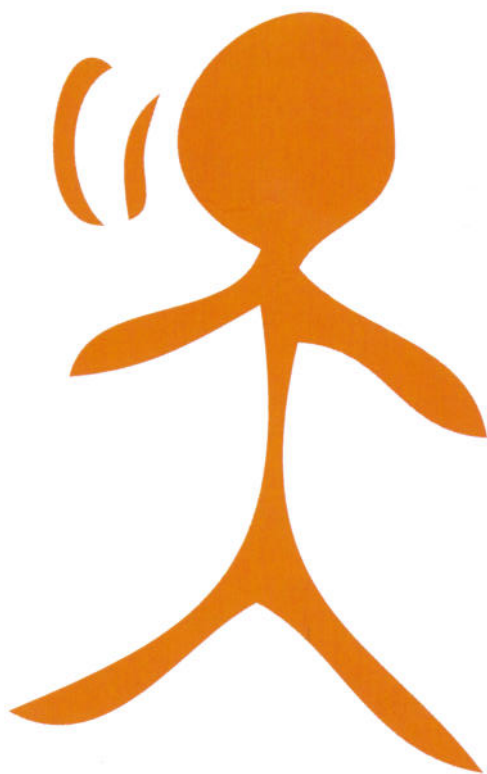


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Kirklees Independent Visitors

Independent Visitors

Information for young people



Kirklees Independent Visitors scheme



What is an independent visitor?

"Someone who will listen to me"
"Would speak up for me if I can't"
"Someone who is patient"
"Would take me to the cinema"
"Will help me make decisions"
"Will ask how my day's been"
"Wants me to be independent"

An independent visitor is a volunteer who will spend time getting to know you and spend time regularly with just you.

They are not paid to spend time with you, they do it because they want to.

An independent visitor is someone that you choose. Someone you can talk to and get along with.

Your independent visitor might be someone you already know or they might be completely new to you.

An independent visitor is NOT a social worker or carer.

Your carer, social worker or independent visitor coordinator can help you choose an independent visitor if you would like one.

What does an independent visitor do?

They will visit you regularly! This might be more often to start with whilst you are getting to know each other.

They will take the time to get to know you and let you get to know them too.

Hopefully you and your independent visitor will have lots in common such as hobbies and interests. You might wish to arrange to do these together.

Your independent visitor is also someone you could talk to and ask for advice. You could even ask your independent visitor to support you in your review or meetings at school.



Who can have an independent visitor?

We would like all young people in care in Kirklees to have one, if they want one.

Sometimes there are young people who really need an independent visitor because they don't have much contact with their family or friends. We try to get them one first.

It can sometimes take a while for us to find you the right independent visitor.

Before you start to see your independent visitor we make sure they are good people who enjoy spending time with young people and who you will enjoy spending time with.

We also interview the independent visitors, do police checks, ask for references and run some training to make sure they are safe before they start visiting you.

How long can someone be my independent visitor?

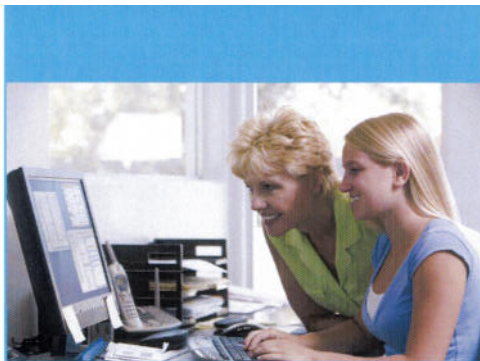
A volunteer can be your independent visitor for as long as you are both happy to keep visiting each other. This might be for a short time or for many years.

We will keep checking with you and your independent visitor to make sure everything is going well and you are both still happy.

How do I get an independent visitor?

Tell your carer, social worker or someone else you trust that you wish to have an independent visitor. Your social worker will then make a referral which means your name goes on our waiting list.

If you'd like to know more about independent visitors you can always call the independent visitor coordinator *(the phone number is on the back page!)*



What happens then?

Once we know what kind of person you would like to be your independent visitor we will find one of our volunteers we think would be suitable. We will then tell you, your carers and your social worker about them.

If you agree we will arrange a meeting with you, the independent visitor and the independent visitor coordinator. This gives you the chance to meet the volunteer and interview them yourself and decide if you will enjoy spending time with them.

If you decide you are happy with the independent visitor then they will be allowed to start visiting you.

If you do not think the volunteer is right for you then you can ask to have someone else.

What if I'm not happy with my independent visitor?

If things have changed and you decide you no longer want an independent visitor or you would like someone else please contact the Independent Visitor scheme and speak to the Independent Visitor Coordinator who will help you.

If you feel you need to make a complaint about an independent visitor you can speak to the Independent Visitor Coordinator or ask your carer or social worker to contact us for you.

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Kirklees Independent Visitors



For more information on the Independent Visitors scheme,
go to www.kirklees.gov.uk/independentvisitors.

To request your own Independent Visitor, talk to your carer
or social worker or you can contact:

Chris Berridge

Independent Service Officer

Looked After Children Independent Service Team

Children's Rights Team

Brian Jackson House

2nd Floor, New North Parade

Huddersfield

HD1 5JP

T: 07976 497735

E: christopher.berridge@kirklees.gov.uk

www.kirklees.gov.uk/care2listen