

# **THE NORTH FLAT**



# **CHILDREN'S GUIDE**

This booklet has been designed to help you to understand what life is like in the North Flat. It will try to answer any questions or concerns that you may have and help them to disappear.

(Ofsted registration number: SC035241)



### What is the North Flat?

The North Flat is an extension of Dickson House. Together, they are registered as one children's home which provides care for children who are being educated at Doncaster School for the Deaf or Communication Specialist College, Doncaster. The North Flat has three bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, a lounge/dining room, a playroom and a staff office. The North Flat has a friendly staff team who work in both the flat and Dickson house; they are there to help you and they want you to be happy.

### What is in the North Flat?

#### Bedrooms:



When you come to the North Flat you will have your own bedroom. All bedrooms have their own bed, wardrobe, chest of drawers, desk, chair and lamp. You are encouraged to bring your own belongings and pictures to make it more personal. Bedding and towels are provided however you can bring your own bedding if you want, but it must be fire retardant.



All bedrooms have smoke alarms in them. The smoke alarms are very sensitive so aerosols must only be used in the bathroom. Staffs are always there to help should the building need to be evacuated.

You can also bring a television, games console or music system for your bedroom but this must be PAT tested by an electrician before you can use it. You will be issued with your own bedroom key so your belongings will be safe.



### Room Access

Your bedroom is your own personal space; however, sometimes the staff may need to enter. When staffs enter the room, they flash the lights to make sure you know that they are about to enter the room. This only happens in the follows situations:

- To wake you up in the morning
- To check that you are ok through the night
- To help you make your bed
- To help you sort your laundry

- For workmen to carry out repairs
- To notify you that you have visitors or that it is mealtime/school time
- If you need medical treatment
- If anything criminal is happening
- If the police require entry or if we think you are in danger
- If you are suspected of having illegal substances in your room (drugs or alcohol)
- For a room search (if this happens you may be present and you will be told that it is going to happen and why it is going to happen)

### Bathroom and Toilet.

The North Flat has a bathroom with a shower, bath, toilet and wash basin in it. The bathroom can be locked from the inside for your own privacy but can also be accessed by the staff from the outside, but only in an emergency.



### Social Areas.

The North Flat has a large living/dining room where you can sit and relax. The living room has a corner sofa, storage unit, dining table and chairs and a wide screen television and DVD player.







In addition, the flat has a play room, which has with two communal computers with internet access (the computers have a filter system to prevent access to inappropriate material) sofas and bean bags to relax on, and a pool table.



### Mornings/Bedtimes

When you become a resident in the North Flat you will be given a time to get up and a time go to bed depending on your age. These times are agreed with you so that you have time to have a shower and get ready. If you need more or less sleep, then this can be discussed and negotiated with your key worker.

## Mealtimes

The North Flat has a kitchen where the staff help you to cook your meals. You will be involved in the planning of the weekly menu and if you are mature enough, you can help cook the meals too. After each meal you will be encouraged to clear away your plate and help wash up. This is to help you become more independent. You will be encouraged to eat a wide variety of foods but you will not be forced to eat anything that you do not like.



### A typical day in the North Flat

- Get up between 7.30– 8am on a school morning. You can use an alarm or the staff will flash the light when they enter the room and then gently tap you on the shoulder to let you know it is time to get up
- If you ‘wet the bed’ it is not a problem, staff will help you to change your bedding whilst you have a bath or shower and get ready for school
- Go into the kitchen and get your breakfast, before taking it into the lounge/dining room to eat
- Get ready for school, the staff will remind you to take your PE kit, swimming things, homework etc to school
- If you go to school, the staff will escort you to school
- If you go to college you can go on your own
- There will usually be a member of staff in either Dickson House or the North Flat throughout the day in case you are ill or if you need to attend a doctors or dentist appointment – the staff will accompany you to all of your appointments if you wish.
- When you return from school or college it is time to get changed out of your uniform, do any homework that needs doing and sort out your laundry (the staff will help)
- If you are hungry or thirsty you can help yourself to fresh fruit or drinks which are always available
- It will then be teatime where you will be encouraged to help set the table and join everyone for tea. After tea you will be encouraged to help tidy away.

- It is then time for the evening's activities. You may want to play with your friends, go to the shops, attend local clubs such as scouts or football, watch a DVD or chat to the staff.
- If you want to develop your independence skills then you can practice your road safety, laundry, ironing or baking skills with staff assistance.
- You may also want to complete your targets which will help you to develop your independence skills
- If you are old and mature enough and have passed your road safety, you can go out alone, but you will be given a time that you must be back for, if you are late, you may be grounded or have to come in earlier the following night.
- When you have finished your activities, it will be supper time. You will be encouraged to prepare and clear away your own supper although the staff will be there to help if you need it
- It will then be time to get ready for bed. You may want a bath or a shower, the choice is yours.
- When you go to bed the staff complete any paperwork and get things ready for the following day
- One staff sleeps in and depending on numbers, we might have a waking night staff too.
- The waking night staff and/ or sleep-in staff are there to help you if you have any problems throughout the night. The staff are there to make sure that you are ok.
- Everyone gets up in the morning and the routine starts again.

## Leisure Facilities

At Doncaster Deaf Trust we have a wide range of leisure activities to keep you occupied. We have in-door and out-door courts, football pitches and tennis courts. Young people are encouraged to embrace exercise and keep active. Within walking distance, we also have a leisure complex which includes Doncaster Dome, the Vue cinema, bowling, restaurants and Asda. Doncaster Town centre is also within walking distance or a short bus journey away so residents are encouraged to access the community and enjoy a varied social life.



## Communication

The North Flat has a range of different methods to help you stay in touch with your family/friends/social worker or staff. They have a phone, a mobile phone to send and receive messages and a computer to email and to

participate in video calls. All staff are trained to communicate using British Sign Language. Staff have either achieved, or are working towards their level 2 in BSL.

### House Meetings

All young people have the right to be heard and express their opinions. House meetings are held weekly to discuss any problems, achievements, activities, menus and/or house rules. You can participate as much or as little as you like, it is up to you.

Every month we have a fire practice. This is so you know what to do in a fire. This is discussed in the meetings.

### The staff team

The North Flat has an experienced staff team who work in both Dickson House and the North Flat. The team has a Care Manager, a deputy Manager, two shift leaders and five residential care workers. All the staff who work in the house are qualified to work with you. The team are a friendly group of people and have chosen to work in care; they do this job because they find it rewarding. The team includes:

## THE STAFF TEAM

**Kate – Care Manager**



**Maria – Deputy Manager**



**Donna D and Donna E - Shift Leaders**



## CARE STAFF

**Martin**



**Zoe**



**Paul**



**Julie**



**Teresa**



The staff who work here have been chosen very carefully. They have been assessed to make sure that they have the right skills and knowledge to work with young people. They have also been trained in child protection and BSL so they know how to care for you properly.

The staff team work different shifts to make sure that there is always enough staff to care for you and the other young people who live in both the North Flat and Dickson House. We can provide care for 24 hours a day, 52 weeks a year, depending on who is living in Dickson house or the North flat. There are usually two staff who work every morning and another two who work in the evening, but it depends on the needs of the young people. Throughout the night, there are sleeping-in staff (or waking night staff if required) who will look after you, if you are ill, or cannot sleep.

If you have any worries or concerns, then you can talk to the staff in confidence. Sometimes the staff need to discuss your problems with the care manager as she is the person who deals with child protection. If you are in any harm or danger, then the staff will follow procedures to make sure that you are ok. The staff are here to help and protect you and they would not be



doing their job properly if they did not report serious things. All staff are trained in child protection.

If you feel that you need to talk to someone outside the home then you can talk to the 'responsible person' of the home or we can organise for you to see an independent advocate. Some children already have an advocate from their home area but if you need an advocate here in Doncaster, then you can contact Doncaster Council who has a team of 'children's rights officers' who would be more than happy to help.

Their contact details are:

The Advocacy Team,  
Centre for Excellence, Mary Woollett Centre,  
Danum Road,  
Doncaster,  
DN4 5HF.

Telephone: 01302 736100

Email: [AdvocacyService@doncaster.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:AdvocacyService@doncaster.gcsx.gov.uk)

You can also contact NYAS (National youth advocacy service):

Telephone: 0151 649 8700

Email: [help@nyas.net](mailto:help@nyas.net)

Website: [www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net)

There is also a Children's Commissioner for England who is called Dame Rachel De Souza. She has a legal duty to promote and protect the rights of children and young people in England, especially those living away from home, in or leaving care or those receiving social care services. Rachel is

supported by a small team of people at The Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) who support her in her role.



If you would like to contact The Office of the Children's Rights Commissioner then their contact details are as follows:

The Office of the Children's Commissioner,  
Sanctuary Buildings,  
20 Great Smith Street,  
London, SW1P 3BT  
Tel: 02077838330  
Email: [info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

### Key workers

When you arrive at the North Flat you will be given a key worker. It is a key workers job to provide guidance and support to you and to make sure that you are ok. They will talk to your family/social worker and teacher and then put all the information that they have gathered into your 'placement plan'. A placement plan is a document for staff to follow which explains everything about you; it explains how you need looking after and if you have any medical issues. This document is locked away in the staff office so only

those who need to see it, can. Key workers will keep in touch with your family/social workers to maintain contact and help make your stay with us more relaxing and enjoyable. You can request to change your key worker at any time, it is not a problem.

### Action plans and target setting

When you come to the North Flat, your key worker and the care manager will assess your independent skills and then an action plan and targets will be implemented for you to improve these skills. The targets will help you to improve and learn new social and independent skills. Targets are changed every half term and you will be set one or two targets at a time. Examples of some of the targets are:

- Washing
- Ironing
- Cooking
- Money management
- Personal hygiene
- Relationships with staff and peers
- Time management
- Road safety
- Preparing and catching buses/trains

Road safety is a very important target, and you will not be allowed out without staff until you can show that you know how to cross road's safety and behave carefully and sensibly in the community.

## Medical Support

When you live in the North Flat you will be registered with the local dentist, doctors and opticians (unless stated otherwise). The staff will make sure that you have regular check-ups to make sure that you are ok.

We have access to a school nurse and an audiologist on site that can monitor your health needs. Doncaster A&E is also near by. We have input from the York Deaf and Family Service (CAMHS) who provide advice and support to deaf children and their families with emotional and behavioural problems.

## Money

In the North Flat we have a banking system where you can put your money 'in' and 'take it out'. Your money will be locked away in a money tin, in a safe, in the staff office and every time that you want to put money in or take it out, you and the staff will sign a money record sheet. This will help you to learn how to look after your money and budget.



Your parents or carers may provide you with money or if you have a social worker, they may provide you with some money too. You do not need to 'borrow' money from anyone, talk to the staff if you have any problems. The

staff can also help you to open up bank accounts or help you with your benefits; all you need to do is ask.

### Rules

Every home has rules and the North Flat is no different. Rules make sure that you are safe, well looked after and everyone knows what is expected of them. The staff will explain the rules to you and will explain why they are important. If you feel that a rule is unfair or unreasonable then talk to the staff, we will listen to your views and take them seriously.

Most of the rules that we have are about safety. This includes no drinking alcohol or smoking in the North Flat. Other rules are about behaviour and what is 'allowed' and 'not allowed'. If your behaviour could lead to you hurting yourself or others then the staff may need to 'hold' you to protect you and those around you. This will be done using the minimum force and for as short as time as possible. Most staffs are trained to 'hold' you in a positive and safe way.

### Rewarding good behaviour

In the north flat, we have a reward system which promotes positive behaviours. We focus on the positives and minimize the negatives. If you are well behaved and work on your targets, you will get extra rewards and treats. Occasionally though, we may still need to use sanctions to help you learn when your behaviour is not acceptable. This may mean missing an activity or being grounded for a set period of time. You will be given an opportunity to discuss your sanction and behaviour with the staff and write a comment in the sanctions book to say how you felt about the whole process.

## Relationships

Bullying, racism, theft, abusive language, and aggressive behaviour should not, and will not, be put up with in the North Flat. There are policies in place to deal with this.

Everyone needs to be respectful and nice to each other; here are a few tips to make sure that you are being nice to everyone:

- Stay calm, if someone annoys you walk away and tell the staff
- Think about things from the other persons point of view as well
- Talk to the staff about how to deal with issues or problems with another resident
- If you are being bullied, ALWAYS report it
- If you see someone else being bullied, ALWAYS report it
- If you see anyone being racist or disrespectful, ALWAYS report it
- Talk about your feelings, it usually helps

## Code of conduct

We will encourage you to have consideration, concern and respect for others. We expect you to have high standards of personal behaviour and self discipline and to accept the responsibility for your own actions whilst living in the North Flat and when out in the community. You need to be aware socially and be able to show acceptable behaviour. This includes building relationships with other young people and the staff and also managing your aggression.



Bullying is not allowed and you are encouraged to report any incidents of this to us. We will listen to what you have to say and will take action to stop all forms of bullying. The behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy are strong features of the North Flat and any negative behaviour's will be dealt with accordingly.



### Complaints

We want you to enjoy your living in the North Flat and we want your family to feel comfortable leaving you here with us. We are keen to hear about anything that you feel is not working well so that we can sort it out. The North Flat and Dickson House have a written complaints procedure which explains how to make a complaint if you feel that your concerns are not

being dealt with. If you or your family is concerned about anything, the first step is to tell someone in the North Flat that you feel comfortable talking to.

This could be:

- Your key worker
- Any member of staff
- The care manager

Or you could talk to someone outside the home such as:

- Your teacher
- Your social worker
- The responsible person
- Ofsted (the people who inspect us)
- The Office of the Children's Commissioner
- An advocate

You could also discuss your concerns in the house meetings or write your complaint in the complaints book, whatever you decide to do, it is up to you. If you feel that you need to make a more formal complaint then the trust has a complaints policy which states they must respond to any written complaints within 28 days. Ask your key worker or the staff if you need any more help or information about this.

We hope this booklet helps, if you have any further questions or queries then our contact details are listed as follows:



North Flat  
Doncaster Deaf Trust  
Doncaster, DN2 6AY  
Tel 01302 386734

Responsible Individual  
Alexis Johnson - Executive Principal  
Doncaster Deaf Trust  
Leger way, DN2 6AY  
Email: [ajohnson@ddt-deaf.org.uk](mailto:ajohnson@ddt-deaf.org.uk)

Registered Care Manager  
Mrs Kate Warner BA Hons, NVQ 4, CMI 7  
Doncaster Deaf Trust  
Ledger way, DN2 6AY  
Tel: 01302 386747  
Email [kwerner@ddt-deaf.org.uk](mailto:kwerner@ddt-deaf.org.uk)

Type Talk  
18001

NSPCC

Child protection

Textphone: 0800 056 0566

Email: [help@nspcc.org.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.org.uk)

Childline

Freepost NATN1111

London, E1 6BR

Tel: 0800 1111

Website [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

NYAS – National Youth Advocacy Service

Email: [help@nyas.net](mailto:help@nyas.net)

Website: [www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net)

The Advocacy Team,

Centre for Excellence, Mary Woollett Centre,

Danum Road,

Doncaster,

DN4 5HF.

Telephone: 01302 736100

Email: [AdvocacyService@doncaster.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:AdvocacyService@doncaster.gcsx.gov.uk)

The Office of the Children’s Commissioner,  
Sanctuary Buildings,  
20 Great Smith Street,  
London, SW1P 3BT  
Tel: 02077838330

Email: [info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester, M1 2WD  
0300 123 1231 General enquiries  
0300123 4666 Complaints  
0161 618 8524 Text phone/ minicom  
Email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Doncaster Deaf Trust  
Ledger way  
Doncaster, DN2 6AY  
Tel 01302 386700  
Website: [www.deaf-trust.com](http://www.deaf-trust.com)  
Registered charity number: 1088060

(Reviewed and updated in November 2022 by Kate Warner. Next review date November 2023)