



If you would like further information or would like to make a referral to the Children's Rights Service, contact:
**0161 203 3232 or
freephone 0800 032 5647**

Or you can write and email us at this address:

**Manchester City Council
Children's Services
Manchester Children's Rights Service**

QAPMU
3rd Floor, Victoria Mill
10 Lower Vickers Street
Miles Platting
Manchester
M40 7EL.
Fax: 0161 203 3242
Email: childrens_rights@manchester.gov.uk

If you have any comments about this leaflet, please contact us at:

Children's Services Communications Team

Tel: 0161 234 7308
Fax: 0161 234 7253
Email: CSMessage@manchester.gov.uk

www.manchester.gov.uk

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Ever wish there was someone else to talk to?



Manchester Children's Rights Service
You have the right to use it! Know your rights!

What is an independent visitor?

Someone who will spend time getting to know you and become a kind of family friend just for you. Someone who will listen to you and want to spend time with you. Someone who is not paid to spend time with you but does so because they want to. Someone just for you and no-one else. Someone you like and get on with. You get to choose who should be your independent visitor. It might be someone you already know or have known in the past, or you might want someone new in your life. Your carer, social worker or children's rights worker can help you decide. An independent visitor is NOT a carer or a social worker!

What does an independent visitor do?

They will visit you regularly! This might be more often to start with while you get to know each other. You might see each other once every two weeks, sometimes more, sometimes less. They will spend time getting to know you and give you the chance to get to know them too. This could mean finding out about each other's interests and how you like to spend your free time. You might have some interests or leisure activities that you want to share with your independent visitor. They might also help you by giving advice or



talking problems through. You can even ask an independent visitor to support you at your review meeting if you want!

Who can have an independent visitor?

We try to offer an independent visitor to all young people in care in Manchester who want one. However, some young people need one more than others and we try to make sure that young people who don't have much contact with family or friends get one first. It can take some time for us to find the right independent visitor for you. This is because we have to make sure that they are good people who get on well with young people and who have a sense of humour. We also make sure they are police-checked, provide references and attend some training and an interview to make sure that they are safe.

If I decide I want an independent visitor, what do I do next?

Tell your social worker, carer or someone else you trust that you would like an independent visitor. Your social worker should make a referral for you, which will be added to our waiting list. If you need more information, you can contact the Children's Rights Service (our phone number is on the back of this leaflet).

What happens next?

Once we have found someone who we think would be a good independent visitor for you, we will tell you, your carer and your social worker about them. If you agree, we will arrange a meeting with the independent visitor, your carer and a Children's Rights worker. You will have the chance to interview them yourself to see if you think you will get on with them! If you decide you are happy with the independent visitor, then they will be allowed to start visiting you. If you are not happy, you can ask to have someone else.

How long can someone be an independent visitor?

For as long as you are both happy to keep seeing each other. This might be for a few months or many years. We will check with you and your independent visitor every so often to make sure things are okay.

What if I'm not happy with my independent visitor?

If you decide you no longer want an independent visitor or would like someone else, you can contact us on 0161 203 3232. If you feel you need to make a complaint about an independent visitor, you can also contact the Children's Rights Service, or ask your social worker or carer to contact us for you.

