



**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

# Life Stages Service



# Disabled Children and Young Adults

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In Darlington assessment and support for Disabled Children and Young Adults is provided by the Life Stages Service. The Life Stages Service (0-25 and 26+) supports disabled children, young people and adults with a learning disability in Darlington.



We have abandoned the traditional system of transferring young adults to another team at 18 as we recognise that Young Adults and their family's value consistency and stability during a time in their life where there is considerable change. In Darlington this will usually mean the allocated Social Worker remains with the Young Adult as they journey into adulthood. Social Workers in the Life Stages Service have been developing their skills and knowledge to ensure they can assist Young Adults during this phase of their lives.



The Life Stages Services uses a Progression Model. This means that when working with individuals and their families we build on the strengths, skills and support networks that the individual has to promote their independence throughout their life.

To find out if support would be appropriate, the Disabled Child or Young Adult would require an assessment of their needs.





# Assessing Your Needs

## Disabled Children

Disabled Children have a right to an assessment under the Children Act 1989. If requested we will undertake an Assessment of Need which is called a Children and Families Assessment (C&F). To request this assessment a referral is made to the First Point of contact team. A referral is simply a telephone call to CAP or a completed form being sent by a professional involved with you or the child.

[Children's Access Point Team \(CAP\)](#)



When a referral to the Team is received, a Social Worker will be allocated to undertake the Assessment of Need. Following this Assessment, a decision will be made as to whether the child or young adult is eligible to receive a service from the Team. To ensure that our services are targeting the appropriate children and young adults, we apply an Eligibility Criteria following an Assessment. This criteria is explained within this document and within the accompanying guidance notes. The intention of these criteria is to ensure that we do not simply consider the diagnosis that a child or young adult may have; we will also look at the effects their disability has on their day to day life.



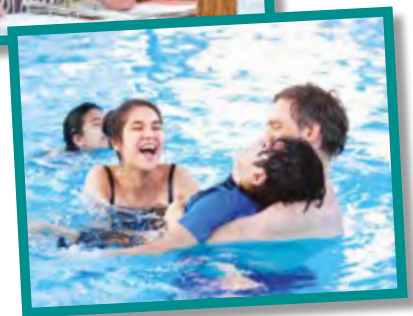
# Assessing Your Needs

To be eligible for a children's service from the Disabled Children and Young Adults Team, children and young adults must meet the following criteria:

- Be aged between 0 and 17 and be ordinarily resident in Darlington.
- Have complex needs (in addition to any behavioural problems that may be present), or have a serious or life threatening illness.
- There must be evidence that the child or young adult's additional needs impact significantly on their ability to enjoy ordinary day to day activities.
- The child or young adult must require a much greater level of day to day care to meet their needs than would usually be required for a person of that age.
- They must require a significantly higher level of support in at least three of the following areas than would usually be required for their age:

- Personal care and supervision
- Education or employment
- Access to social activities
- Communication
- The physical environment
- Condition management

- The child or young adult's condition is life limiting, or expected to last 6 months or more.



For more information please see the [Eligibility Criteria for Children and Young People aged 0-17](#) [Word document]

If you are not eligible we will signpost you to where you could get support from services who already work with you or through community and family support. If you are eligible the Social Worker will then work with you to develop a plan of need/support/outcomes called a Child in Need Plan (CIN).



For Adults (Aged 18 or over) an assessment is carried out under The Care Act (2014). To request this assessment a referral is made to the First Point of Contact. A referral is simply a telephone call or a completed form being sent by a professional involved with you. For more information please visit the [Adult Social Care web pages](#).

When a referral to the Team is received, a worker will be allocated to undertake the Assessment of Need. As part of this Assessment, a decision will be made as to whether the individual is eligible to receive a support.

## Preparing for Adulthood (Transition)

Transition is a term usually used to describe the process of moving from being a child to an adult. The Care Act (2014) requires that for those who are likely to have needs as an adult that a transitions assessment is undertaken. These assessments (a Care and Support Needs “Adults” Assessment) should take place at a time when the local authority can be reasonably confident about what the young person’s needs or support will look like after the young person in question turns 18. There is no set age when young people reach this point. Every young person and their family are different so transition assessment will take place when it is most appropriate for them. We often find that shortly after their 17th birthday works well for a lot of young people.



## Life Stage Service

In Darlington the Life Stage Service have abandoned the traditional system of transferring young adults to another team at 18 as we recognise that Young Adults and their family’s value consistency and stability during a time in their life where there is considerable change. This will usually mean the allocated social worker remains with the Young Adult as they journey into adulthood. Social Workers in the Life Stages Service have been developing their skills and knowledge to ensure they can assist Young Adults during this phase of their lives

At the present time The Life Stages Service is reviewing how it supports individuals in preparing for adulthood and is working with Inclusion North to evaluate our current arrangements.

[Inclusion North](#) [pdf document]



# Support for Disabled Children and Young Adults

## Disabled Children

If the Disabled Child is eligible for support from the Life Stages Service the Social Worker will work with the child and their family to develop a support plan which is called a Child in Need Plan (CIN plan). This plan will use the progression model in identifying assessed outcomes for the child and the services to meet these needs. This means that when working with individuals and their families we build on the strengths, skills and support networks that the individual has to promote their independence throughout their life. This is equally important when we are working with an individual to prepare for adulthood (people might know that as transition).



Where a Disabled child has an EHC Plan/One Plan, we also share the CIN plan with our colleagues in the Special Educational Need (SEN) Team so that they can update this into your SEN or EHC Plan. We will also aim to review our CIN plan within the same meeting that your EHC plan is also reviewed.

[Darlington Special Educational Needs \(EHC\)](#)

## Adults

All adults aged 18 and over whom are eligible for support following their Care and Support Needs Assessment, will work with their allocated worker from the Life Stages Service to develop a Care and Support Needs Plan. The plan needs to be agreed by the council. For more information visit the [Self Directed Support webpages](#).

This plan will use the progression model in identifying assessed outcomes for the individual and the services to meet these needs. This means that when working with individuals and their families we build on the strengths, skills and support networks that the individual has to promote their independence throughout their life.

## Support Available May Include:

The Life Stages Service will support both Disabled Children and Adults to maximise their independence and participation within their locality. Wherever possible we will support individuals to use facilities available within their local community.

Some of these may be universal services, which are available to anyone, or services which are commissioned by the Local Authority.

- [Short Breaks for Disabled Children](#)
- [Support available for adults](#)



# Advocacy Services

The Life Stages Service recognises the need for individuals to have access to advocacy services and support. Darlington Association on Disability are currently commissioned to provide this support within Darlington.

## Assistive Technology

The council can now provide a range of items that can help people to live more independently within the community. It can include items to help with visual and hearing impairments as well as helping to maintain the safety of those with a learning disability.

[Lifeline and Telecare](#)



## Carers Support

When carrying out an assessment we can also look at the needs of carers. This is to make sure their needs for support, due to their caring role, are taken into account. Carers will be offered a separate assessment of their own needs. The Life Stages Service has access to its own dedicated carers support worker. For more information visit the [Carers webpages](#). DAD Carers Support Service also offers information, support and advice to carers including signposting to specialist services.

The Life Stages Carers' Network is currently working on an updated Carers' Information Pack which will be available soon.





# Disabled Children Register



We want to make sure we know how many disabled children or children with special needs that affect their everyday life live in the Borough. This is something all councils have to do. It will help us improve services now and in the future. By being on the register we can also keep you informed of what services are available how you can get involved, if you want to.

If your child has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities you can place their name on the Register. Being part of the Disabled Children

Register is not a way of being assessed for services and will not provide or take away any services for you or your child.

Registering will give you and your family the chance to comment on the services you do or don't get. It is a way for you to tell us what you think could make a difference, and pass on your views to the people who plan services and make decisions. It is also a way for us to pass on information to you.



## Do I Have to Register my Child?

No, registering is voluntary and details of your child cannot be added without your permission.

There is a form to fill in but you can choose which questions you answer. Although there are some questions which must be completed to ensure we have essential information about your child and your contact details.

By registering your child you are helping us develop services for disabled children and young people which are responsive to their needs.

[Complete the Disabled Children Register form](#)





# Is it for my Child?

Yes, if your child:

- Has a special need from either a disability or a health condition
- Has a long-term illness
- Needs help with personal care
- Needs help with communicating their needs and feelings
- Gets Disability Living Allowance
- Is under 18 years of age; and
- Lives in the Borough of Darlington.

Then please join our register.



## What will Families get out of The Disabled Children Register?



Being part of the Disabled Children Register is not a way of being assessed for services and will not provide or take away any services for you or your child.

Registering will give you and your family the chance to comment on the services you do or don't get. It is a way for you to tell us what you think could make a difference, and pass on your views to service planners and decision makers. It is a way for us to pass on information to you.

We will:

- Let you know how we have used your information
- Send you information
- Keep you updated on what Children Services can offer you
- Update you about new developments in services for disabled children



Joining the register is your opportunity to be involved in influencing how services are planned and delivered.

## Where and how is the Disabled Children Register Information Held?

The information you provide is held confidentially and securely on computer with Darlington Borough Council. We will send you a copy of your information if you want.

Every year, we will ask you about any changes and update your records.



# Who would see this Information?



**Breaking Through Barriers**

Any reports we produce will be used for planning and developing services. They will never identify any child or family as only the facts and figures are used.

We ask you on the application form if you are happy for us to share your contact information with colleagues within Darlington Borough Council and other relevant organisations e.g. health, Parent Carer Forum and Darlington Association on Disability (DAD) to help with their planning and development work for disabled children in Darlington.

[Disabled Children Register Leaflet](#) [pdf document]

## Related Information and Useful Links

The [Local Offer](#) provides information for parents/carers about services for children with special educational needs or disabled.

[Darlington Association on Disability \(DAD\)](#) was established in 1986 as a voluntary and charitable organisation led by disabled people. It exists to promote independence and choice, and supports disabled people and carers through the provision of services, support and information and by tackling issues locally and nationally.

[Darlington Parent Carer Forum \(CHYPS\)](#) works in partnership with education, social care and health to influence and develop quality services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities in Darlington.

## How do I Register?

You can complete the registration form on-line and send it to us automatically by email or print off the form, complete it and send it to:

**Disabled Children Register Lifestages Team Central House  
Gladstone Street Darlington DL3 6JX**

[Registration Form](#) [online]

If you prefer to print out the form and send it in you can use the [pdf version](#)



## Where Can I get Further Information?

Email: [disabledchildrensregister@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:disabledchildrensregister@darlington.gov.uk)

Phone: (01325) 406222 select option 5