

The Sunderland Support Guide 2010



**Information for parents/carers of
disabled children and young people**


Sunderland
City Council



Introduction

This guide has been designed in order to assist parents/carers of disabled children and young people to easily find and access information, support or services that are available to them.

Wherever appropriate, disabled children and young people should be able to use social and leisure activities and support services on the same basis as any other child in Sunderland. Sometimes disabled children and young people may need additional support and where ever possible, this is provided directly through the facility they wish to use, rather than through a separate assessment or using a more specialist service. It is often worth asking what help can be provided for your disabled child or young person.

A number of disabled children and young people have more complex needs and require a range of specialist support to help them live at home with their families and participate in their local communities.

How to use this guide

The guide has been produced in three clear sections:

Information and Support

Universal Services

Specialist Services

Each of the three sections has been colour coded in order to make the guide more user-friendly.

This is to enable you to have a clearer idea of the pathways into the relevant services which will support you and your family.

Where teams and services offer both universal and specialist support, you will find these located in the universal section.

Information and Support



Sunderland Families Information Service

The Families Information Service (FIS) is for mothers, fathers and carers. It's for all families; whether you are expecting your first child or a parent of a teenager. It can provide information about all aspects of family life and also offer help, advice or signposting to other organisations.

The range of information on offer includes:

- childcare and help available to pay for it
- schools and education
- health services
- sport and leisure activities
- family support.

In addition the service can provide further support with:

- filling in an application form to make a preference for a primary or secondary school place
- finding childcare when there are particular difficulties
- finding organisations and services for families.

The service can be contacted by telephone on: 0191 520 5505, by email: fis@sunderland.gov.uk or by calling in at a local Children's Centre. Alternatively visit www.familiesinfoservice.com

Family and Parenting Team

All mothers, fathers, grandparents and carers of children and young people aged -19 are entitled to free parenting support.

To find out more about the programmes and support available contact the Family and Parenting Team by telephone on 0191 443 2908 or Email: familyparentingteam@sunderland.gov.uk or visit the Parenting Section at www.familiesinfoservice.com

Sunderland Disabled Children Website

The Sunderland website for children and young people who are disabled, have special educational needs or a long term health condition can be found at www.sundc.org.uk The site is designed to provide information for families in one place and includes:

- local and national information
- young people's section
- what's on calendar
- feedback form
- news
- useful links.

Network for Disabled Children

The benefits to families of joining the Network include having a chance to contribute to the development of services, and receiving email notifications of events and other local information that may be of interest.

By joining the Network, families help agencies to have a more complete picture of the needs of disabled children and young people in Sunderland, which helps planning services for the future.

Members of the Network also receive a Max Card which offers the family free or reduced price entry to over 50 leisure and heritage attractions across the North East.

More information is available from: Services for Disabled Children, Gilpin House, Blind Lane, Houghton le Spring DH4 5HX. Telephone: 0191 566 2190, Fax: 0191 566 2191 Email: child.disability@sunderland.gov.uk

Sunderland Carers' Centre

The Carers' Centre offers confidential information, advice and support to carers, including support at meetings with social workers, consultants, psychiatrists etc. The Centre also runs support groups (including ones specifically for parent carers of disabled children and young people) and courses on carer-related subjects, as well as organising social activities for carers, producing a monthly information sheet and a newsletter every two months.

Carers can contact the Centre directly or can be referred by another agency with their permission. A leaflet entitled 'Do you look after a family member who is ill, disabled or frail?' outlines the service, while a comprehensive Information Pack with everything you need to know about services on offer is also available.

For more information contact: Sunderland Carers' Centre, 12 Toward Road, Sunderland SR1 2QF. Telephone: 0191 567 3232, Fax: 0191 567 8536. Email: info@sunderlandcarers.co.uk

Sunderland, Washington and Coalfields Parent Carer Council

Sunderland, Washington and Coalfield Parent Carer Council are a group of parents and carers working together to create change, so all our children and young people can learn, make friends, have a voice and be part of everyday community and school life.

Parents, carers and grandparents of any child under the age of 18 who has any disability are very welcome to come to the meetings. They meet once a month at either Columbia Grange School in Washington or the Awards Centre, Hylton Road, Sunderland between 10am and 12 Noon on a Friday.

Dates for future meetings and further information can be obtained from the Administrator of the Group Paula Lockhart on 0191 417 5322 or at paula.office@swcpcc.org.uk

Contact a Family

Contact a Family is a national charity aimed at helping families who care for children and young people with any disability or special need. There is a regional office in the North East which offers a range of services including signposting to services and local/national support groups; providing information about specific conditions and family members and producing a wide range of publications and fact sheets on a variety of issues affecting families including regional newsletters and email bulletins. The North East branch has committed, friendly staff who families can contact directly.

**For more information contact:
Contact a Family (North East),
Dene Centre, Castle Farm Road,
Gosforth, Newcastle NE3 1PH.
Telephone: 0191 213 6300,
Fax: 0191 213 6300 Email:
northeast.office@cafamily.org.uk**

**The national website can be
found at: www.cafamily.org.uk**

**The local pages of this
website can be found at:
www.cafamily.org.uk/northeast**

Disability North

Disability North offers open access via phone, email, drop-in or appointments to information, advice and support on every aspect of disability, including benefit claims and appeals, mobility and access, rights to services, holidays and leisure, housing and adaptations, education and employment.

There is also the opportunity to talk over the buying of expensive equipment before making any decision, and possibly trying it out first.

Disability North can also provide access audits and disability training to other organisations and agencies.

**For more information contact:
Disability North, Dene Centre,
Castle Farm Road, Gosforth,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PH.
Telephone: 0191 284 0480,
Fax: 0191 213 0910, Email:
reception@disabilitynorth.org.uk
or visit the website:
www.disabilitynorth.org.uk**

NHS Direct

**Telephone: 0845 46 47
(24 hour local rate help line)**

This is a 24 hour confidential helpline staffed by trained health information advisors and qualified nurses. They can offer advice on what to do if you are feeling ill, if you have health concerns for you and your family, and information about local health and social care services, self help and support organisations.

**Three NHS Trusts provide
healthcare in Sunderland:**

- City Hospitals NHS Trust
- Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust
- Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust.

Each provides a range of services for disabled children and young people and their families.

City Hospital NHS Trust

City Hospitals NHS Trust aims to deliver a first class, comprehensive health care service to meet the needs of the local population. The Trust provides mainly acute services, but also provides a range of community based services. City Hospitals NHS Trust provides a number of services for disabled children and young people. Some of the services they provide are listed within this document.

**Further information can be found
at: www.sunderland.nhs.uk/chs
or www.sunderland.nhs.uk**

Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust (TPCT)

The Sunderland TPCT provides a range of primary healthcare services for patients across the city. Sunderland TPCT is the organisation which manages the delivery of front-line patient services through GPs and nurses at local surgeries, dentists, opticians and pharmacists throughout the city.

Some of the services they provide are listed within this document.

For information about services and treatment call:

- **The Patient Advice Liaison Service: 0800 731 2326**
- **Answers: 0191 510 3133**
- **Sunderland TPCT: 0191 529 7000 (for general enquiries) or visit the website at: www.sotw.nhs.uk**

Answers Health Information

Answers are a friendly and accessible information resource which supports the needs of young people with any issues. Youth workers are available to offer information and signposting advice to young people between the ages of 13-19 and NHS staff are available at specific times to offer family planning advice and the Shout Card services.

For more information or to check the session times for each of the services mentioned above contact:

**Answers, 21 Holmside, City Centre, Sunderland SR1 3JE.
Telephone: 0191 510 3133,
Fax: 0191 510 1186.**

Mental Health Matters Helpline

This is an out-of-hours confidential emotional support and information service, provided by trained and experienced telephone helpline workers. You do not have to have a mental health problem to use this helpline. They provide information on many local and national services specific to mental health and other issues. People contact the helpline about many different issues such as bereavement, relationship problems, family problems, loneliness/isolation, stress and carer's issues.

The helpline is open from 5pm to 9am Monday to Friday, and 24 hours at weekends and public holidays. Telephone: 0800 013 0626.

Sunderland Counselling Service

This service offers counselling and support to people who are experiencing emotional or mental trauma as a result of bereavement or loss. Specially trained practitioners provide individual counselling and group support. Counselling is also available for women who have been raped or sexually abused. There is also a palliative care service for people with life-limiting/life threatening illnesses and their family or carers.

**The service can be contacted at: Sunderland Counselling Service, 37 West Sunnyside, Sunderland SR1 1BU.
Telephone: 0191 514 7007.**

The counselling service for children and young people is part of **Community CAMHS** which is detailed on page 40.

Financial help

Benefits

Many families with disabled children or young people are entitled to claim benefits. It is important to get good advice about which benefits to claim, and to get support in filling out the application forms. Ask for a complete benefits check to make sure you are not missing out on anything. Information and advice is available from a qualified Benefits Advisor.

Website at: www.dwp.gov.uk

Families not currently in receipt of benefits can get advice from the Benefits Advice line on 0800 882 200.

Families already in receipt of benefits but who want further help need to contact the Benefits Enquiry line on 0845 608 8637.

Sunderland City Council

Welfare Rights Service

The Welfare Rights Service can provide specialist help and advice about:

- benefits, including assisting with appeals and representation at tribunals
- employment rights, including assisting with and representation at employment appeals, where an individual is unable to access support through Trade Union membership or membership of a Professional Association. Sunderland Welfare Rights Service will not be able to assist in employment matters regarding employees of Sunderland City Council
- debts
- housing rights.

For further information contact: Sunderland Welfare Rights Service. Telephone: 0191 553 5922 or email welfare.rights@sunderland.gov.uk

Further information is available on the website: www.sunderland.gov.uk/advice

Housing and Council Tax Benefit

Housing Benefit is help towards rent. Council Tax Benefit is help towards Council Tax. You can claim these benefits if you are responsible for paying rent or Council Tax and you have a low income. The amount of benefit you are entitled to will depend on your household income and circumstances.

We can:

- give you an estimate
- fill in a form for you (or post one)
- arrange a home visit
- collect evidence to support your claim.

You can visit any Customer Service Centre to fill in a form and see if you qualify. Alternatively, you can access our website at **www.sunderland.gov.uk/rentandcounciltaxhelp** where you can download a claim form and find out what you are entitled to by using the on-line benefits calculator.

You do not need to fill in our form if you have already applied for Pension Credit, Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance (income-related) and have filled in a Housing and Council Tax Benefit form at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Getting more information

There are a number of leaflets which provide more details about the way Housing and Council Tax Benefit is worked out and paid. These leaflets are available at Customer Service Centres or can be viewed on the website at **www.sunderland.gov.uk/benefits-leaflets**. Please contact the Technical Team on 0191 561 5055 if you require a copy in large print, Braille, audio and other languages.

New claim enquiry line – Freephone – 0800 633 5853 Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm or access the 24-hour answer phone outside of these hours.

For all other enquiries please telephone 0191 520 5502 Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm. E-mail: benefits@sunderland.gov.uk

General

Family Fund

This organisation gives financial help to families with a severely disabled child or young person, related to the child's care needs, for instance:

- holidays or leisure activities so everyone can have a break
- a washing machine or tumble drier because of constant bedwetting or dirty clothes
- bedding and clothing to cover the expense of wear and tear because of the child's disability
- driving lessons for the child's main carer if there is a car available.

The Fund can help if the child's condition or disability is regarded as severe under its guidelines, and if a family's income is within certain limits. Families with a disabled child or young person can make one application a year.

Families can contact the Fund direct for an application form. An application form can be downloaded from the website: www.familyfund.org.uk or requested in writing.

The Family Fund, 4 Alpha Court, Monks Cross Drive, York YO32 9WN. Telephone: 0845 130 4542 or 01904 621115, Fax: 01904 652625, Textphone 01904 658085 (for people with a hearing impairment) Email: info@familyfund.org.uk

Family Fund Extra

If you care for a disabled child or young person, Family Fund extra could make a difference to both you and your family. Become a member of Family Fund extra and you will benefit from receiving discounts on thousands of products and services from leading high street retailers and organisations.

For more information visit the website: www.familyfundextra.org.uk/Home.aspx

Help with health costs

You may be entitled to help with health costs including prescriptions, dental treatment, sight tests, glasses and contact lenses, necessary travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment, wigs and fabric support. More details about this can be found in leaflet HC11 available from the Health Literature Line on: 0845 850 1166.

You may be entitled to help with necessary travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment for your child if you are on a low income, or if you receive one of the following:

- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Working Families Tax Credit
- Disabled Person's Tax Credit.

Families on a low income should apply by completing form HC1, available from a Benefits Office or from the hospital. You may be entitled to full or limited help with travel costs for yourself and your child. If you are entitled to help, you will be issued with either a HC2 (full help) or HC3 (limited help) certificate. The cost of travel can then be claimed back, by showing this certificate at the hospital at the time of the appointment, and explaining that you would like to claim back the cost of the journey.

Families in receipt of the benefits/credits listed above should show proof of their entitlement, such as benefit or tax credit award notice at the hospital at the time of their appointment, and explain that they would like to claim back the cost of the journey.

For more information contact: NHS Business Services Authority on 0191 232 5371. Freephone Advice Line: 0800 055 6688.

Travel

Programme for Independent Travel (PIT)

The Programme for Independent Travel Training (PITT) is an exciting travel training scheme that assists students of all ages to travel independently. This can be walking, cycling, by bus, light railway (tube/metro), train, tram, ferry or even aeroplane.

Independent Travel Training programmes are offered for all students with a learning difficulty and/or disability who are studying in full-time education.

These programmes help to prepare students to travel independently either on evenings, weekends or after they have completed their education.

All of the training programmes are taught by fully trained and accredited staff who have undergone CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checks.

The programmes are flexible, considering each person's individual needs as well as the service provision in the area.

A dedicated travel training area has been developed and learning resource aids including booklets, CD's and DVD's have been made available.

For more information contact Marie Rooney Telephone: (0191) 643 8752 or Email: marie.rooney@northtyneside.gov.uk or visit the website www.traveltraining.org

Bridge Card

Nexus in partnership with bus operators and the 5 local authorities in Tyne and Wear have introduced the Bridge Card to help anyone who may need additional support whilst travelling.

If you have difficulty using public transport because of age, disability, illness, or you simply lack confidence, you can carry a Bridge Card. When you show the card to transport staff they will recognise that you may need extra help during your journey. You don't have to register for the scheme you just have to carry a card.

The Bridge Cards can be obtained from Nexus Travel Shops, day centres, libraries or local authorities.

Blue Badge Scheme

The Blue Badge Scheme provides a national arrangement of parking concessions for people with severe walking difficulties who travel either as drivers or passengers. The scheme also applies to registered blind people. It allows badge holders to park near their destination.

Badges need renewing every three years. You can get a badge on behalf of your child or young person if:

- they receive higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- they are registered blind
- they have a permanent and substantial disability which means they are unable to walk or have considerable difficulty in walking. In this case you may need to answer some questions to help the local authority determine your eligibility
- children must be over two years of age to qualify, as below this age they would not be expected to walk independently.

An information booklet entitled '**The Blue Badge Scheme**' (ref: T/INF/222) is also available from the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) **Telephone: 0300 123 1102. Email: dft@twoten.press.net**

For further information, an application pack or to renew a Blue Badge, please contact Customer Service Centre, P.O. Box 100, Civic Centre, Sunderland SR2 7DN. Telephone: 0191 520 5555. Email: bluebadge@sunderland.gov.uk

Nexus TaxiCard

TaxiCard offers you convenient and affordable transport to and from your home. TaxiCard is a smartcard which is the same size as a credit card which you will use to pay for part of your journeys by taxi. There are two opportunities to join the TaxiCard scheme – April and October.

You will pay be first £1.50 of any journey yourself, then the next £2.50 will be deducted from your card, then you will pay for the rest of the fare.

You will automatically qualify for the scheme if you receive any of the following:

- registered severely visually impaired or blind
- in receipt of the higher rate component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- in receipt of Attendance Allowance.

You will need to complete a TaxiCard application form.

These are available by calling the Nexus TaxiCard team on: 0191 203 3460, or by emailing: access@nexus.org.uk or writing to: TaxiCard Administration, Nexus, Nexus House, St James' Boulevard, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4AX.

Further information can be obtained from the Nexus website at: www.nexus.org.uk/wps/wcm/connect/Nexus/Bus/TaxiCard/

Concessionary Travel Passes

If you are disabled, live in Tyne and Wear and have a Concessionary Travel Pass, you can travel on buses in Tyne and Wear for free. To qualify for a Concessionary Travel Pass, your child has to be initially assessed by Children's Services. If your child is eligible for a Concessionary Pass you will be given a Confirmation of Eligibility form to allow you to obtain, via post, a pass from the Concessionary Travel Bureau at Nexus' Head Office.

To find out about eligibility criteria and what documentation you will need to bring with you, contact Services for Disabled Children on (0191) 566 2190.

For more information contact your Concessionary Travel Bureau at Nexus on: 0191 203 3434, pick up a leaflet at any Nexus Travelshop or visit the website at: www.nexus.org.uk/wps/wcm/connect/Nexus/Tickets/Concessionary

Metro journeys are not covered by the Concessionary Travel Pass. For metro journeys you would need to purchase an annual metro Gold Card which costs £12 per year.

People into Employment (PIE)

PIE is an independent, impartial and informal project that supports carers and ex-carers who want to return to work. Support is tailored to meet individual needs and can include training, vocational experience, voluntary work and employment.

Working in partnership with voluntary, statutory and private sector organisations, PIE can tap into city wide resources to help take those initial steps toward finding suitable employment.

Meetings can be arranged with PIE staff in your locality.

For more information, telephone 0191 514 6150 or visit the website at www.etec.org.uk/development/pie

Carers and Employment

Jobcentre Plus offers a number of programmes and services to help Jobseekers, unemployed people, particularly long-term unemployed people, people with disabilities and others who may need extra help in finding work.

If you are a carer and are considering a return to work, even if it's only on a part time basis, Jobcentre Plus can now offer a much wider range of help and support. Experienced advisers can provide assistance with jobsearch, identify training opportunities, offer advice on benefits and provide a "Better Off Calculation" to see how much better off you could be by taking a job. In some cases Jobcentre Plus could even pay for replacement care whilst you take part in an approved training activity.

If you would like to know more about the support available, please contact the Jobcentre Plus Care Partnership Manager on 0191 382 4192.

NHS Help Card

City Hospitals Sunderland (CHS) NHS Foundation Trust is the first trust in the country to pilot the NHS Help Card. The card has been developed to support people who feel they might need help or support.

The free card features a blank panel in which people can write down any special requirements. The card can be shown to NHS staff when needed. The card can also be used by anyone who has problems communicating and includes a tick list of different languages on the reverse of the card for those who cannot speak English.

For more information about the NHS Help Card contact: Patient Advice and Liaison Service (Pals) at CHS on 0800 587 6573.

Helplines

The following services are offered in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus:

Benefits Enquiry Line

A confidential telephone service for people with disabilities, their representatives and carers.

Use this number to obtain all claim forms. Open 8.30am-6.30pm Monday to Friday and 9am-1pm Saturday.

Telephone: 0800 88 22 00

Textphone: 0800 24 33 55

Disability Living Allowance Helpline

Advice on Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance claims. Open 7.30am-6.30pm Monday-Friday.

Telephone: 08457 12 34 56

Textphone: 08457 22 44 33

Carer's Allowance Unit

Offers advice and updates on Carer's Allowance claims and payments. Open 8.30am-5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am-4.30pm Friday.

Telephone: 0845 608 4321

Textphone: 0845 604 5312

Child Tax Credit

Child Tax Credit is a means tested allowance for parents and carers of children or young people who are still in full time education. Open 8am-8pm 7 days a week.

Telephone: 0845 300 3900

Textphone: 0845 300 3909

Vaccine Damage Payment

Offers advice and updates on Vaccine Damage Payment claims and payments. Open 8.30am-5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am-4.30pm Friday.

Telephone: 01772 89 99 44

Textphone: 0845 604 5312

Independent helplines

Contact a Family helpline.

Telephone: 0808 808 3555

Washington Citizen's Advice Bureau. Telephone 0191 416 6848

Easington & District Citizen's Advice Bureau. Telephone: 0191 586 2639

Monday 10am-3pm, Tuesday & Friday 10am-1pm, Thursday 10am-12noon.

SHARP. Telephone: 0191 385 6687

Covers Shiney Row, Houghton and Copt Hill areas.

Sunderland Advice Service.

Telephone: 0191 567 4649

Covers Red Hill, Castle, Southwick, Fulwell, St Peters, Millfield, Hendon, St Michaels, Doxford and Ryhope areas.

Outreach Welfare Rights Project

Telephone: 0191 514 2930

Covers the Ford, Pallion and Pennywell areas.

Disability Alliance Rights Advice Line. Telephone: 0207 247 8763

Libra Network

Libra is a network of local advice providers that work together to ensure you receive advice from the provider(s) best placed to help you. The Libra website holds details about all of the local advice providers involved: www.librasunderland.co.uk

Universal Services



Sunderland Children's Centres

Sunderland Children's Centres help to give children in the city the best possible start in life. They offer activities for children and parents and help and support with the practical issues in bringing up a family. At Children's Centres you can find out all you need to know about young children. The centres provide:

- play and learning activities for you and your child to enjoy together such as messy play, soft play, story time, busy bodies, time for rhyme, arts and crafts, toy and book libraries and toddler groups
- the chance to meet other parents, make friends and learn from each other
- help and support in times of difficulty
- family learning courses to develop skills and prepare parents and carers for work
- child and family health services, including advice on healthy eating, giving up smoking, breastfeeding groups and specialist health services for children

- affordable childcare available from 8am-6pm
- support to young families
- preparation for parenthood for prospective mothers and fathers, antenatal classes, advice on breastfeeding and stopping smoking
- volunteering opportunities.

There are currently 17 Children's Centres in Sunderland. They can provide support and help for disabled children and children with special educational needs as well as more specialist services such as Early Support and Portage as appropriate. More details of these services are available in the Specialist Services section.

If you would like more information or to find your nearest centre please ask your Health Visitor or contact: Families Information Service on 0191 520 5505 or visit www.sunderlandchildrenscentres.co.uk

Toy libraries

Toy libraries provide opportunities to borrow toys, books, games and equipment for parents/carers, schools and all children up to the age of 14 years. Toy Libraries also sell a variety of arts and crafts materials and safety equipment.

Toy Libraries give your child the chance to play and interact with other children within the Library setting, which helps you to spend quality time with your child in a fun and friendly environment.

To join your local Toy Library please contact your local Children's Centre.

Nursery provision

Support is available for families of disabled children up to 3 years old to access childcare.

**For more information or to find out what support might be available to you, please contact your Health Visitor or:
Project Officer, Commissioned Childcare Service, Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland, SR3 4EN
Telephone: 0191 553 5698,
Fax: 0191 553 5700.**

Inclusion Support Scheme

The Extended Services & Attendance Group offers a range of support to help disabled children to access private and voluntary childcare including childminders. Support includes funding for specialist equipment, additional staff and training.

**For more information contact: Inclusion & Equality Development Officer,
Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland SR3 4EN.
Telephone: 0191 553 5637,
Fax: 0191 553 5700.**

**Or; Inclusion & Integration Team Manager: Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland SR3 4EN.
Telephone: 0191 553 5641,
Fax: 0191 553 5700.**

Study Support

Study Support is learning activity outside the normal school day which children and young people take part in voluntarily. Study Support includes sporting, creative and curriculum based clubs and activities. These can take place before and after school, lunchtime, weekends and holiday periods. All schools in Sunderland offer Study Support activities.

**For further information please contact: Study Support Development Officer,
Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland, SR3 4EN. Telephone: 0191 561 5645.**

Sunderland Youth Development Group

Sunderland Youth Development Group works with voluntary sector providers across Sunderland to provide and facilitate informal educational opportunities, which enable young people from the ages of 13 to 25 to maximise their potential; to respond critically and creatively to their everyday experiences and to contribute to the cultural and political life of the city.

There are currently 10 youth clubs operating which directly supports young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. There is an open referral system and forms are available from the address below.

For more information please contact the Social Inclusion Co-ordinator, Sunderland Awards Centre, 270 Hylton Road, Sunderland SR4 7XJ. Telephone: 0191 561 7410 or Email angela.mills@sunderland.gov.uk

Connexions

Connexions offers young people support and advice around any issue to do with approaching adulthood. The Special Needs Team works with young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities between 13 and 25 years of age. They also carry out careers work in schools, attend young people's reviews from year 9 onwards, and assist in the transition process from school to post-school provision. They also liaise with parents and other professionals.

For more information contact: Connexions Sunderland, Special Needs Team, City Library and Arts Centre Building, First Floor, 30-32 Fawcett Street, Sunderland SR1 1RE. Telephone: 0191 443 2950, Fax 0191 443 2858.

Visit the national website at www.connexions.gov.uk

Visit the local website at www.connexions-tw.co.uk

Opportunities in Sunderland at 16 is an information pack containing information on all of the opportunities available to young people in Sunderland including opportunities at the City of Sunderland College and Special Schools in Sunderland.

Copies are available on the website: **www.sun1419.net**

More detailed information is available on a range of education services, events, facts and figures and policies and strategies at **www.sunderland.gov.uk**

Emergency Planning for parents/carers of disabled children and young people

This is a service that offers parent carers the opportunity of developing a plan which would provide cover when the carer experiences an emergency that stops them from being able to carry out their caring role. This would be a short term solution which would be until the emergency was over or a longer term solution could be arranged.

Any parent carer or person with responsibilities for a child or young person aged 0-18 who has a physical disability, learning disability or long-term illness can have an emergency plan.

Once the plan is accepted, parent carers will be issued with a credit card sized card to keep with them. In the event of an emergency, such as an accident where the carer is prevented from returning home, the card provides a 24 hour telephone contact point and a unique reference number. Calls are received by Sunderland Telecare Service who will then take appropriate action as detailed in the Emergency Plan.

Registration with the service is free of charge to all parents/carers of disabled children and young people.

For more information contact: Sunderland Carers Centre on 0191 567 3232 or Sunderland Telecare: 0191 566 2028.

Young Carer's Card Scheme

A young carer is a person aged between 4 and 18 who helps to look after someone in the family at home because they are disabled, have been ill for a long time, have a mental health problem or a problem with alcohol or drugs. They may care alone or as part of a family.

Frequently young carers may be late for school, unable to attend detention at short notice, or may need to keep their mobile phone switched on. At secondary school, young people come across lots of different teachers and it can be frustrating for them to have to keep repeating why they are late etc.

The young carer's card scheme is a partnership between Children's Services and Sunderland Carers' Centre and aims to make school life a little easier for young carers. Young carers can carry the card with them at school and show the card to teachers when they are having problems.

The card is issued for a fixed time period and is authorised by the Headteacher.

Information leaflets (which include an application form) are available within schools or by contacting Sunderland Carers' Centre on 0191 567 3232.

Parent Partnership Service

Parent Partnership can signpost parents to appropriate education services. Support can be offered to families with a child with Special Educational Needs (SEN) including:

- supporting parents of children with SEN in understanding the SEN Code of Practice
- offering information on schools, SEN agencies, national and local support groups
- supporting families through the special needs process

For more information, parents can contact: Parent Partnership Co-ordinator, Carley Hill Education Centre, Emsworth Road, Sunderland SR5 2QB. Telephone: 0191 553 5424.

The Attendance Team

(formerly known as the Inclusion and Attendance Team)

The team is responsible for supporting pupils and schools in maintaining good school attendance, supporting the assessment of pupils with special educational needs and for providing support to pupils, teachers, schools and families where individual or community issues act as a barrier to good attendance and learning. The team also supports schools, parents and pupils with child protection, behaviour, bullying, elective home education and pupil exclusion issues on behalf of the Local Authority. The majority of staff are based in schools.

The team also implement the legislation surrounding children working part-time while still at school and children taking part in performances.

For more information contact: The Attendance Team, Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland SR3 4EN. Telephone: 0191 561 5817, Fax: 0191 553 5633.

Additional support for children with challenging behaviour can be accessed through schools or the Educational Psychology Service.

General Paediatric Services

A team of consultant paediatricians and children's nurses provides secondary health care for children and young people. There are two children's wards and also a High Dependency Unit for children and young people who are very ill and need specialist nursing care.

Children and young people are usually referred by the GP, either for an outpatient appointment, or for inpatient care when the child is acutely unwell.

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (previously known as the Special Care Baby Unit) cares for babies born prematurely or who become ill at birth or in early life.

The Paediatric Accident and Emergency department assesses and treats children and young people with injuries. Children and young people who are unwell should be seen first by the GP, but may then be sent for a second opinion to the paediatric team at the hospital.

**For more information contact:
Paediatric & Neonatal
Departments, Sunderland
Royal Hospital, Kayll Road,
Sunderland SR4 7TP. Telephone:
0191 565 6256.**

Health Visiting Service

The Health Visiting Service comprises of health visitors, staff nurses and nursery nurses. Health visitors are experienced registered nurses who undergo advanced training and mainly work with families with young children. They work closely with social care, education and other health care professionals. Their aim is to improve the health and well being of individuals and communities, by helping people to improve their own health. The service is available to everyone.

Staff nurses are registered nurses who work with individuals and groups towards healthier lifestyles. nursery nurses are skilled in child care and development and work with families and groups under the direction of the health visitor. For further information please visit the Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust's website at:

www.sotw.nhs.uk

There is a specialist health visitor for children and young people with additional needs. See the Specialist Services section for more details.

School Nursing Service

The School Nursing service is provided to all children or young people from 4-18 years. The service includes:

- regular health needs assessment of the school age population
- school health screening and assessment
- health protection programmes such as immunisations and vaccination against infectious diseases
- health promotion sessions, monitoring and supporting vulnerable children and families
- providing drop-in sessions for children in school for any health issues
- advice and support for any child who develops health or learning problems.

All schools have a named nurse and health care assistant.

**For more information contact:
School Nurse Business Manager
Preventative Services,
Pemberton House, Colima
Avenue, Sunderland Enterprise
Park, Sunderland SR5 3XB.
Telephone: 0191 529 7308.**

Specialist Services



Sensory Support Team

The Sensory Support Team based within Health, Housing and Adult Services provides a support service to adults who have a diagnosed visual or hearing impairment. They have a responsibility for maintaining the Visual Impairment Register. Following an examination by a Consultant Ophthalmologist an individual may become included on the Register in either of the categories 'Blind' or 'Partially Sighted'.

The Team can also provide support to children and young people who have visual or hearing impairment.

Families can get more information by contacting: Sensory Support Team, Houghton Council Offices, The Broadway, Houghton le Spring DH4 4BB. Telephone: 0191 566 2330, Fax: 0191 553 6353. Textphone: 0191 553 6502.

When contacting please request Sensory Support Team.

Children's Sensory Team

The Children's Sensory Team work with children and young people from birth until the time they leave school. The team work with children and young people in their homes, nurseries and schools giving advice to parents and staff of the child's difficulties, encouraging development and how best to include the child in the education system. Children can only be referred to the team if they attend the Audiology or Ear, Nose and Throat department for hearing difficulties and/or a hospital orthoptic clinic for visual difficulties. Written permission is needed from the child's parents before a child is seen.

For more information contact: The Children's Sensory Team, c/o Sunningdale School, Shaftoe Road, Sunderland SR3 4HA.

For enquiries involving children with visual difficulties Telephone: 0191 553 5701, Fax: 0191 553 5705.

For enquiries involving children with hearing difficulties; Telephone: 0191 553 5706, Fax: (0191) 553 5705. Typetalk: 18002 0191553 5961.

Early Support

Early Support is a Government led initiative that supports the development of effective, well co-ordinated multi-agency support services for young disabled children and their families. This enables families to be partners and to have a say in how services are delivered.

Families of young children who live within the Sunderland area can ask any professional involved with their child, or staff at their local Children's Centre, if they wish to have a Family Service Plan meeting. At the meeting a support plan will be developed which will outline the professionals who can help to meet the family's needs.

Early Support also produced a range of parent information materials, including information about certain conditions as well as information about education, social care and health.

The materials are free of charge and are available from family health visitors, Sunderland Children's Centres, or directly from the Early Support website: www.earlysupport.org.uk

For more information please see your Health Visitor or contact: Specialist Health Visitor for Children and Young People with Additional Needs, Gilpin House, Houghton-le-Spring, DH4 5HX. Telephone: 0191 566 2190
or
Inclusion & Integration Team Manager, Extended Services & Attendance Group, Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland SR3 4EN. Telephone: 0191 553 5641.

Portage Service

Portage is a home visiting educational service for pre-school children with additional needs and their families. The aim of Portage is to support the development of a young child's play, communication and relationships in day-to-day life. The Portage home visitors come from a wide range of professional backgrounds including teachers and nursery nurses and are based in a variety of community settings including Sunningdale School, Children's Centres and Health Centres.

Any parent or professional working with the family can make a referral. All referrals are discussed by the multi-agency Early Years Intervention Panel, which meets monthly.

For more information contact: Portage Service, Sunningdale School, Shaftoe Road, Sunderland SR3 4HA. Telephone: 0191 553 5716, Fax: 0191 553 5882.

Language and Learning Team

The recently established Language & Learning Partnership is based at and managed by Sunningdale School. It includes The Language and Learning Specialist Support Team and Speech and Language Therapy Complex Language and Learning Team.

The purpose of the Partnership is to provide an effective and efficient city wide service for pupils with language and learning difficulties that will impact on future achievements and standards for pupils.

Referrals for support should be made by schools through the Integrated Services Referral Panel (ISRP).

Language & Learning Team is based at Sunningdale School, Shaftoe Road, Sunderland SR3 4HA. Telephone: 0191 553 5972, Fax: 0191 553 5705.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Accessibility Team

The SEN and Accessibility Team carries out the SEN (Special Educational Needs) statutory functions of the local authority. The team:

- delivers the council's statutory responsibilities for SEN (Special Educational Needs) in relation to the statutory guidance contained in the SEN Code of Practice and SEN Regulations 2001 and 2006
- manages and administers the statutory assessment of children & young people with SEN
- arrange placement and provision for pupils, with appropriate resources, in line with their Statements of SEN
- co-ordinate annual review of statements of SEN with schools and make amendments to statements as appropriate following a review
- manages the process of parental appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs & Disability) and represent the Local Authority at appeal hearings

- delivers safe, efficient and effective home to school transport for eligible pupils and administer the process for issuing free travel to school passes
- promote and increase accessibility across the city in accordance with Parts 4 and 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) ensuring all schools are supported and are aware of their statutory responsibilities
- provides information, advice and guidance to parents, carers and schools and other key partners on the full range of statutory SEN processes and legislation

For further information on SEN and Accessibility please contact SEN & Accessibility Team on 0191 561 2211/561 2282 or Email: sen@sunderland.gov.uk

For further information on Home to School Transport telephone 0191 561 2284 or Email sen@sunderland.gov.uk

The SEN & Accessibility Team are based at Stannington Centre, Stannington Grove, Sunderland, SR2 9JT. Telephone: 0191 561 2211.

Educational Psychology Service

Educational Psychologists are graduate psychologists with additional postgraduate training. Many are also trained and experienced teachers who have worked in schools. They advise the Local Authority on children and young people with special and additional educational needs and other vulnerabilities.

They help and advise schools and parents/carers on programmes, strategies and resources to support pupils with a wide range of needs, carrying out individual assessment and programme planning for those pre-school or school age pupils with more severe and/or complex needs.

Provided there is parental consent, any professional (e.g. Headteacher, doctor, social worker) can refer to the EP Team through the Integrated Services Referral Panel. Parents can also self refer through the Panel.

The Educational Psychology Service and Integrated Services Referral Panel are based at Stannington Centre, Stannington Grove, Sunderland, SR2 9JT. Telephone: 0191 561 2216.

Specialist Support Team for children with Physical/Medical Needs

The Specialist Support Team will accept referrals from all agencies involved in the education and care of children and young people with physical or medical needs where their condition significantly affects their functioning and ability to carry out physical or learning tasks independently.

Schools should initially telephone the team to discuss the issues/concerns relating to the child. An agreed written referral should then be completed when appropriate.

For further information contact: Specialist Support Team, Oxclose School, Dilston Close, Oxclose, Washington NE38 0LA. Telephone: 0191 219 3775.

Autism Outreach Team

The Autism Outreach Team (AOT) is a multi disciplinary team based at Columbia Grange School, comprising of professionals from education, health and social care. These professionals include specialist support teachers, educational psychologist, speech and language therapists, paediatricians, and occupational therapists.

The AOT supports pupils attending mainstream provisions with a diagnosis or possible diagnosis of ASD, by the delivery of quality outreach services and training in the field of ASD, so that wherever possible, pupils can successfully attend their local mainstream school.

The AOT offers:

- assessment of pupils needs
- involvement in the diagnostic process
- advice on strategies
- individual pupil targets
- Code of Practice Reviews
- home visits
- consultation with parents/carers
- consultation with staff in schools
- consultation with multi agency professionals
- group work
- transition work
- training for professionals and parents.

**For more information contact:
Autism Outreach Team,
Columbia Grange School, Oxclose
Road, Washington NE38 7NY.
Telephone: 0191 219 3863.**

Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS)

EMTAS provides support to schools with minority ethnic and traveller pupils. The service operates by teaching the English language to pupils new to English (EAL) and giving advice and help to their families. It monitors attainment and suggest strategies for improving pupils' attainment where necessary. It also provides guidance, resources and training to staff in schools and the non-statutory and voluntary sectors on a wide range of EAL, travelling and cultural issues. Outreach tuition is provided by way of distance learning packs and internet connection to support travelling families.

**For more information about the Service you can contact: EMTAS,
Carley Hill Education Centre,
Emsworth Road, Sunderland
SR5 2QB. Telephone: 0191 553 5250.
Email: wendy.eden@
edcom.sunderland.gov.uk**

Home & Hospital Tuition Team

All children and young people with medical needs should have their educational needs identified quickly and receive the appropriate support they require as soon as possible.

Provision will be flexible and sensitive to the changing needs of pupils.

The primary aim of the Home and Hospital Team practice is to minimise, as far as possible, the interruption and disruption to a child's education caused by their medical condition and continue to have access to as much education as their medical condition allows so that they are able to maintain the continuity of their education.

This policy covers all pupils whose home is in Sunderland who are of compulsory school age, on the roll of a Local Authority maintained school and are unable to attend school due to:

- physical health problems
- physical injuries or recovering from medical interventions
- mental health illness.

**For further information contact:
The Home and Hospital Tuition
Service,
Telephone: 0191 553 5467 or
Email: caroline.granton@
edcom.sunderland.gov.uk**

The Neurodisability Team

This consultant-led specialist team manages children and young people with a range of established and potential disabilities, usually referred on from consultants, GPs, other doctors, health visitors or therapists.

Children and young people may be seen in a range of settings including children's outpatient department, special school clinic, on the children's wards and sometimes at home.

The service offers diagnostic assessment, support and ongoing management, linking closely with others in health, education, children's services and voluntary agencies as appropriate to the individual's needs. Specialist palliative care is offered for children and young people with life limiting conditions.

**For more information contact:
Paediatric Department,
Sunderland Royal Hospital,
Kayll Road, Sunderland SR4 7TP.
Telephone: 0191 565 6256
extension 42486.**

Specialist Health Visitor for children and young people with additional needs

There is a specialist health visitor for children and young people with additional needs who works with children from 0-19 years. This involves giving advice and information to members of the Primary Care Team (GP, family health visitor, nurse etc) to help them when working with the child and family.

**For more information contact:
Diane Watson, Gilpin House,
Blind Lane, Houghton le Spring,
DH4 5HX. Telephone: 0191 566 2190.
Email child.disability@sunderland.gov.uk**

Community Children's Nursing Team

This is a team of specialist children's community nurses and nursery nurses, specialising in the areas of endocrinology, the care of children with complex medical needs, diabetes, epilepsy, gastroenterology and cystic fibrosis. They assess the needs and develop programmes of care to facilitate and co-ordinate effective home care management for children/young people and their families. They also offer home support, education and training for parents around care, and carry out school visits.

Referrals to the Team are made by a hospital consultant.

**They can be contacted at:
Community Children's Nursing Team, Niall Quinn Children's Centre, Sunderland Royal Hospital, Kayll Road, Sunderland SR4 7TP.
Telephone: 0191 565 6256
extension 41236.**

Psychology

The Sunderland Psychology Services (Learning Disabilities) is a lifespan service working with both children and adults with a learning disability and their families/carers. The service offers psychological assessment and intervention with individuals, families/carers and groups. They also undertake indirect work, using a variety of methods, with other specialist staff in promoting the psychological aspects of the overall care provided by Health, Children's Services, Education and voluntary sector staff. Referrals can come from a variety of professional groups in agreement with the individual child/adult's GP.

**For more information contact:
Hillview Clinic, Stannington Grove, Sunderland SR2 9JT.
Telephone: 0191 564 2600,
Fax: 0191 564 2437
Email: hillview@ntw.nhs.uk**

Community Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) – including Early Years Mental Service and Community CAMHS Counselling

The Community Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (Community CAMHS) is a preventative and early intervention mental health service for children and young people aged from birth up to their eighteenth birthday, and their families, provided by Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust. It is one of three main providers of specialist CAMHS in Sunderland alongside the Barnes Unit and the Child and Family Department.

It is a multidisciplinary service and includes staff from nursing, teaching, psychiatry, counselling and other therapeutic backgrounds. It offers direct short term intervention to individuals, families and groups who are affected by mild to moderate mental health difficulties.

It is located in a number of community bases throughout Sunderland and Washington, has three main locality teams, as well as workers based within the Youth Offending Service and Maplewood School. It also has a small team of early years workers who focus on the birth to 5 age range and are located within each Children's Centre cluster area throughout the city.

The service is accessed via a referral system through health practitioners, social workers, voluntary sector services and also by schools. The early years service is accessed via Children's Centre services.

They also offer training, consultation and support to other children and young people service workers to enable them to have a positive impact on the mental health of the children and young people they work with.

For further information please see the website at www.communitycamhs.nhs.uk

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team (CAMHs) Tier 3

The Child and Family Department provide assessment and treatment of complex emotional and psychiatric disorders in children and young people under the age of sixteen. This includes individual/group therapy, art therapy, cognitive therapy and family therapy. They also provide parental support, and parent groups. Referrals can be made to the team by children's services professionals (social workers, educational psychologists, youth offending team workers) or by health service professionals (GP, paediatricians, community nurses, school nurses and health visitors).

The Team can be contacted at: Child and Family Department, Sunderland Royal Hospital, Kayll Road, Sunderland SR4 7TP. Telephone: 0191 565 6256 extension 49026, Fax: 0191 569 9247.

Barnes Unit Adolescent Mental Health Team

The Barnes Unit is a community out patient department and work with young people who have mental health difficulties such as depression, eating disorders, severe anxiety/Obsessive Compulsive Disorders. They offer assessment, help and support for young people between 16 and 18 years of age who are experiencing mental health difficulties and can offer different types of therapy to meet the needs of the young person.

They accept referrals from any professional working with the young person (as long as the young person is aware of the referral and they have a Sunderland GP) but unfortunately they are unable to take self referrals. They also offer advice and support to professionals working with young people.

The team are based in the Children's Centre on Durham Road but they will see young people at different venues in Sunderland to make it easier for them to attend.

Opening hours are Monday to Friday 9am-5pm and the Team can be contacted on 0191 522 7739.

Community Nursing Team: Children with Learning Disabilities

This small team provides a specialist service to children and young people aged 0-18 years with a learning disability. Their aim is to provide a range of specialist therapeutic interventions including:

- behaviour therapy
- individual therapy
- psychological support to children and families
- management of mental health
- parenting advice
- epilepsy management
- skills development for children and families.

Referrals come from any healthcare professionals, social workers, schools or day care staff, or families can also refer themselves.

Following a referral, a short assessment would indicate the level of intervention required at that time. With the patient's permission they can also refer to other agencies should they feel they could offer a more appropriate service.

**The Team can be contacted at:
Services for Disabled Children,
Gilpin House, Blind Lane,
Houghton le Spring, DH4 5HX.
Telephone: 0191 566 2190.**

Physiotherapy

Physiotherapists deliver children's services to children who have posture, movement and co-ordination difficulties. Children are seen at home, in the Child Development Unit, nurseries, special and mainstream schools. Hydrotherapy can also be offered where appropriate.

Physiotherapists attend appliance clinics and wheelchair clinics, and carry out rheumatology, orthopaedic and neurodevelopmental work based at the Children's Centre.

There is also close liaison with the Occupational Therapists.

Children can be referred to the Paediatric Physiotherapy Service by either a consultant or their GP.

**For more information contact:
Physiotherapy Department,
Children's Centre, Durham Road,
Sunderland SR3 4AF. Telephone:
0191 565 6256 extension 49123.**

Speech and Language Therapy

Speech and Language Therapists provide packages of care depending upon the needs of the child. They work with children and young people aged 0 to 19 with disordered/severely delayed development of communication, language, speech, voice or fluency. The team also work with children and young people with eating/swallowing problems. This may include direct input (with a group or individual children), or with parents/carers, while also providing advice/training/support to parents or other professionals.

There is an open referral system and forms are available from the address below. However, a medical referral is needed for eating/swallowing problems.

**For more information contact:
Speech and Language Therapy
Department, Children's Centre,
Durham Road, Sunderland SR3 4AF.
Telephone: 0191 565 6256
extension 49122.**

Community Based Occupational Therapy and Wheelchair Service

Your child's assessment might involve an occupational therapist or a wheelchair assessor in order to promote independence and assist with practical management of disability issues.

Occupational therapists may recommend the provision of specialist equipment for your child, or alternatively you may be supported to access grant funding in order to make structural alterations to the family home. The Occupational Therapy Service will work with the Home Improvement Agency and Community Equipment Services in order to do this.

Wheelchair assessors may recommend the provision of equipment that enables mobility whilst also making sure that your child's postural needs are cared for.

Wheelchair assessors will work with a range of service providers, including Community Equipment Services and the Regional Rehabilitation Engineering Mobility Service in order to do this.

The community based Occupational Therapy and Wheelchair Service is available through the Health, Housing and Adult Services Directorate and is based at the Independent Living Centre (ILC), Leechmere. Referrals for small items of equipment can be made directly to the ILC, all referrals for major equipment need to be made through Services for Disabled Children.

**For further information contact:
Independent Living Centre,
Claymere Road, Leechmere
Industrial Estate, Sunderland
SR2 9TS. Telephone: 0191 566 2102/
2103 Email: ILC@sunderland.gov.uk**

Occupational Therapy

The Occupational Therapy outpatient service provides assessment and advice regarding fine and gross motor skills, coordination, sensory processing, visual perception, independence and functioning in all areas of daily living.

This may include assessment for equipment and environmental alterations in school. The child or young person may be seen at the Durham Road Children's Centre; the Child Development Unit; specifically identified special schools; or hospital. The Occupational Therapy Service accepts referrals from the child's consultant associated with Sunderland Royal Hospital.

The Occupational Therapy Orthopaedic inpatient service includes assessment for equipment and minor alterations to facilitate hospital discharge. Children may be seen within the home or hospital environment.

**For more information contact:
Occupational Therapy Department,
Entrance 8, Sunderland Royal
Hospital, Kayll Road, Sunderland
SR4 7TP. Telephone: 0191 565 6256
extension 42412.**

Dietetic Services

The Paediatric Dietetic service provides assessment and advice for those children and young people with a variety of nutritional needs including those with feeding difficulties, overweight and obesity, food allergies, and gastro intestinal problems. Children and young people may be seen with their parents/carers on an individual basis or as part of a multidisciplinary clinic. The service is based at the hospital with appointments being offered in the Dietetic Out-Patient Department or the Niall Quinn Children's Centre. The dietetic service accepts referrals from a child's consultant or GP.

**For more information contact:
Department for Nutrition and
Dietetics, Sunderland Royal
Hospital, Kayll Road, Sunderland
SR4 7TP. Telephone: 0191 569 9013.**

Case Management Teams

Case Management Teams support and provide services to children and young people, who are assessed to be in need, including children and young people whose level of disability does not meet the criteria for Services for Disabled Children. They help children, young people, their families, carers and friends, by looking at their needs and planning services to support them in their own families in the community.

Offices are located at Lambton and Cassaton House. Families can refer themselves or get more information about services by contacting the Initial Response Service at Cassaton House during office hours.

The teams are based at: Cassaton House Initial Response Team, 43-49 Fawcett Street, Sunderland SR1 1RR. Telephone: 0191 566 1500, Fax: 0191 566 1501.

Lambton Office, Station Road, Penshaw DH4 7LB. Telephone: 0191 566 3300, Fax: 0191 566 3110.

What to do if you need the support of a Social Worker in an emergency

From time to time families may experience emergencies and need the support of Children's Services. If your child has a social worker or assistant social worker, you should contact the Duty Social Worker within their team. The teams can be contacted during office hours on the following numbers:

Cassaton House Initial Response Team: 0191 566 1500

Services for Disabled Children: 0191 566 2190

If it is outside office hours, at the weekend, or on a public holiday, the Emergency Duty Service is able to respond to urgent crises. Contact them on: 0191 528 9110.

Services for Disabled Children

Services for Disabled Children only work with severely disabled children and young people up to the age of 18 who have:

- a substantial physical disability
- a severe communication difficulty (including Autistic Spectrum Disorder)
- a severe learning disability.

If you think you need help from Services for Disabled Children you will be offered an assessment.

Assessment is the word we use to describe how we look at your child's needs. This is an opportunity for you and your child to tell us about your circumstances and discuss your child's needs, your needs as a young person or your needs as a carer. The aim is to reach an agreement about what help you need and how this can be provided so your family can live as ordinary a family life as possible. Services for Disabled Children work very closely with all other agencies.

Staff from other agencies are based within the Service, these include:

- Community Nursing Team: Children with Learning Disabilities
- Specialist Health Visitor for Children with Special Needs

Families can refer themselves, or get more information about services, by contacting a Duty Social Worker at Services for Disabled Children during office hours at: Gilpin House, Blind Lane, Houghton le Spring DH4 5HX. Telephone: 0191 566 2190, Fax: 0191 566 2191 Email: child.disability@sunderland.gov.uk

More information is available in the following leaflets, available from any Children's Services area office or the above address:

- Network for Disabled Children leaflet and application form
- Services for Disabled Children
- Direct Payments
- Emergency Planning for parent/carers of disabled children and/or young people.

Quest

Quest is a specialist service jointly funded by Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Trust and Sunderland Children's Services. Quest works with children and young people with severe learning difficulties whose behaviour presents a severe challenge to families and services.

In practice, this means Quest working directly with the child and their family, offering a range of interventions and support tailored to meet individual needs. Quest offer a holistic assessment to provide a shared understanding of the underlying causes of the behaviour, enabling everyone involved in their care to find more successful ways of dealing with the difficulties. We also offer consultations and other forms of indirect working.

Referrals can be made to Quest via the GP or other professionals and will require active involvement from both Health and Children's Services.

**For more information contact:
Quest, Services for Disabled Children, Gilpin House, Blind Lane, Houghton le Spring DH4 5HX.
Telephone: 0191 566 2190,
Fax: 0191 566 2191 Email:
quest@sunderland.gov.uk**

Support Services

Support Services are a team of support workers who undertake a wide range of tasks with children and young people and their families, including care tasks and support into leisure activities, either at home or in the community to enable the young people to engage in appropriate activities and for their families to have a break from caring. Support Services work in partnership with children and young people, their parents and or carers and with other professionals also working with them.

Commissioning arrangements are also in place with a number of independent providers of support services where deemed appropriate.

Overnight Short Breaks

A purpose built short break facility in Grangetown provides overnight short breaks for up to 7 young disabled people aged 8 to 18 at the same time. This enables them to have regular overnight stays away from home and participate in a wide range of activities with their peers. There is a leaflet called 'Sea View Road West, overnight Short Breaks Services for Disabled Children' which gives more information.

Family based overnight short break care is available through Services for Looked After Children. This is a flexible service which provides children with positive experiences as well as giving the family a well earned break from caring. Children are linked to a specific carer who would also work in partnership with the child's parents. The foster carers are trained and supported in their role and receive a small allowance for the care of the child.

Commissioning arrangements are also in place with independent providers of overnight short break services where appropriate.

Aiming High for Disabled Children

Aiming High for Disabled Children is a Government programme that will transform services for severely disabled children and young people and their families and give them the support that they need to live ordinary family lives. The programme will give disabled children and young people and their families more of a say about how services are developed and more choice and control over what services they will use to meet their needs.

One of the conditions of the Aiming High for Disabled Children funding is that we increase the number of short break opportunities available to the disabled children and young people whose needs tend to be the most difficult to meet.

More information is available from the Aiming High for Disabled Children Team: Services for Disabled Children, Gilpin House, Blind Lane, Houghton le Spring DH4 5HX. Telephone: 0191 566 2190, Fax: 0191 566 2191. Email: child.disability@sunderland.gov.uk or visit: www.sundc.org.uk

'Futures' a Person Centred Transitions Team

'Futures' is a Person Centred Transitions Team that is jointly funded with Children's Services and is based within Health Housing and Adult Services in Sunderland.

The overall aim of Futures is to facilitate a smooth transition for young people into adulthood using person centred tools. 'Futures' involve and engage with the person throughout the process using creative communication techniques. This helps to gather evidence of what is really important to the individual and their family at a time of great change.

Futures will help people to create a comprehensive transition plan that will take into account 6 key areas including; education, employment, social activities, friendships and relationships, health and housing.

Futures will help a young person to create a circle of support that will include everyone who needs to be involved in an individual's transition to make it successful and positive.

The Futures team is made up of four facilitators, two transitional healthcare co-ordinators and one business support assistant. The inclusion of the healthcare co-ordinators in the team maintains health expertise and important links with professionals throughout transition.

With facilitators dedicated to an individual and their family throughout their transition from the age of 14-25, the model is designed to provide the ongoing support that will help young people achieve a smooth transition into adulthood.

**For more information contact:
Futures Team on 0191 566 2389.
or Email:
as.futures@sunderland.gov.uk**

Complaints, compliments & comments



We welcome comments about the service we give because your views tell us a lot about the quality of what we do. Please tell us if you think we have done well, if you are unhappy and want to complain or if you just have a comment or suggestion. We listen to everything people say and take their comments seriously. Where we can, we use the information people give us to improve services.

Children's Services

If you have a complaint or comment about the service please contact the **Complaints Team at Children's Services, PO Box 101, Civic Centre, Sunderland SR2 7DN. Telephone: 0191 561 1296**

N.B. Complaints about anything related to your child at school should be directed in the first instance to the school staff you usually deal with.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS focuses on improving the service to NHS patients, by offering advice and support to patients, families and carers, providing information about NHS services, listening to concerns, suggestions or queries, and helping to sort out problems quickly on your behalf. PALS act independently when handling patient and family concerns, liaising with staff, managers and, where appropriate, relevant organisations to negotiate immediate or prompt solutions.

PALS can be contacted Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm on **0800 731 2326**, or through Answers on **0191 510 3133**.

Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust

The first stage in making a complaint about a service you or your child have received is to talk to someone at the practice if you can. If you feel you cannot do this, or you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can follow the complaints procedure. You can find more information in a leaflet entitled 'Making a complaint about a GP, dentist, pharmacist or optician' available from Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust on **0191 529 7110/7111**.

City Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

The first stage in making a complaint about a service or treatment you or your child have received is to talk to the staff at the Trust at the time of the incident if you can. If you feel you cannot do this, or if you are making a complaint after the incident, you should phone or write to the Chief Executive of the Trust (see below). You will be put in contact with staff who are responsible for dealing with complaints. You can obtain a leaflet about the complaints process from the Complaints Department on: **0191 565 6256 extension 41234**.

Chief Executive, City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, Sunderland Royal Hospital, Trust Headquarters, Kayll Road, Sunderland SR4 7TP. Telephone: 0191 565 6256, Fax: 0191 514 0220.

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust

The first stage in making a complaint about a service or treatment you or your child have received is to talk to the relevant staff at the Trust as soon as you are unhappy about something. If you feel you cannot do this, or if you are not happy with the outcome of this approach, you should put your complaint in writing to the Chief Executive of the Trust. You can obtain a leaflet about the complaints process from the Head of Clinical Governance Support.

Chief Executive Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust, Cherry Knowle Hospital, Ryhope, Sunderland SR2 0NB. Telephone: 0191 565 6256 extension 49409.

Index

Aiming High for Disabled Children.....	49
Answers Health Information	8
“Attendance Team, The “	27
Autism Outreach Team.....	36
Barnes Unit Adolescent Mental Health Team	41
Benefits.....	10
Blue Badge Scheme	15
Bridge Card	14
Carers and Employment.....	17
Case Management Teams	46
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team (CAMHS) Tier 3	41
Childcare	22
Children’s Sensory Team	31
City Hospital NHS Trust	7
Community Based Occupational Therapy and Wheelchair Service.....	44
Community Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	40
Community Children’s Nursing Team	39
Community Nursing Team: Children with Learning Disabilities	42
Complaints and comments	52-53
Concessionary Travel Passes.....	16
Connexions	24
Contact a Family.....	6
Dietetic Services	45
Disability North	6
Early Support	32
Educational Psychology Service.....	35
Emergency Planning for parents/carers of disabled children and young people	25

Emergency Social Worker	46
Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS).....	37
Family and Parenting Team	3
Family Fund.....	12
Family Fund Extra	13
Futures’ a Person Centred Transitions Team.....	50
General Paediatric Services	28
Getting more information (finance)	11
Health Visiting Service.....	28
Help with health costs.....	13
Home & Hospital Tuition Team	37
Housing and Council Tax Benefit.....	11
Inclusion Support Scheme.....	23
Independent helplines.....	19
Language and Learning Team	33
Mental Health Matters Helpline	9
Network for Disabled Children.....	4
“Neurodisability Team, The “	38
Nexus TaxiCard.....	16
NHS Direct	7
NHS Help Card	18
Nursery provision	22
Occupational Therapy	45
Overnight Short Breaks.....	49
Parent Partnership Service.....	26
People Into Employment	17
Physiotherapy.....	43
Portage Service	33

Programme for Independent Travel	14
Psychology	39
Quest.....	48
School Nursing Service.....	29
Sensory Support Team	31
Services for Disabled Children.....	47
Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Accessibility Team.....	34
Specialist Health Visitor for children and young people with additional needs.....	38
Specialist Support Team for children with Physical/Medical Needs	35
Speech and Language Therapy	43
Study Support	23
Sunderland Carers' Centre	5
Sunderland Children's Centres	21
Sunderland Counselling Service.....	9
Sunderland Disabled Children Website	4
Sunderland Families Information Service	3
Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust (TPCT).....	8
Sunderland Youth Development Group	24
Sunderland, Washington & Coalfields Parent Carer Council	5
Support Services.....	48
Telephone Helplines	18
Toy libraries.....	22
Welfare Rights Service.....	10
Young Carer's Card Scheme	26



Services for Disabled Children

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DH4 5HX
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Email: child.disability@sunderland.gov.uk
www.sundc.org.uk

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This information can be made available in Braille, large print, other languages and on audio cassette.

Please contact the Communications Service on **0191 520 5555** for a copy in your preferred format.