



# Annual Report

## 2023-2024



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## **The Statutory Duty**

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on every local authority to publish a SEND Local Offer, setting out in one place information about services and support available for children and young people in their area who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care plans. Local authorities and their partner bodies and agencies must co-operate with each other in its development and review.

The Local Offer has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it, and
- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving children, young people, parents, carers and service providers in its development and review.

Local authorities must publish comments about their Local Offer received from, or on behalf of, children with SEN or disabilities and their parents and young people with SEN or disabilities.

Comments must be published if they relate to:

- The content of the Local Offer, which includes the quality of existing provision and any gaps in the provision
- The accessibility of information in the Local Offer
- How the Local Offer has been developed or reviewed.

Local authorities are not expected to publish responses to every comment individually but can adopt a 'you said, we did' approach. Local authorities are also not required to publish abusive or vexatious comments or complaints about the service provided to an individual since there are established routes for such complaints.

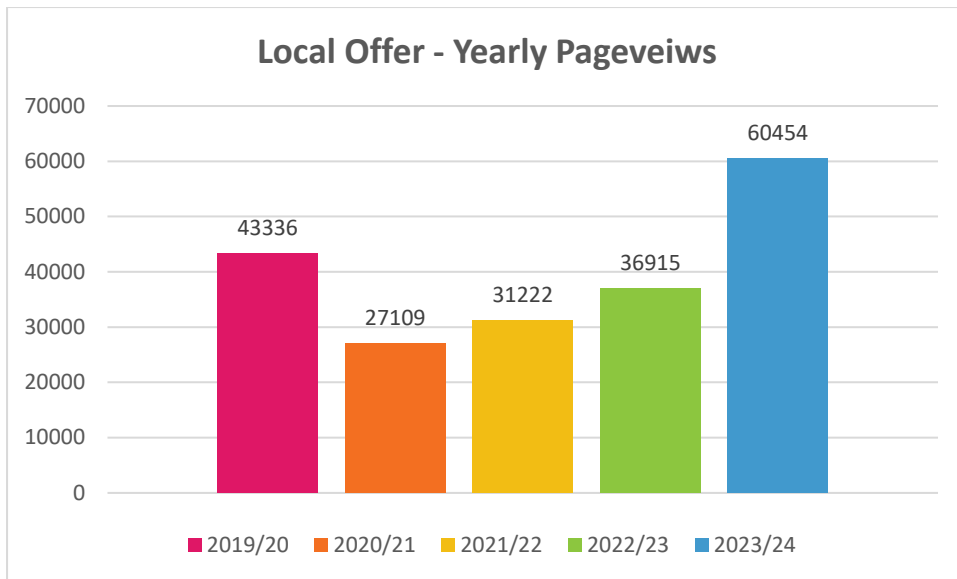
## **The Local Offer Website**

The [SEND Local Offer](#) is managed by Doncaster Families Information Service (FIS) and the website is hosted by the City of Doncaster Council. While FIS manage the content of the website, the accuracy of the information is a shared responsibility across the whole partnership, which includes education, early years, health, social care and our wide range of partners from the voluntary, community and faith groups.

## **Analytics**

### **Local Offer Website Analytics**

We have had a total number of 60,454 pageviews between April 2022 and March 2023; a 63.8% increase from 2022-23.



The top 10 most visited pages (excluding the Local Offer homepage) are shown below:

- Early Years Inclusion
- Schools and Alternative Provision
- Assessment including Education, Health and Care Plans
- Specialist Education Support Services
- Graduated Approach Toolkit
- TIE Activity Discount Card for children with SEND
- Activities & Leisure
- SEN Service and FAQs from the SEND Code of Practice
- Short Breaks
- Graduated Approach Homepage

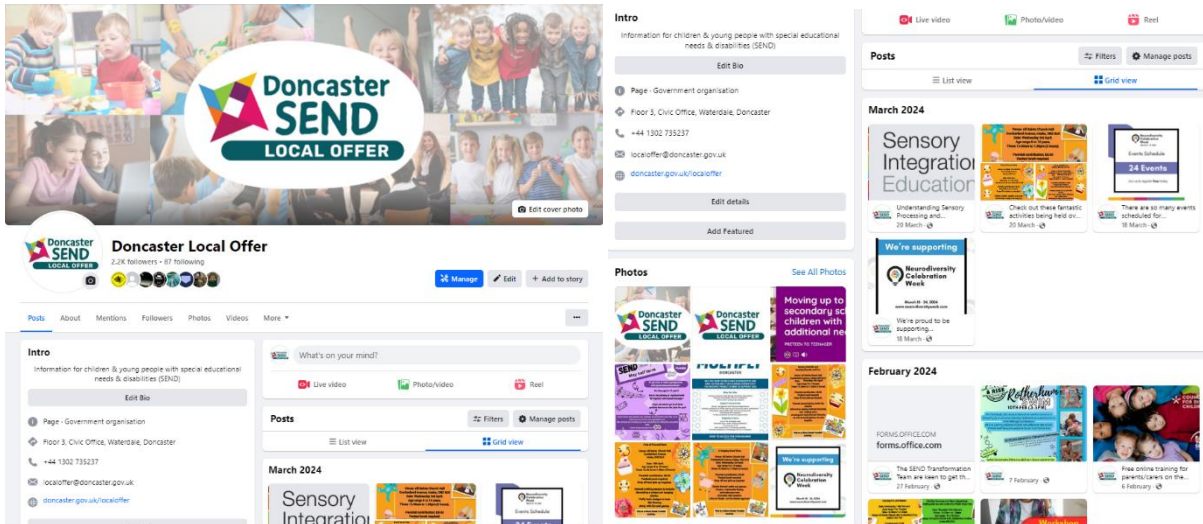
Below are some of the pages users spent the most time viewing:

- Graduated Approach Toolkit
- Early Years Inclusion
- Portage Service
- Specialist Provision
- Activities and Leisure
- SEN Support

In addition to the website visits, there have been 500 searches made on the Local Offer Directory. The Local Offer Directory compliments the Local Offer website by allowing users to find services and information from national and local services through using relevant 'keyword' searches. This continues to be an underused feature of the website which we intend to promote more going forward.

### Local Offer Facebook Analytics

Data shows that our Facebook followers are increasing each month. As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, we have 2,187 followers; a 14.5% increase (277) since April 2023. The majority of our followers continue to be women aged 35-44 years. The average reach of our page is 6,410 a month and we average 303 page visit per month.



The top five performing posts on the Local Offer Facebook page, from April 2023 to March 2024 were as follows:

1. Post about a new SEND group, including poster, reached 17,027 users
2. Post about work to improve the SEND offer in Doncaster, including a survey link and poster reached 9,495 users
3. Post about an opportunity to join our team, with a graphic, reached 9,476
4. Post about activities taking place as part of the Short Breaks Holiday Activity Timetable, with posters, reached 2,033 users
5. Post about a SEND parent/carer coffee morning hosted by Doncaster Parents Voice, with poster, reached 1,980 users.

All of our top performing posts were accompanied by images, therefore, it would be fair to conclude that posts with images typically reach more users than basic text posts.



**Doncaster Local Offer**  
Published by Doncaster FIS · 10 November 2023

The SEN Den is a new playgroup for children with special educational needs and disabilities in Doncaster.  
The group runs every Friday, 4pm-5:30pm at Cantley Community Centre  
Booking is essential - message The SEN Den for more information

**THE SEN DEN**

**A playgroup for children with special educational needs and disabilities in Doncaster.**

**Every Friday 16:00 – 17:30**  
**Children: £1**  
**Adults: FREE!**

**Cantley Community Centre, DN4 6DF**

**Booking is essential: find us on social media for more info!**

**The SEN Den Doncaster**  
**the\_sen\_den\_doncaster**

See insights **Boost a post**

24 15 comments 142 shares

**Doncaster Local Offer**  
Published by Doncaster FIS · 5 December 2023

Does your child or young person have Special Needs or need some form of additional support in school/college or in their daily lives?

If so, we would love for you to help us by sharing your experiences through our parent/carer survey here: <https://forms.office.com/e/dKZiCZj1?origin=ipLink>

As part of our work to improve the SEND offer in Doncaster, we want to better understand the support your young person receives through their education, health, social care and social lives, as well as any support they have received in their transitions from school or into adulthood.

You can also access the survey and find out more about the work we are doing to improve Doncaster's SEND offer by visiting [www.doncaster.gov.uk/send-transformation-updates](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/send-transformation-updates)

Thank you for helping us with this!

**Improving Doncaster's SEND Offer**  
December 2023 update

**Improving Doncaster's SEND Offer**  
December 2023 update

Doncaster Council is working on a programme to change our SEND offer to improve lives and opportunities of local children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Part of that work includes:

- Helping schools and agencies to make sure that they all identify children with SEND in the same way and at the right time.
- Creating an online **Handbook and Toolkit** to help parents and people who work with children to provide the best support.
- Providing training to support all professionals who work with children and young people with SEND.
- A brand new, online system which will make it much easier for parents, carers, schools, and other professionals to contribute towards and update Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- Continuing to grow our specialist offer within Doncaster through the creation of the new post-16 offer at Stone Hill School and an additional class at Coppice School. We are also creating four Enhanced Resource Centres located within mainstream schools enabling children with social, emotional, and mental health issues, to remain in education locally.
- Continuing to explore ways to increase and expand our alternative provision offer in Doncaster.
- Redesigning the Children Young People Neurodiversity pathway through the Integrated Care Board (ICB), working alongside both Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber ICB Foundation Trust (RDSH) and Doncaster and Rotherham Teaching Hospitals Foundation Trust (DTHRFT).

**Get Involved!**

One of the ways of our improvement is your voice - whether that is as a child or young person in Doncaster with a Special Educational Need or Disability, a family or wider support network member supporting a young person or a professional working within our SEND community in Doncaster. Here's a list of ways we would love you to get involved to further develop this work:

- Join our SEND Shadow Board**  
This is made up of children and young people who meet on a 6-weekly basis. Member groups have set their own priorities which helped shape the work the SEND Transformation programme is delivering. The group is made up of children of all ages from special and mainstream schools. Members are really engaged and provide lots of positive feedback, all of us sharing their views on how we can shape the system better, following their own experiences. If you would like your children to be a part of this, please contact us via [sendtransformation@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:sendtransformation@doncaster.gov.uk)
- Join our 'Making a difference' Parent Carer Surgeries**  
This group is made up of parents who meet on a bi-monthly basis and has allowed us to discuss the work which we are implementing. It has also provided a forum to support parents in feeling back to us the positive things which have happened to their child, as well as sharing areas in need of development and change. If you would like to be part of this group, please contact us via email: [transformation.send@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:transformation.send@doncaster.gov.uk)
- Complete our Parent/Carer Survey**  
You would like to provide feedback and share your views on SEND Services in Doncaster. Please take the time to complete this short survey: <https://forms.office.com/e/dKZiCZj1?origin=ipLink>
- Join our 'Senior Leadership Parent/Carer Surgeries'**  
You would like to discuss any of this work further with a member of the Senior Leadership team, we are looking to arrange a number of parent/carer surgeries in the future. Please provide your details via [transformation.send@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:transformation.send@doncaster.gov.uk) so we can contact you with further details of these in due course.

**Doncaster Local Offer**  
The Local Offer is on the Council's website which provides advice, guidance and support for children, young people, and families with additional needs. The page is on the website at the following link: [www.doncaster.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/localoffer)

See insights **Boost a post**

6 8 comments 104 shares

## What We've Done This Year

### The Local Offer Website

The Local Offer website has also been updated to reflect the services that are available as a result of strategic assessments of local needs, consultations with parents and reviews of local provision.

Officers responsible for the publication of the Local Offer have been working with the local parent carer forum 'Doncaster Parents Voice' to improve the content, look and navigation of the Local Offer website. We have consulted and actively used the feedback received to make changes, which families suggest will help them to quickly find the information they are searching for.

### Improved Navigation

Based on the comprehensive feedback we received from Doncaster Parents Voice, we have worked closely with colleagues in the Council to introduce an enhanced navigation system to improve accessibility to the Local Offer webpages. This works by providing a dropdown navigation system, which helps users to access key information faster.

We have also done a significant amount of work to redesign the webpages, so the information is organised around the needs of children and young people as opposed to being service led.

### Improved Information about Local Health Services

We have worked closely with local health services and the Designated Clinical Officer to ensure that the Local Offer website is representative of local health services and that we have direct links to service leads to ensure that our information is updated and timely. The content is now displayed in the 'needs led' format which parents and partners alike agreed would make the content easier to navigate.

## **Promotion**

In response to comment from parents and partners that families were not aware of the Local Offer website and in some instances find it hard to navigate, we used funding from 'Developing Better Values' to employ a dedicated 'Local Offer Officer'. The Officer is responsible for outreach work and promotion of the Local Offer.

We have also:

- Attended the area SENCO network meetings to promote the Local Offer and to encourage professional partners to ensure that parents are aware of the Local Offer website
- Attended local school cluster meetings in-house training events
- Attended coffee mornings in schools
- Commissioned a radio commercial which is played every hour in all of our local leisure centres
- Worked with SENDIAS to make sure that the team promote the Local Offer website to all families they are supporting.

## **Development and Review of Services**

In addition to making changes to the Local Offer website, there has been a great deal of work around SEND as a whole in Doncaster, which included identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses to allow us, along with partner agencies, to improve and develop services for families.

### **Online EHCP Hub**

The EHC Hub is an innovative digital platform supporting engagement, contributions, and collaboration on EHC assessments, plans and reviews. The platform also allows parents to complete an online form to request an EHC assessment as well as monitoring the progress of an application made. This launched in April 2024 for new requests and assessments. It will also be used for statutory Annual Reviews in the near future, once existing data migration is completed.

### **Social, Emotional, Mental Health Hubs**

In response to the increasing rates of Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) needs across the borough, alongside parental comments, The City of Doncaster Council (CDC) have opened 3 new local SEMH Hubs to support pupils with mental health needs. A 4th SEMH Hub is planned to officially open in September 2024, although staff are already in place and work is already being undertaken in the locality. Further SEMH Hubs are proposed as part of the Sufficiency Plan to increase the number of children and young people who will receive locally based support for their needs.

### **Doncaster Autism Service (DAS)**

The City of Doncaster Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) acted on parental feedback requesting an increased in pre and post diagnosis support for children and young people. From this Doncaster Autism Service was set to support families and was for children of all ages through funding from the Integrated Care Board.

Doncaster Autism Service has been hugely successful in offering pre and post diagnosis workshops, 1:1 post diagnosis support, community-based activities and support groups and working with other local services. As a result of their success, they have received increased funding from the ICB to sustain and increase their current offer.

## **Family Hubs**

Family Hub staff have consulted with parents of children with SEND for feedback of their experiences of accessing their services. This led to the development of a SEND specific booklet for parents, which provides information and advice about accessible buildings, local groups and resources. Family Hubs have also employed two workers on a temporary basis whose remit is to enhance the SEND provision. This will include recruiting parent champions, setting-up social groups and completing audits of our all our buildings to ensure they are inclusive, and families feel welcome.

Family Hub staff have also initiated a pilot scheme in Edlington, which is a community led group for parents and their children with SEND. This is helping to shape service and direct support where it is most required. All staff have attended a deaf awareness training course and some staff are trained in using Makaton. Family Hub staff also work closely with a BSL interpreter to offer information, advice and support to our families in a local community centre.

## **Joint SEND Commissioning Strategy**

We have published the [Joint SEND Commissioning Strategy](#) to improve knowledge and understanding of the current position in Doncaster, what services are available, where any gaps may be and how we might address these.

## **SEND Handbook and Toolkit**

The [SEND Handbook and Toolkit](#) has been launched and links closely to the Local offer website which ensures greater consistency of approach and delivery of the graduated approach within settings. This includes guidance for all staff for working with all SEND need types and the templates required for use within the new EHC Hub (IDOX EHCP System). This also includes details of useful tools to aid support within schools, leading to increased focus on inclusion as a result of greater understanding.

The Handbook and Toolkit expands upon and replaces the Graduated Approach Toolkit. Some new additions in the Handbook include the [Ordinarily Available Provision guidance](#) and [SEND Funding and Needs Descriptors](#).

Following the positive response to the SEND Handbook, a new Parent Handbook is in the process of being developed and will compliment the information on the Local Offer.

## **The SENCO Charter**

The SENCO Charter was launched in the Autumn Term 2023 with a key focus on providing SENCOs with the time and appropriate space to undertake the role. A key part of this was more time to interact with families and provide tailored support.

## **Inclusion Charter**

The SEND and Inclusion Charter has been developed and is currently being reviewed by a number of children, young people and families to ensure that this meets their requirements before formal launch. A new performance measure for schools is also in development called the "Inclusive8" and this will underpin the SEND and Inclusion Charter.

The Mainstream inclusion team commenced in January 2024 and has started to work with schools on their own SEND and inclusion progress. This team will focus on inclusion within schools and will both support and challenge schools to improve inclusivity.



## Launching the Co-production Charter

Working with the Making a Difference Group, we have recently launched the Co-production Charter, highlighting the Ladder of Co-production and creating an outline for further working together going forwards.

Further information about the feedback which came from the Making a Difference Group can be found in the Feedback and Co-production section of this report.

**CO-PRODUCTION CHARTER**  
Co-produced by Doncaster parents, carers, children and young people.

**We will...**  
**Value Each Other**

- Respect each other, our individuality and our opinions
- Appreciate, celebrate and build on our strengths and differences
- Recognise that we all add value and have different knowledge and experiences to share
- Treat each other with kindness and dignity

**We will...**  
**Listen & Communicate**

- Communicate clearly and openly in plain English - no jargon
- Actively listen to each other's views
- Use positive, inclusive and constructive language
- Be transparent, open and honest in our communication
- Be mindful that people may not be aware of how/what support they can access

**We will...**  
**Be Accountable**

- Take responsibility and do what we say we will in a timely manner
- Focus on solutions and set expectations
- Explain clearly what is available and what is not
- Acknowledge our mistakes and take action to resolve them
- Provide opportunities to openly reflect on decisions
- Ensure Information and decisions are documented

**We will...**  
**Work in Partnership**

- Encourage participation and make it easier for everyone to work together
- Learn from each other and improve our knowledge
- Build trust and work towards a common goal for children and young people
- Be inquisitive and don't allow preconceptions to cloud our judgement
- Respect each other as equals, with different experiences and value our contributions as equal partners

**Ladder of Co-production:**

- Co-production** (Doing with): Involving people as equal partners from the start to the end of the project.
- Co-design** (Doing for): People are asked their opinions and views but have limited influence over decisions that are made.
- Engagement** (Doing to): People are seen as passive recipients. Services are designed for them and their views are not considered.
- Consultation**
- Informing**
- Educating**
- Coercion**

[www.doncaster.gov.uk/Local Offer](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/Local Offer)

## Completed a SEND Local Parental Consultations

A parental survey undertaken in December 2024 which gave following key results, all of which will be used to help inform our ongoing strategic plans:

- **Timeliness and Pathways (Needs identified in a timely way)**
  - When asked "What support from health services could be better?" 32% said quicker diagnosis times.
  - When asked "What support in their education and/or training could be better?" 25% said quicker identification of need / diagnosis.
- **Access to the Community / Activities Outside of School (Valued visible and included)**
  - When asked "What support in their activities outside of school / social life is working well?" 36% of parents said they were unaware of what services were available
  - When asked "What support in their activities outside of school / social life could be better?" 36% of parents said accessibility.
- **Training on SEND for all Professionals Who Work with Children and Young People**
  - When asked "What support in their education and/or training could be better?" 23% said knowledge and skills i.e. more training and awareness raising on SEND for professionals.

- **Help and Support (Right Help at the Right Time & Prep for Next Steps)**
  - When asked if they received the right help and support from services 29% said no to healthcare, 28% said no to Education and training, 58% said no to social care and 47% said no to prep for next steps.

## Feedback and Co-Production

All local authorities must publish feedback and comments on the Local Offer and demonstrate how the feedback has been used to shape services and information to ensure they meet local needs.

There are multiple ways users can give feedback and get involved in the co-production of the Local Offer in Doncaster. These include:

- Giving feedback on each page of the Local Offer website
- Using the Local Offer feedback form
- Contacting Families Information Service to give feedback
- Giving feedback in person at outreach events.

Employing an additional officer to work in the team has meant we will be able to increase our presence in the community and secure feedback from families to help us improve the Local Offer website.

The following feedback is an overview of what you told us over the last 12 months:

### Community and Website Feedback

| You Said  | We Did  |
|---|---|
| You don't know how to contact the BOSS team / you can't find their contact details. | We worked with the BOSS team to update their information on the Local Offer, clearly outlining how parents can contact the service. We also added an email address for the team.  |
| You wanted to know how to contact the GDA team.                                     | We added contact details for the GDA Coordinator.   |
| You told us that the information on 'Finding Schools' was not easy to navigate      | We have improved our listings of both local and out of area school placements for children and young people with SEND. This includes and providing direct links to the school websites where our service users can find detailed information about the individual establishments' SEND provision. |
| You wanted more information about Dyslexia  | We've been working with professionals to create a new webpage which contains information on specific literacy difficulties, including Dyslexia. The page is under review and set to go live in summer 2024.   |

### Making a Difference Group

| You Said   | We Did  |
|--|---|
| There should be a consistency in the approach across schools – what practice looks like, work on how to get this working | We have developed and launched the SEND Handbook and Toolkit.<br><br>We have also increased Professional Development opportunities to schools |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Funding should not be held waiting for EHCP and should be measured against the level of need   | We have developed a new funding system to be rolled out Autumn Term 2024 providing a consistency of approach and needs based funding whether an EHCP is in place or not.  |
| We should ensure funding is spent on what it should be. A whole school approach to SEND needs to be pushed, and get specialist support teams in with SENCOS, teachers, observing children. | We have recruited and developed a new school improvement team in place from Jan 2024 to provide support and challenge and oversee funding allocations and progress.   |
| There should be improved commissioning to ensure young people have work skills for transitioning   | We have employed of an Enterprise co-ordinator to review employability and employment options for young people, including increasing the number of supported internships available and taken up. The initial Futures Fair is due to take place September 2024 for Young people with SEND. |
| We should work closely with health for strong coordination   | We have improved partnership working with Health leading to the new joint commissioning strategy.   |

### Shadow SEND Board

Doncaster's Young People's SEND Shadow Board has been reformed and the group is working to ensure that the voice of children and young people with SEND is heard and represented at the Local Area SEND Board and in the wider partnership. Below are the current priorities and actions taken to address the issues raised.

| You Said  | We Did   |
|---|--|
| Make sure we have school places in Doncaster for all children and young people with social and emotional needs  | We have created 30 extra places within the City of Doncaster Council for children and young people with social and emotional needs |
| Improve how schools meet the mental health needs of children and young people   | We have established a borough wide approach to supporting young people's mental health and developing a whole school approach      |
| Reduce waiting times for children and young people to get a diagnosis for autism  | We have improved neurodiversity pathway which includes a multidisciplinary triage panel.   |
| Check EHCP plans so that they are good quality and based on the voice of children young people  | We have established a multidisciplinary panel to monitor the quality of education health and care plans                            |
| Make sure that schools know more about how to spot the signs when children and young people are struggling as early as possible   | We are establishing a borough wide approach to supporting young people's mental health and developing a whole school approach      |
| Improve the quality of teaching for children and young people with send   | We have developed and launched the SEND <i>Handbook and Toolkit</i> .  |
| Make sure services for children and young people are joined up encourage schools to think more about how to include children and young people in lessons and activities | We are working with partners to reshape specialist support services as part of the overarching sense strategy                      |
| Give support and training to staffing schools and other agencies so that they understand how to meet needs better   | <i>We have also increased Professional Development opportunities to schools</i>  |

## **Next Steps**

We are dedicated to improving the Local Offer to ensure that the information is up-to-date and relevant and meets the needs of Doncaster residents and professionals working with children and young people with SEND in our community. To do this we will:

- Continue to engage with members of the community, to ensure their voices are heard, as they form a crucial part of the co-production of the Local Offer
- Further promote the Local Offer, including the Local Offer Directory, across Doncaster to ensure more people are aware what support available is available
- Continue to partake in the Yorkshire and Humber Local Offer Group to learn from the experiences of other local authorities
- Work with more young people to review the Local Offer and find ways to improve access to information.