



DONCASTER CARERS CENTRE

MARCH/APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER

Introduction and Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter. Since our last update we have been working on growing our volunteer team. We have been lucky to have volunteers come on board who are helping us with our website, marketing, telephone befriending, events, meetings and engagement in the community. All of this extra support will help us to communicate better, engage more with our members and parents/carers and develop our services. We have also been attending meetings in the borough representing parents/carers and advocating for children with SEND in Doncaster. Below are some of the meetings we attend on our members behalf:

SEND Partnership Board, Employment Forum, Doncaster Carers Strategic Board, SEND Shadow Board, Doncaster Mental Health Strategic Board, Autism Partnership Board, and the Community Paediatric and Autism Board.

One of the important meetings we attended was with Doncaster Council and Idox. Idox have been working with Doncaster Council to produce an online platform for the EHCP process. This platform will make the process more transparent for parents. There is a further update on this in the News Updates section of our newsletter.

We are looking forward to celebrating World Autism Acceptance Week in April and are making preparations for this so keep an eye on our Facebook page for information and how you can get involved.

News

The General Development Pathway (GDA). What is it, and how do you get referred?



In Doncaster the GDA Pathway (also known as **needs-led neurodevelopmental assessment**) is a route by which children are assessed for autism, ADHD, development delays, dyspraxia and cerebral palsy. Your child can be referred to the GDA Pathway by your local SEN provision at your child's school, the School Nursing Team, or your GP (if your child is under 2).

A referral will consist of the following evidence:

- X 2 terms of evidence of progress which could be through a SEN Plan, Individual Support Plan or Behaviour Support Plan, submitted from the early years provider, school or post 16 setting.
- Completed GDA Health Summary by the School Nurse or Health Visitor.
- Completed referral form by the SENCO, School Nurse/Health Visitor or Early Years Provider.
- Completed setting and parent questionnaires.

After a completed referral is submitted, your child will be invited for a clinic appointment with a doctor who will perform an initial assessment. After this initial assessment appointment your child may:

- Have a further follow up appointment for further assessment or monitoring. They may also ask for more information from your school or early years setting.
- Be referred to a more specialist service, therapist or speciality community pathway such as ASD pathway or ADHD pathway.

There can be a considerable wait time for an assessment, and then referral to a specialist pathway. You can keep up to date with how long the wait will be by keeping in touch with the Waiting List Co-ordinator by contacting 01302 642302.

In the meantime there are services which can help and support you during your wait for a GDA Assessment. Some of these services are detailed below, please click on the links:

[Doncaster Parents Voice](#)

[Doncaster Autism Service](#)

[Doncaster SENDIAS](#)

[Doncaster Local Offer](#)



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The latest from The SEND Shadow Board

What is the SEND Shadow Board?

The SEND Shadow Board helps to ensure that young people with SEND have their voices heard on decisions that affect them in Education, Health and Social Care. The SEND Shadow Board meetings are an opportunity to meet the people who manage these services and for children and young people to talk about their lived experiences as a young person with SEND. These meetings then feed into developing and improving services in Doncaster.

The SEND Shadow Board met on 27th February 2024 where discussions took place on creating a video which will be made with the voices of children and young people with SEND. This video will be used as a training aid for teachers, school staff, senco's, and professionals to help them to understand children and young people with SEND, and what works for them in a school setting and what doesn't. Members of the SEND Shadow Board volunteered to take part in this video which is being produced by Doncaster Council. If your child or young person would like to be involved in this video, then please contact Doncaster Parents Voice via e-mail: dpvoice@doncastercarers.org.uk for a consent form if under 18 years and further information.



DONCASTER'S LOCAL OFFER

Special Educational Needs/Disabilities

Provides information for children and young people with SEND and their parents or carers in a single place

www.doncaster.gov.uk/localoffer

An update from the Ladder Group

The Ladder Group is a voice/social group especially for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) for ages 11 up to 25 years. The group meets regularly to share their experiences and to put forward their voices to the decision makers whilst also enjoying group activities and making new friends.



The group is made up of a diverse range of young people with a variety of additional needs who champion the needs of young people with SEND. They are always looking for new members and enjoy watching young people gain confidence and make new friends. All Ladder Group members are invited to join the SEND Shadow Board.

The Ladder Group is currently looking for new members to help support the work that they do in Doncaster. If you are aged 11-25 years and would like to find out more or join the Ladder Group, or if you are a parent/carer whose child/young person would be interested in joining, then please contact us on 07917 690590 or 01302 637566 or e-mail us at dpvevents@doncastercarers.org.uk

Please keep checking the [Ladder Group Facebook](#) page for the latest updates

Are you a member?

Being a member of Doncaster Parents Voice allows you access to all of our workshops, groups and events. By joining us, your support helps us to continue working towards getting the best outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Doncaster. Membership will also enable you to apply for a Max Card, and best of all membership is free!

Please visit www.doncasterparentsvoice.co.uk to find out more about membership and to download a membership form.



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April Workshops/Events/Meetings

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| Wednesday 3rd April 2024—3.30pm to 5.30pm | Easter Disco —Woodfield Club, Woodfield Rd, Balby |
| Thursday 4th April 2024—10.00am to 1.00pm | Managing Anxiety Workshop —For Young People |
| Tuesday 16th April 2024—4.30pm to 6.00pm | SEND Shadow Board Meeting |
| Tuesday 16th April 2024—11.00am to 12.00pm | Making a Difference Meeting Online Teams Meeting |
| Tuesday 16th April 2024—8.00pm to 9.00pm | Making a Difference Meeting Online Teams Meeting |
| Thursday 18th April 2024—10.00am to 12.30pm | Accessing Support in Schools —For parents |
| Thursday 25th April 2024—10.00am to 12.00pm | Wellbeing Session for autistic adults |

NEWS UPDATES



Opportunities for work experience

SMILE Horticulture Learning Centre have opportunities for work experience. They work in partnership with adults with learning disabilities and autism. Their aim is to help people develop their skills and knowledge within a horticultural environment helping them to feel valued, independent and fulfilled. For more information please see their website [here](#), or visit their [Facebook page](#).



Education Health and Care Hub (Online platform)

The Doncaster EHC Hub is coming to Doncaster. The EHC Hub is created by Idox and is an innovative digital platform supporting engagement, contributions, and collaboration on EHC assessments, plans and reviews. It offers complete transparency for families, professionals and education settings, truly transforming the way local authorities work with their partners. The EHC Hub will enable parents/carers, professionals, schools and senco's to apply for, update, manage and issue EHCP's in Doncaster on a digital platform. All parties will be able to see all aspects of the EHCP and contribute accordingly. Currently Doncaster Council are in the process of setting up the EHC hub. This will be going live over the next few months. Online training for parents/carers representatives, schools and professionals is underway and parents will be informed of when to set up an account as part of the annual review process. Initially the EHC hub will be available for new EHCP requests, and the rollout of the annual reviews of EHCP will follow in stages. We will post any updates on our [Facebook page](#).



Department for Work & Pensions

Disability Benefits Increase

From April 2024 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has confirmed that disability benefits will increase by 6.7%. The rates will rise in line with the September consumer price index (CPI) inflation figure. Increases can be seen in Disability Living Allowance, PIP and Attendance Allowance. Further information on the increases can be found on the [DWP website](#) here.



World Autism Acceptance Week

2nd April 2024 – 8th April 2024 is World Autism Acceptance Week. We are proud to support The National Autistic Society in their campaign to raise awareness for autism. There will be updates and posts on the Doncaster Autism Service and Doncaster Parents Voice Facebook page all week. To get involved and find out more, please visit the National Autistic Society [website here](#).



SEMH Hubs at Doncaster Schools

The City Of Doncaster Council is in the process of developing four specialist Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Hubs. The Hubs will be attached to three primary schools and one secondary school in Doncaster. When they are fully operational, the Hubs are expected to provide places for up to 10 children each, on a full-time basis. The Hubs will be attached to Brooke Primary Academy, Castle Hills Primary Academy, Conisbrough Ivanhoe Primary Academy and The McAuley Catholic High School. The Hubs are expected to be operational in 2024 and placements are initially likely to be allocated to children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Further updates will be available through the Local Offer web page and Facebook page. Click here for the [Local Offer website](#).



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Getting out and about and finding support in 2024

There are lots of groups/sessions around Doncaster that you can join either for yourself or for your children/young people. If you haven't joined any groups as yet, 2024 might be the year to give them a go. Below are some of the groups/sessions in Doncaster. These groups/sessions are for a variety of childrens/adults needs and age ranges:

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| Go Bounce |
| Go Bounce have a SEND Session on the first Tuesday of each month. For further information please contact Go Bounce on 01302 965465 or see their Facebook page here |
| Astrabound SEND Evening |
| Astrabounds SEND Evenings take place on the last Wednesday of each month, 6.00pm—7.30pm. To book and for further information please contact Astrabound on 01302 304620 or see their Facebook page here |
| Uproar Play Barn |
| Uproar Play Barn have SEND Sessions every Monday from 4.30pm—6.00pm. To book and for further information please contact the Uproar Play Bar on 01302 535057 or see their Facebook page here |
| Flip Out Doncaster |
| Flip Out have Friendly Sessions on Saturdays from 10.00am—11.00am where flashing lights are turned off and music is turned down to create a more relaxed atmosphere. To book or for further information please contact Flip Out on 01302 595010 or see their Facebook page here |
| Play Valley—Doncaster |
| Play Valley have SEN Sessions which are exclusively for children with special educational needs and their families. Held on the first Wednesday of each month, 4.00pm—6.00pm. For further details please contact Play Valley via their Facebook page here |
| Lemurian Light Wholistic Health CIC |
| Lemurian Light Wholistic Health CIC hold a regular coffee morning for SEN parents on the last Tuesday of each month, 10.30am—11.30am at the Grove Gardens Community Centre. For further information please see their Facebook page here . |
| Cura-Care Yorkshire Ltd |
| Cura-Care Yorkshire Ltd run a SEND Childrens Lego Group on Mondays, term time only from 5.00pm—7.00pm. There are fully funded group places for children with SEND who have an EHCP in place. Please see their Facebook page for further information and events. |
| Care2Dance |
| Care2Dance offers dance/movement classes in Doncaster for individuals with a disability. Please see their Facebook page for further information |
| Dungeons and Dragons Club |
| A collaborative roleplaying game for young autistic people aged 14+. Embark on epic quests and tell legendary stories filled with fantasy and fun. Sessions take place at the Doncaster Carers Centre and Askern Library. Please see the Doncaster Parents Voice Facebook page for the dates and times. |


Max Card is the UK's leading discount card for days out for families of SEND and looked after children.

A Max Card gives you and your families access to discounted days out all across the UK to include top attractions like Butlins, Thorpe Park, Lego Land Windsor Resort and many more!

To get your Max Card please contact Karen on **01302 637566** or email us at karen@doncastercarers.org.uk

maxcard

Cards cost £6.00



You can keep up to date with all of the latest events, news and workshops happening at the Carers Centre by following us on our Facebook pages below:

-  [Doncaster Partnership for Carers](#)
-  [Doncaster Parents Voice](#)
-  [Doncaster Autism Service](#)

For any enquiries please contact us on our central number 01302 637566, or email dpvoice@doncastercarers.org.uk or visit our website