



Under 18s Policy

Chester House is managed by the Guy Chester Centre. The Guy Chester Centre is the trading name of the Trustees of the North Bank Estate.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. At Chester House we are committed to ensuring that all our residents feel welcomed, settled, and safe throughout their stay. Based on our experience, we feel that a resident who is under 18 years of age at the date they move in needs a little extra support, especially at the beginning of their stay.
- 1.2. This policy outlines how Chester House will help support residents who are under 18 during their stay.
- 1.3. This policy only applies to residents who are 16 and 17 years old. Chester House does not provide accommodation to individuals who are under 16.
- 1.4. Chester House does not have any contractual or formal partnership arrangements with any educational institution. Applicants under the age of 18 can only be accepted where Chester House can ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to support their welfare. At present, this is limited to those enrolled at institutions where trusted support pathways are already established.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL PARTIES

- 2.1. Before a booking is confirmed by the accommodation team, the prospective resident (under 18) must provide the name and contact information for their parent(s) or legal guardian(s). They must also provide the name of the college/educational institution they plan to attend.
- 2.2. Before a booking is confirmed by the accommodation team, the prospective resident (under 18) and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must be provided with a copy of this policy and must confirm in writing that they have read and understood its contents. A booking will only be confirmed by the accommodation team once this written confirmation has been received.
- 2.3. Before a booking is confirmed by the accommodation team, the prospective resident (under 18) and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be asked to share any support needs, medical information, or relevant risks that may require additional oversight by staff. This must be confirmed in writing. Where such needs are identified, a safeguarding risk assessment will be completed to determine whether Chester House is an appropriate and safe environment for the resident. Bookings may be declined where risks cannot be safely managed. Failure to disclose relevant information about support needs may result in the withdrawal of accommodation.
- 2.4. All residents who are under 18 will be emailed by a member of the accommodation team at Chester House, prior to their arrival.
- 2.5. A member of the accommodation team will arrange a telephone call with the prospective resident and the resident's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) before their arrival to discuss anything important that the accommodation team should be aware of before their arrival, and to allow the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ask any questions.
- 2.6. A member of the accommodation team will contact the resident to arrange an informal meeting within their first two weeks to enable the resident to feel more comfortable speaking to staff at Chester House. Following this first meeting, the accommodation team will make regular contact with the resident until the end of their agreement, or until they turn 18,



whichever is soonest. The resident must attend all meetings that have been arranged and promptly respond to any emails sent by the accommodation team.

- 2.7. Contact between the accommodation team and the resident should be conducted by face-to-face meetings or by email only. Mobile phones or social media accounts must not be used as methods of contact and personal contact details of the accommodation team must not be shared.
- 2.8. Any face-to-face meeting should be conducted in an open and publicly visible space, such as the office or Hub. Meetings must not take place in a private space such as a resident's bedroom.
- 2.9. The purpose of the contact is to provide general support regarding the resident's stay at Chester House. The accommodation team cannot provide professional guidance on any personal or health related matters. However, they may be able to provide details for other organisations that can offer that kind of help.
- 2.10. No member of the accommodation team will act in 'Loco Parentis' (in the place of the parent/guardian) or provide direct supervision of any residents under the age of 18. No member of the accommodation team will monitor how any under 18 resident participates in their studies, spends their leisure time, or how they manage their finances.
- 2.11. The accommodation team will follow data protection laws and the relevant data privacy notice with regards to the sharing of information for any under 18 residents with their school, college or university.
- 2.12. Should an under 18 resident require assistance, they should go to the office to speak to a member of staff or use the emergency phone in reception to contact the person on duty. There will always be a member of staff available to speak to.
- 2.13. The accommodation team will keep a record of all residents who are under 18, along with details of their next of kin, including contact email addresses. These details will be kept up to date and will be available to the whole accommodation team.
- 2.14. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are carried out on all members of the accommodation team.
- 2.15. The accommodation team will inform the guarantor and the parent(s)/guardian(s) if the resident is in rent arrears.
- 2.16. The accommodation team will inform the guarantor and the parent(s)/guardian(s) if the resident is in breach of the Licence Agreement that leads to disciplinary procedures, resulting in a final written warning or a termination of their license agreement.

3. CONDITIONS OF STAY

Under 18 residents have some specific conditions of stay attached to their accommodation agreement. These conditions will continue until the resident reaches their 18th birthday or end their stay at Chester House, whichever is soonest. These conditions are that:

- 3.1. The resident must notify Guy Chester Centre of the name, phone number and email address of one or more emergency contacts. Emergency contacts must be available to respond at any time.
- 3.2. All members of Guy Chester Centre's accommodation team are available for the resident to contact. A member of the accommodation team will contact the resident's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) by phone before their arrival to discuss the resident's stay.
- 3.3. Residents under the age of 18 are not permitted to have overnight guests, except for immediate



family members and only with prior approval from the accommodation team. This requirement ensures a safe and appropriate environment for all children living at Chester House. Any breach of this rule will be treated as a safeguarding concern and addressed under our safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

- 3.4. Visitors are not permitted on site after 10:00pm unless they are approved family guests.
- 3.5. Residents under 18 must not purchase, consume, possess, or store alcohol or illegal substances on the premises. Any breach will be treated as a safeguarding concern and may result in termination of their licence agreement.
- 3.6. A member of the accommodation team will contact the resident after their arrival to arrange an informal meeting. The resident must attend this meeting.
- 3.7. Chester House may contact the resident's guarantor and, if different, the resident's parent(s) or legal guardian(s), should the resident be in breach of their accommodation agreement.
- 3.8. The resident is expected to have the necessary skills to study and live independently alongside people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Accommodation at Chester House is offered on the understanding that the resident will be able to adapt to living away from home and to looking after themselves in all practical matters.
- 3.9. Residents must keep staff informed if they will be away overnight.

4. SAFEGUARDING

- 4.1. The accommodation team will adhere to the Guy Chester Centre's Safeguarding Policy with regards to all residents under 18. For further information, please see the *Safeguarding Policy* on our website.
- 4.2. Any safeguarding concern involving a resident under 18 will be escalated immediately to statutory services (e.g., MASH, Police) in accordance with Chester House's Safeguarding Policy.
- 4.3. In the event of a serious concern, Chester House may require the resident to return to the care of their parent(s)/guardian(s) or appropriate authority while risk is assessed.
- 4.4. Information may be shared with statutory safeguarding agencies without consent where doing so is necessary to protect a child from harm, in line with "Working Together to Safeguard Children" and data protection law.
- 4.5. Accommodation information will not be shared with a resident's place of study unless there is a safeguarding concern or legal requirement to do so. Any information sharing will follow statutory safeguarding guidance and data protection legislation.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information or clarification can be obtained by emailing office@chesterhouse.org.uk

6. REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed in August 2026.