



**Hear
me**

telling
it **like**
it is

Doncaster Independent Visitors Scheme

A Guide for Children and Young People

This booklet will give you some information about Doncaster Independent Visitors Scheme. It should help you to understand:

- What is an Independent Visitor?
- What sort of activities you could do with your Independent Visitor?
- How do you request an Independent Visitor?

Delivered by young people from



Doncaster
Children's
Services Trust

What is an Independent Visitor?

An Independent Visitor is an adult who:

- Volunteers their spare time to spend with young people.
- Will listen to you and support you.
- Can be trusted and you can talk to about anything.
- Will share your hobbies and interests.



Who can have an Independent Visitor?



Any child or young person who is looked after and does not have regular contact with their birth family can have an Independent Visitor if they want to. It is your choice if you want to have an Independent Visitor or not.



What sort of things could I do with my Independent Visitor?

Whatever you like! As long as it is safe, and your Independent Visitor agrees to it.

Some young people like to share a hobby with their Independent Visitor, like playing football or going bowling.

You could ask your Independent Visitor to help you with your homework or reading. You can even go on outings together to fun places such as into town or the cinema. There might be times when you would like to talk to someone or when you would like someone to speak out for you at reviews or other meetings. Your Independent Visitor may agree to give you this type of support, and will become a good friend to you.



Things your Independent Visitor **CANNOT** do



There are a number of things your Independent Visitor **cannot do**, and this includes the following:

- Take photos of you on their phone.
- Take you to their home or let you know their address.
- Allow their or your family and friends on a visit.
- Be friends with you on social media.
- Buy you alcohol or cigarettes.
- Give or lend you money.
- Use your allowance for anything other than the planned activity.
- Let you use their phone.
- Do things that paid professional in your life should be doing, like supporting you with finances and housing issues, attending appointments and dealing with emergencies that are not part of your visit.

How can I request an Independent Visitor?



If you would like an Independent Visitor, you can either:

- Ask your carer.
- Ask your social worker.
- Call the Independent Visitors Scheme Coordinator (Sue Wakefield on 07919 306 375).

After this, the Scheme Coordinator will contact you to tell you more about having an Independent Visitor. You can choose what type of person you would like to be your Independent Visitor, and the Scheme Coordinator will try to find someone who likes the same things as you.

What happens next?



When an Independent Visitor has been identified for you, you will see them a few times to make sure that you get on and like each other. The Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator will ask you how things are going and if you are happy with your Independent Visitor. If you are, then you can carry on seeing them.

If you're not happy with your Independent Visitor, you can tell the Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator. The Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator will not tell anyone what you say, unless you or someone else is not safe. You can also talk to your Carer or Social Worker if you want to. It is very important that you let someone know if there are any problems, as soon as possible. The Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator will try to fix any problems or find you a new Independent Visitor.


When will I see my Independent Visitor and for how long?

- You will see them twice a month to do a fun activity.
- In the beginning you will spend a short amount of time together to get to know each other. When you start to feel more comfortable with each other you can go out for longer.
- We ask volunteers to commit to supporting you for at least two years. However, if you get on really well and they can commit for longer your friendship could last for years.
- You can end your match at any time if you feel that it is no longer working for you, you're not happy or your circumstances change.







How will visits be set up with my Independent Visitor?

- When the Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator thinks they have a suitable match for you, they will show you their interest form and give you the opportunity to decide if you want to meet them or not.
 - The Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator will introduce you to your Independent Visitor and then you will spend time with them on your own.
 - The Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator will check in with you and your volunteer after your first visit to see if you are both happy with your match and want to continue.
 - If you are happy to continue, the Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator will give your foster carer your Independent Visitor number and your Independent Visitor will have your carers number so they can arrange your next visit and future visits.
 - As you get older you might start to arrange these visits yourself with agreement with your carer. If you would like your carer or keyworker to help arrange visits, we will give them your volunteers contact details too.
- 

Confidentiality

- 
- 
- **Your volunteer doesn't know anything about your past.** They just know you are in care or have been in care and they know what some of your interests are. It is up to you what you decide to share with your volunteer about your past.
 - **The Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator will share any support needs you have with your volunteer.** This is to help to make sure that you get the right support and you and your volunteer are safe on your visits.
 - **What you and you volunteer talk about is between you and them, they will keep it confidential and won't tell anyone.** However, your volunteer does have to tell the Independent Visitor Scheme Coordinator if you tell them something that means you or someone else is not safe.
 - **We ask that you treat your volunteer with respect and act responsibly during your visits** so you can both enjoy your visits as much as possible. If either of you have concerns, it's really important that you contact us on 07919 306 375 to let us know.



Who can I talk to if things aren't working out?

The Scheme Coordinator is **Sue Wakefield**

Telephone number **07919 306 375**

If you are unhappy with the support you are receiving you can make a complaint by calling Dawn Jones, Customer Experience Manager, on **01302 862 845**

