

Smithstown Lodge

We are a residential unit which will provide a safe and homely living environment for young people. We will provide 24 hour care 7 days a week. We will also aim to support and encourage you to be able to live on your own when you are old enough.



Where is the house?

In Julianstown, close to Drogheda and Dublin. It's close to the bus route to Dublin. There are various facilities nearby including schools, shops, cinema, clubs, church and other amenities such as horse riding.

How do young people come to live here?

Through referrals from their social worker when young people need a safe place to live that will help them in every way to reach their full potential.

- In most cases we think that it is good for the young person to meet the staff and other young people who live in the house before you move in. This is what we call an induction plan. In order to do this we will decide on dates together with you and your social worker which will be suitable for you to come and visit us. The first few visits are usually short and as we get to know you better the length of your visit will increase until you move in. During this time you will get to know the house routines and various activities which we do, this will also help you to get to know the young people who live here.

Who will be living in the house?

There will be no more than 5 young people living in the house, both boys and girls

for all different reasons and different lengths of time. Everyone will be treated fairly and individually.

Who is the Manager?

Vanessa Higgins is the Manager. She works from Monday until Friday. Vanessa is committed to providing a high standard of care making sure that all the staff and young people are well looked after.

Who are the staff?

A team of full time workers, two who will stay overnight, often there will be three staff working during the day. All the staff like working with young people and are open honest and friendly.

What is a key worker?

A key worker is one of the staff who will help you with all aspects of your life e.g. health, education, making contact with family and key workers will do special work to help you with any problems as well as the fun stuff like shopping and days out.

What are group meetings?

There will be a group meeting each week so that everyone living in the house has a chance to talk about things in the house that they like and don't like. Young people are encouraged to make suggestions around things that they would like to see happening around the house and are given feedback on any requests they have previously made.

What can I do in the house?

- School or a course is very important; the staff will make sure you get all the help you need to succeed. After that there will be activities organized by the staff and including trips away which we will pay for e.g. cinema, karting,

etc.

- Joining local clubs, we will pay for these and provide transport for you.
- Spending time at your leisure in the house watching TV, playing the computer, just relaxing, spending time outside with friends and family, (Your Care Plan will give you details of your family access arrangements), having family over to visit, we encourage you to have friends over to visit provided it is at an appropriate time, phoning family and friends.

Family Contact

We encourage and welcome family contact (Access arrangements will be written in your Care Plan). Whatever arrangements are made for family access we will always ensure that your access takes place and that you and your family will be given space and time to make sure your visit is a happy experience. We will encourage your family or other significant people involved in your life to be included in all aspects of your care because they are the most important people in your life.

Choice

We believe that it is very important for you to have choices like what to do in the evening what clothes to buy what colour to paint your bedroom and so on. Choosing and buying your own clothes will help you develop your own style and personality. You will also get at chance to do the weekly food shopping with staff to choose what food you like. If there are any sports/ activities that you are interested in doing staff will encourage you to do so, we will also give you the money for these activities.

Behaviour

All young people and staff must respect each other. The staff are here to look after everyone and we are open to listening anytime if you are feeling low, confused or angry. We know being in care isn't easy but we must all work together to make sure that it is a positive experience for you. It is important that everyone takes responsibility for their behavior and deals with the consequence e.g. if you break something we will deduct your pocket money to pay

for a replacement. Young people will get the opportunity to help in choosing appropriate consequences for certain behaviours. It is important that we all try to find better ways of coping with difficult situations; staff will do their best to help you with this.

The staff at Smithstown Lodge use "*Therapeutic Crisis Intervention*" which is a way of helping you and making sure that you, the other young people and staff are safe. We will also help you learn new ways to cope with things you are finding difficult in your life. The staff at Smithstown Lodge will only if absolutely necessary and appropriate use physical intervention when all other options have been used and there is a real threat to your safety, other young person or staff.

Physical intervention means that staff are properly trained in how to hold and manage young people safely.

Will I get pocket money?

You will get pocket money every week for this you will have to keep your room reasonably clean and tidy. You will also be expected to keep the house clean and tidy as well as helping with the cooking from time to time. The amount of pocket money you will get depends on your age. We will pay for toiletries shampoo deodorant etc clothes and activities which you do with the staff.

Clothing

We will make sure that when you come to live in Smithstown lodge that you have all the clothes you need e.g. shoes/runners, coats, plenty of underwear, plenty of jeans, jumpers, t-shirts, tracksuits. During your time here your Key Worker will make sure that you will be provided with whatever clothes you need.

Care Plan

Each young person will have a Care Plan, which your Social Worker fills out. A Care Plan is a plan that makes sure that you are getting the best possible chance in life, school, with family, and in your placement. There will be a

meeting regularly to make sure everything in your Care Plan is being done, this meeting is called a Review. It is important that you attend your Review meeting so you can voice your opinion and have a say on what is going to happen in your future. However it is your choice whether or not you attend and your Key Worker will speak on your behalf if you are not comfortable.

Education

You must be attending either school, a course or in employment when you live in Smithstown Lodge. We will provide you with all the materials and school books that you will need. Staff will organise transport for you. Your Keyworker will play an active role in your education by building and maintaining strong links with your teachers and tutors. We will do our best to keep you in your current school or course, this will not always be possible however staff will ensure to arrange a suitable alternative that you are happy with. Parents and families will be encouraged to be part of your school life- parent teacher meetings, project work etc and will be informed of your progress.

Phone Calls

You are always allowed to phone your family and social worker. You can also phone your friends to a reasonable limit. You will be given phone credit once a month for your mobile phone.

What are your responsibilities?

A responsibility is something you are expected to do or learn to do.

- You have a responsibility to respect other people's privacy
- You have a responsibility to respect other people's possessions
- You have a responsibility treat other people with respect.
- You have a responsibility not to bully or intimidate other people.

What are the staff's responsibilities?

Everyone has the same responsibilities but there are some more that the staff have. The reason for this is to make sure that all the young people we care for are kept safe and are being cared for in the best possible way. Some of these include:

- Staff write daily reports on how your placement is progressing.

- You will be encouraged to read and sign your daily log and if you don't agree with what staff have written there is space for you to say so.
- If you have not returned to the house at the agreed time or if you have left without permission, staff are obliged to follow procedures i.e. contacting your social worker, the guards and your family.
- Staff have the responsibility to keep you and everyone else in the house safe

Names you may hear staff speaking about

Registration and Inspection

The Inspectorate are in charge of making sure that the social workers and residential centre's are doing a good job looking after the children

An Inspector

An Inspector is a person who works for the government or the health board and whose job is to make sure all the centre's are keeping the rules and that the children are safe and happy. After the inspector visits a centre they write a report about it, which says all the good things about the centre. The report also says if there are things that need to be made better for the children who live there.

Monitor

Every children's residential centre needs to be checked out every so often by a person who works for the health board. This person is called a "monitor" and their job is to make sure the centre is up to standard and that the children are being properly looked after. You can talk to the monitor when he or she visits, and tell them what you think about the centre.

Access to your records and information concerning your placement progress, family contact may be reviewed by monitoring and inspection authorised personnel.