

# DICKSON HOUSE



# CHILDREN'S GUIDE

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

(Ofsted registration number: SC035241)

#### **What is Dickson House?**

Dickson house is a children's home that provides care for young people who are being educated at Doncaster School for the Deaf or Communication Specialist College, Doncaster. Placements can be either Monday to Friday, term time only, or 52 weeks a year, depending on what it right for you. Dickson house has a friendly staff team who are there to look after you and make your stay as enjoyable as possible.

#### What is in Dickson House?

#### Bedrooms:

When you come to Dickson house you will have your own bedroom. Each bedroom has its own bed, wardrobe, 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.

You can also bring a television, games console or music system for your bedroom. They will need to be tested to make sure they are safe to use (PAT tested) but once they are, you can keep them in your room. You will be issued with your own bedroom key so your belongings will be safe.

All bedrooms have smoke alarms in them. There is also a red flashing light system in Dickson house which flashes if the smoke alarms are activated. The smoke alarms are very sensitive so aerosols must only be used in the house bathroom. Staffs are always there to help should the building need to be evacuated.









#### **Room Access**

Your bedroom is your own personal space; however, sometimes the staff may need to enter. When staff 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 following situations:

- To wake you up in the morning
- To check that you are ok
- 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
- 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 will be told the reasons why and you can be there too)

## Bathroom and Toilet.

Dickson house has a bathroom with a shower, bath, toilet and sink in it. It also has a separate toilet as well. All bathrooms and toilets can be locked from the inside for your privacy but can also be accessed by the staff from the outside, but only in an emergency. Mornings and evenings can be very

busy, so a timetable is agreed with all the children so that everyone has an equal amount of time in the bathroom.



## **Social Areas**

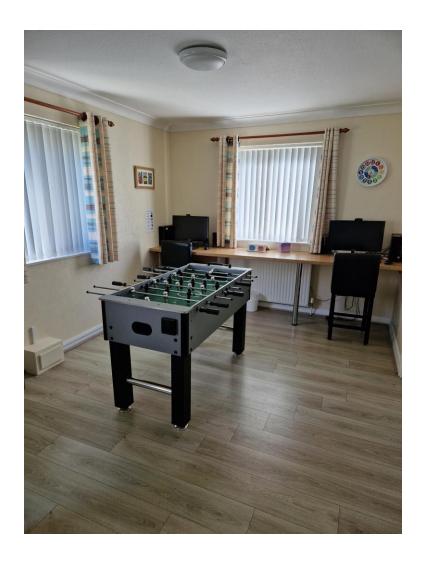
Dickson House has a large living room where you can sit and relax. The living room has reclining settees, coffee tables and a storage unit where books and games are stored. It also has a wide screen television and another smaller television, where you can play on the xbox or wii.



## Games room

Dickson house has a separate games room which has two computers with internet access on them (the computers have a filter system to prevent you from looking at inappropriate material which keeps you safe from harm).

The room also has lots of board games and arts and crafts to keep you busy, and a football table to play table football with your friends.



## Mornings/Bedtimes

When you become a resident in Dickson house 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**

Dickson house has a modern kitchen where your meals are prepared and cooked. Everyone in the house helps to contribute to the planning of the weekly menu and if you are old 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.







Meal times are an important part of the day. Breakfast is served in dickson house and throughout the week, lunch is served in school. During the evenings, we usually all sit together for our evening meals so that we can catch up on the days events. It is a great opprtunity to talk to everyone in a BSL environment.

Before or after tea, the dining room table is also used for playing games, house meetings, doing arts and crafts or completing your homework (this can also be done in your bedroom or games room), the choice is yours!



## A typical day in Dickson House

- Get up between 7 8am on a school morning (you can have a lie in on a weekend) 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.
- Come downstairs and have your breakfast.
- Get ready for school, the staff will remind you to take your PE kits and homework 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, but this is risk assessed first.
- There will usually be a member of staff in Dickson house 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 your appointments if you want them to.
- 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 film or chat to your friends and 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 enough, have been risk assessed and have passed your road safety, you can go out alone, but you will be given a time that you must be back for.
- 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
- We have 2 staff that sleep in each night. We sometimes have 'waking night staff but this depends on the needs of everyone.
- The 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.

#### Weekends and holidays in Dickson House

Weekends and holidays are very similar to the evenings although they give you more of an opportunity to relax and participate in activities that may be further afield. Some of the places that we like to visit are country parks, swimming, bowling, cinema, the gym and restaurants. If you have hobbies or interests, then tell us and we can arrange to take you there. If you want to go to a place of worship or club, then the staff will accompany you.

Weekends and holidays also provide an opportunity for your family and friends to visit you here, or for the staff to take you on home visits. These will be arranged with your parents/carers or social workers if necessary.

#### 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 young people are encouraged to access the community and enjoy a varied social life.



#### Communication

Dickson house has a range of different methods to help you stay in touch with your family/friends/social worker or staff. They have a telephones, mobiles and computers which you can use to email or participate in face-to-face meetings. All staff are trained to communicate using British Sign Language. Staff have either achieved or are working towards their level 2 in BSL as a minimum.

## The staff team

Dickson house has an experienced staff team who work within the home. The team has a Care Manager, a Deputy Manager, two shift leaders, and four residential care workers. All the staff who work within 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 Paul - Deputy Manager





Donna D, and Donna E - Shift Leaders





**CARE STAFF** 

Zoe

Julie





Teresa



The staff team work different shifts to make sure that there is always enough staff to care for you and the other young people. We can cover the house 24 hours a day, 52 weeks a year. There are usually at least two staff who work every morning and another two who work in the evening although this is increased or decreased depending on the needs and numbers of the young people present. Throughout the night there is either a sleeping-in staff and a waking night staff, or two sleeping in staff, again, this depends on the needs of the young people present. When there is no waking night staff, we use an alarm system to let the staff know that you have come out of your bedroom. The staff are there to look after you throughout the night if you are ill or cannot sleep. This is risk assessed and is safe.

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.

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 at home, or here, 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

Colonnades House,

Duke Street, Doncaster, DN1 1ER

Tel: 01302 735540

Email: AdvocacyService@doncaster.gov.uk

Or you can contact NYAS (National youth advocacy service):

Telephone: 0808 8081001

Whatapp: 07494788875

Text: text NYAS to 85258

Email: help@nyas.net

Website: <u>www.nyas.net</u>

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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, 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@childrenscommisioner.gsi.gov.uk

## Key workers

When you arrive at Dickson house 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 also 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 settings

When you come to Dickson house, your key worker 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 roads safety and behave carefully and sensibly in the community.

#### **Medical Support**

When you live in Dickson house 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 nursing team, and we have an Audiologist on site that can monitor your audiology needs. We also have a Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist and Speech and Language team. Doncaster A&E is also nearby. We also 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.

#### <u>Money</u>

In Dickson house we have a banking system where you can put your money 'in' and 'take it out'. Your money will be locked away 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.

#### **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, attainments or house rules. You can participate as much or as little as you like, it is up to you.

#### Fire Practices

Every month we have a fire practice. This is so you know what to do in a fire and where the exits are.



### Rules

Every home has rules and Dickson house 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 Dickson house. 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 Dickson house we have a reward system which promotes positive behaviours. We focus on the positives and try to 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 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, sexual harassment, abusive language, and aggressive behaviour should not, and will not, be put up with at Dickson house. There are policies in place to deal with this. Everyone needs to respect and be 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 bulled, 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 Dickson house 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 to us. We will listen to what you have to say and will take action to stop it.

### **Complaints**

We want you to enjoy your time at Dickson house 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. This can be done in a number of different ways. You can talk to your keyworker, write down your complaint in the complaints book, raise it at house meetings or post your thoughts and feelings in our comments box. Whichever method works best for you is ok with us. The staff are there to support you, whatever you decide.

You could also talk to the following people who can offer you support and advice if you do not want to write your complaint down:

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

If you feel that you need to make a more formal complaint, then the Trust has a complaints policy which states that they must respond to any written complaints as soon as possible. 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 here:

Dickson House

Doncaster Deaf Trust

Leger way

DN2 6AY

01302 386700

Dickson house email: dicksonhouse@ddt-deaf.org.uk

Care Manager

Mrs Kate Warner BA Hons, NVQ 4, CMI 5 & 7

Email <a href="mailto:kwarner@ddt-deaf.org.uk">kwarner@ddt-deaf.org.uk</a>

Responsible Individual
Alexis Johnson – CEO
Doncaster Deaf Trust
Leger way
DN2 6AY

Email: ajohnson@ddt-deaf.org.uk

**NSPCC** 

Textphone: 0800 056 0566

Email: help@nspcc.org.org.uk

Childline

Freepost NATN1111

London

E1 6BR

Tel: 0800 1111

Website www.childline.org.uk

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

**Store Street** 

Manchester

M1 2WD

0300 123 1231 General enquiries

0161 618 8524 Text phone/ minicom

Email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

NYAS - National Youth Advocacy Service

Address: Tower House, 1 Tower Road

Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 1FF

Telephone: 0808 8081001

Email: help@nyas.net

Website: www.nyas.net

The Office of the Children's Commissioner,

Sanctuary Buildings,

20 Great Smith Street,

London,

SW1P 3BT

Tel: 02077838330

Email: info.request@childrenscommisioner.gsi.gov.uk

The Advocacy Team, Colonnades House,

Duke Street,

Doncaster,

DN1 1ER

Tel: 01302 735540

Email: AdvocacyService@doncaster.gov.uk

**Doncaster Deaf Trust** 

Ledger way

Doncaster

DN2 6AY

Tel 01302 386700

Website: www.deaf-trust.com

Registered charity number: 1088060

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