Youth Advocacy service) will visit Whiteleas Way every month to do a 'Regulation 44' visit. This means they check that things are being done correctly and make sure you are being cared for well. They may ask you how you feel about things if you're around, and they may ask if they can have a look at your bedroom – if that's not okay with you, they won't go in.

INSPECTIONS

All children's homes are inspected twice each year by Ofsted and we never know when they will arrive! The Inspectors will check we are taking care of you properly – they will appreciate it if you spend a little bit of time to tell them how you feel you are being cared for. If you want to contact an inspector about something, you can get in touch with them at any time. Ofsted (children's services regulation) 0300 123 1231 www.Ofsted.gov.uk/enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

As well as people you may see around the house such as Key Workers and managers you will also see some other people. This includes IROs who hold your Review Meetings. You will also see Social Workers who are there to make sure your voice is heard and help support you. Finally, you may see outside organisations such as Ofsted who carry out inspections to ensure that where you are living is suitable.

SOCIAL WORKER

All children cared for in South Tyneside have their own dedicated Social Worker. Your Social Worker will keep in touch with you and visit you regularly. This is usually once every 6 weeks, or more often if needed.

How often they come to visit you might change depending how long you have been at Whiteleas Way, what is happening in your life, and what your views are. You can always speak with your Social Worker, your Key Worker can help you get in touch with them, and you can speak to them in private.

All children who have a Social Worker should have one of these cards.



Identity, family, and friends

Being a teenager is tough sometimes. Finding yourself living in a new place, with new faces around you, can sometimes make the day-to-day feel quite hard.

We want you to be able to express yourself and be true to who you are. Your appearance, personality, religion, sexuality, and culture are all the things that make you who you are. We will support you to be confident and true to yourself.

We want to support you in any way we can.

We know how important friends are. Keeping in touch and continuing to meet your friends can really help how you feel. We also know that it can feel tricky when you first move to live with us.

Thinking about who will know where you live, what to say to friends about where you live, and how to keep meeting up with friends in the way you used to, are all the things we can help you with..

The important thing to know is, you don't have to work this all out on your own, we are here to help you!

Thinking about your family, and wondering how they are and what they are doing, can bring up some really strong and tough emotions that may sometimes feel quite overwhelming when you first move to live with us. Getting used to living with us can sometimes seem easier if you have the answers to these questions and are able to see the people who are important to you. We will support you, we will listen, and we will find out information about your family for you, as well as support you to see your family in the best and safest way for everyone.





Dos and Don't's of living here...

Living with others can be tricky to get used to. Carers will do their best to keep everyone happy and make sure everyone gets on well in the house.

One of the ways we do this is to have an agreement about what we all will and will not do. Some of the things you may already do such as clearing up after yourself, putting dishes in the sink after you've used them, using the bins around the house, and things like not having music or your TV in your bedroom playing too loud or too late at night.

Sometimes things can get damaged in the house. If you have broken something or caused any damage, we will always ask you to help repair or fix it, or look at how you can improve the situation in some way.

If it cannot be fixed or repaired, or you do not wish to do this, we will then look at other ways for you to resolve the issue. This might be to do some chores around the house, or pay for the cost of the damage from your pocket money each week.

We **DO NOT** allow any kind of bullying at Whiteleas Way. If you think you are being bullied, at home or anywhere else, please to speak with a carer at Whiteleas way or talk to a trusted person (teacher, social worker, family member or friend).

There is no smoking or vaping in or around the house (we will help anyone who smokes to get some help and support to give up).



Staying Safe!



Keeping you safe, and supporting you to be as safe as you can be when you're away from the house and carers, is really important to us.

Some of the things we will do that you might not be used to include keeping in touch with you via mobile phone (we will give you a basic mobile phone if you do not have one), knowing where you are going, who you are with, and what time you will be home. We also give you a coming home time which is agreed in line with how old you are. One of the reasons we need to know this information is because we have experience of young people finding themselves in situations that have become worrying, frightening or 'out of control' for them even though they felt they were with friends or adults they thought they could trust. Sometimes because we need to do everything we can to keep you safe, we may need to make decisions such as sharing what we are worried about with police, Social Workers, your family and school. We will always talk to you about this.

We will try really hard to become someone you feel you can trust in the hope that you feel able to tell us if you're worried, not sure, or feeling frightened of a situation or someone, so we can do whatever we need to keep you safe, even when sometimes you may not agree with the action we need to take to do this.

Remembering the time you need to be home by, and staying in touch, is really important. If you want to stay at friends' or family's houses overnight, we will need to agree this with your Social Worker and plan for this to happen at the best and agreed time for everyone. If you are late coming home and we cannot get in touch with you, we will get in touch with the people you know (both friends and family). We will also look for you in the areas we think you may be. If we are still unable to speak with you to confirm you're safe, we would need to report you 'missing from home' to the police.

The important thing to remember is that you will not be 'told off' when you come home! All we want is for you to be home safe with us. We will also see if there's anything we can do so you don't feel you need to go missing again.

Someone who helps us do this is the 'Missing Coordinator'.

Missing from Home:

If you're reported missing from home, someone will come out to see you and have a chat about it. This is called a 'Return Home Interview (RHI)'. It is voluntary. There is nothing to be worried about, and you won't get told off.

A RHI is all about finding out:

- if you're ok
- what made you go missing
- if there were any risks
- if you need further support
- going missing can be a hard thing to deal with

The Missing Team know this and are here to help you.

The person who comes to see you will be an Independent Person or it may be the 'Missing Coordinator'. This means they aren't normally part of your care team.

Try and see it as a chance to talk openly about what is going on for you with someone who doesn't make decisions about your life. This person isn't going to tell you what to do. They will be ready to hear everything you've got to say and will help you to look at ways you can be safer and, if needed, better supported.

Your Health

Your health, both physical and emotional, is really important to us at Whiteleas Way. We will make sure you have a doctor, dentist, and optician, and we'll come with you to any appointments.

There is a Cared for Nurse. You will see her if you choose to have your Annual Health Assessment; this is something that helps us to make sure you're growing and staying fit and healthy.



Some other health services that can help you:

MATRIX - Works with young people under the age of 18 in South Tyneside, their families and carers. The service provides help, support and advice to those whose lives have been affected by drug and alcohol misuse or those who are at risk of developing drug and alcohol problems.

SURT - Stopping Unsafe Relationships Together... SURT work with children and young people aged 11-24 living in South Tyneside who are experiencing or have been affected by intimate partner abuse, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, honour-based abuse or stalking and harassment.



Sexual Health Service

This service offers pre-bookable appointments for all contraception requests, cervical smears, pregnancy options discussions and asymptomatic screening for sexual transmitted infections.



CYPS

The Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) provides a single service to all children and young people aged 0-18 years living in South Tyneside and Sunderland who present with mental health difficulties. This includes children and young people who may have learning difficulties and those living in a range of difficult and challenging circumstances.

“
You can swim
for free with your
leisure card!
”

Activities

When you live with us we have a range of things we like to do for fun. We like to know if you have any hobbies or other things you like to do, so we can help keep these going.

We have books, board games, a games console and of course a TV (Netflix, Amazon Firestick, Disney plus), and we also like to do things like visiting the climbing wall, trips to theme parks, cinema trips, beach trips and music concerts.

We really like the young people who live with us to help make plans to visit places and to do the things they want to at weekends and during school holidays.

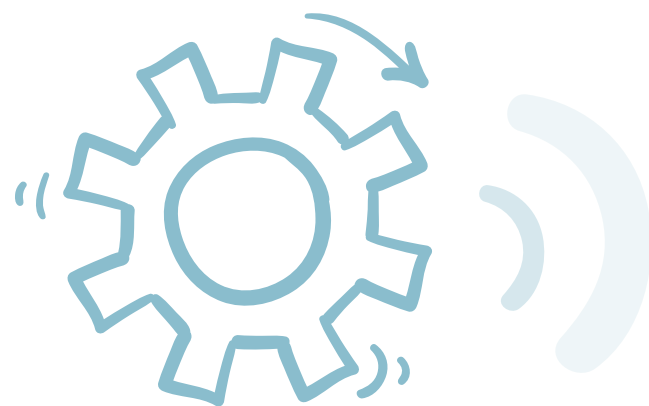
If you are 14yrs+ you'll be eligible for a Leisure Card which enables you to use the gym and leisure facilities in and around South Tyneside for free.

With this card you can also bring a friend for free!



Haven Point

Education and Training



At Whiteleas Way we think education is very important! We understand that it can also be a real struggle sometimes for some young people. Whether that's getting up on time in the morning, managing relationships with teachers and peers, or feeling the learning is just too tough. There are lots of things we can do to help and you may also be supported by the Virtual School..

The Virtual School works alongside schools, Social Workers and carers to make sure you have the best opportunities throughout your school journey. They provide the support, guidance and reassurance you might need. They collect your attendance and progress information regularly from your school or college, and use Personal Education Plans (PEPs) to monitor your education more closely to make sure you are happy in school and doing as well as you can. They can offer one to one support if you are struggling with certain subjects, your overall progress, or your attendance or behaviour.

The Virtual School can also help you get support from other services such as Educational Psychology, counselling, etc. They also provide activities in school holidays, book packs, links with local universities, competitions, and rewards for achievements throughout the year.

If you have a question or would like any help or support with your education, you can email VirtualSchool@southtyneside.gov.uk or phone Virtual School, Virtual head on 0191 427 2488.

Work placements and shadowing opportunities

We have a specialist role within the Leaving Care Team, known as the 'Opportunities Broker', who is dedicated to making stronger links with local employers and training providers.

They will support you to access work placements and shadowing opportunities. You can find our Opportunities Broker by visiting <https://campaigns.southtyneside.gov.uk/care-leavers/>.

Finishing School?

Once you're finished school, thinking about your next steps is also something we can help with. Whether you want to go to college, sixth form, get a job or an apprenticeship, there are services to help you make the best decision for your future:

The Princes Trust is an organisation that has a range of programmes to develop young people's skills and boost their confidence. They can offer training, work placements and funding for those wanting to start their own business.

Connexions South Tyneside provides careers information, advice and guidance to young people aged between 16 and 18, and up to 25 if they have a special educational need or disability.

Connexions Advisers can support young people to make positive choices about their future with information about:

- college courses
- apprenticeships
- 6th form
- employment opportunities
- training schemes

Virtual School

The Virtual School promotes the education and achievement of cared for children. The Virtual School is not a building like other schools. The Virtual School is a team of people who support cared for children to do as well as they can in their education.



The Virtual School monitors the progress and attendance of children cared for, and coordinates educational support as well as offering advice and guidance to all partners working with children who have Social Workers.

It doesn't replace the responsibilities of the young person's actual school in their duties to cared for children, but provides additional resource to support and challenge those involved in their education.

Each school has a **DESIGNATED TEACHER** who is responsible for the educational and personal issues related to cared for children.



The team will:

- Monitor attainment, progress and attendance
- Provide individual support in learning, attendance or behaviour
- Train Designated Teachers and carers
- Build capacity in schools so that they are more able to intervene and support children and young people
- Oversee and provide advice for Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- Attend Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Reviews
- Work with other colleagues and agencies inside and outside the borough to support cared for children
- Share Pupil Premium Plus
- Provide access to a counselling service and an Educational Psychologist
- Provide advice and guidance on previously cared for children and those who have Social Workers (CIN & CP).

Having your Say!

Finding out what you think and feel about living with us is something we really value and there are lots of different ways we try to gather your input. We have young people's group meetings every month, which carers will help you to organise, where we chat about living together and anything that's working really well or that we need to change. We also think about fun things we can do and when we can do them, then make plans for the weekends and school holidays.

MY PLAN

Your meetings will talk about the 'My Plan' you'll have done with your Social Worker. 'My Plan' is a way for you to say what you want to happen in the future. It's your plan to get your views across. You can write what you want without being judged.

You could include things like:

- what is going well
- what you want to be different
- what people can do to help
- what is important to you
- who is important to you

You can create your own plan. It can be:

- a drawing
- a conversation
- a scrapbook



ADVOCATE

Cared for children can also get help to have their say from an Advocate.

An Advocate is someone who can help you speak out. They do not work for the Council.

They will keep what you say private, unless what you tell them puts you or someone else in danger.

An Advocate can:

- Support you at meetings
- Help you by expressing your wishes and feelings for you in person, or in writing

For more information on getting an Advocate you can speak with your Social Worker, Key Worker, IRO or you can contact NYAS yourself.

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) by calling 0808 808 1001 or visit NYAS.



INDEPENDENT VISITOR

You can also regularly see an Independent Visitor. This is someone who will meet up with you every few weeks to do something fun.

An Independent Visitor is interested in you and you only.

They will help and guide you during your time in care, and be someone you can trust and talk to.

Your Independent Visitor will:

- visit you on a regular basis
- talk to you about things you are interested in
- listen to you about anything – whether it's a funny story or something more serious
- respect you and not judge you
- support your hobbies and interests, and help you develop new ones
- support your future and help you achieve the things that matter to you
- be completely separate from Childrens Services



MAGIC GROUP

Magic stands for Making a Great Important Change. It's our Children in Care Council in South Tyneside.

There are two MAGIC groups for cared for young people aged 12 to 16 years old. These take place weekly.

MAGIC are involved in lots of projects to help make important changes to the lives of cared for children and young people.

They also take part in fun activities, trips, events, and attend an annual residential trip in the Lake District.

To find out more, speak to your Social Worker, or email participation@southtyneside.gov.uk.



Just for you...

Our Cared For Children Website

We have a website dedicated to cared for children. On the website you will find a range of helpful information, this includes things like:

- Staying safe well and healthy
- Who will support me and how
- Your voice and getting involved
- Getting ready for leaving care



Things to Remember

Use this page to make a note of important information about your Key Worker and Social Worker!

My Key Worker is:

Their phone number is:

Their email address is:

My Social Worker is:

Their phone number is:

Their email address is:

Questions?

Use this space to write any questions you have...

Useful Contacts

We really want to make your stay as enjoyable as possible but also understand that we may not always get things right. If there is anything you aren't happy with around the home, whether that be a member of staff or something like issues with your bedroom, please tell us so we can improve things.

We hope you don't need to, but if you want to make a complaint you can do so by contacting the Complaints Officer on 0191 424 4679.

You can also speak to your Social Worker, IRO or NYAS. We want to make sure you have all the tools to reach out if you need to so here is a list of numbers you might find useful. If you need support in phoning any of the services below just ask a member of staff and we will be more than happy to help you.

- **Childline - 0800 11 11**
 - **NSPCC Helpline - 0800 800 500**
 - **Cyps - 0191 566 5500**
 - **Independent Reviewing officer (IRO) - 0191 454 5021**
 - **Matrix - 0191 497 5637**
 - **NYAS Advocacy - 0800 616 101**
 - **Social Work Teams - 0191 427 2830**
 - **Ofsted (children's services regulator) - 0300 123 1231 or www.ofsted.gov.uk**
 - **SURT - contact@wearesurt.org**
 - **Sexual Health Service - 0191 402 8168**
 - **Complaints Officer (South Tyneside Council) - 0191 424 4679 or complaints@southtyneside.gov.uk**
 - **Connexions - 0800 328 1898**
 - **LADO - 0191 424 7430**
 - **Local Safeguarding Partnership - 0191 454 5021**
 - **The Virtual School - VirtualSchool@southtyneside.gov.uk**
 - **IV (Independent Visitors) - IV@nepacs.co.uk or freephone 0800 0121539**

South Tyneside Council



0191 519 6918



IndependentAdolescentUnit@southtyneside.gov.uk



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