**Independent Visitors Guidance**

**Provider**

In Newcastle the Independent Visitors Service is provided by NEPACS. The contractual arrangement with NEPACS is overseen by the Service Manager for the Children’s Safeguarding Standards Unit.

**Eligibility**

The Independent Visitors Service is only available to Children in Care. The service is provided to children and young people that have little or no family time or dedicated time with adults outside of those who care for them or support them in school and the community.

Children can maintain the support for as long as they wish, whilst they remain in Care and with agreement from the relevant service manager, the service can remain involved with young people after they leave care.

**What does the Service Provide?**

Independent Visitors enable children in care to develop positive and long-term relationships with adults. It can be used to help support children access activities they enjoy. The service can help children develop social skills and confidence and to feel valued. The establishment of a positive long-term relationship also creates the opportunity to support the young person develop skills and confidence in other areas and an individual plan must be identified before the service begins.

**Referrals**

Children should be referred by their Social Workers or Carer. Information on the Independent Visitor Service and on how to make a referral can be found in this section.

**Complaints**

Any complaints about the Independent Visitor Service should be sent to the Service Manager for the Children’s Safeguarding Standards Unit.