




Daisy Chain
A haven for families affected by autism

Our Services

Supporting families affected by autism



About Daisy Chain

Daisy Chain was established as a charity in 2003 as the dream of its founder, Lesley Hanson, whose son Jacob was diagnosed with autism at an early age.

Although Jacob's condition was not severe, Lesley soon became aware of the problems faced by the parents and carers of children who were higher on the autistic spectrum.

Lesley dreamt of a haven for children with autism; a place where they could go to experience something in life that would give them pleasure and was especially for them. It would also provide parents, carers and siblings with support and a resource library.

Disgruntled with the lack of facilities and services available to support families, Lesley and her husband Duane set off on a quest to make her dream become a reality. After extensive fundraising, the doors to Daisy Chain opened one year after her initial dream and it has continued to grow ever since.

Now, many years later, the charity provides a range of support services to children and adults affected by autism, either with a diagnosis or who are undergoing the diagnostic process, their parents/carers and their siblings living in a TS or DL postcode area.

We are continuing to develop our facilities and services all the time. Lesley died in 2004, but to ensure her dream lives on, we strive to provide the relevant support needed by our families in the local area.



Facilities

Our facilities at our 5.5-acre site, Calf Fallow Farm in Norton allow us to offer a variety of services and activities to the families who visit us on a weekly basis.

Day Centre

Our unique £1m day centre was opened in 2010, the first comprehensive support facility that provides holistic support to children with autism and their families in the UK. Facilities within the centre include a soft play area, sensory rooms, art and craft room and IT suite, as well as housing offices and meeting rooms.

Farm

The Daisy Chain farm is a popular attraction for our children and families, and is home to a variety of animals for our children to interact with during activity days, one-to-one animal therapy sessions, social clubs and youth groups. We also offer animal care qualifications to our placement students, and run a sponsor an animal scheme to help raise funds to care for the animals.

Sensory Play Area

Our redeveloped sensory play area was opened in 2016 and provides our children with an opportunity to experience a genuine sense of adventure within a safe environment. The area includes a sand play area, slides, pod swings and trampolines.

Wetlands

Our fascinating wetland area provides a safe area for our children to learn about nature. We run a number of activities in our wetland area, including nature trails, bird watching, making wildlife homes and pond dipping.

Gardens and allotments

Looked after by a team of dedicated volunteers, our allotment area provides our children with the opportunity to grow their own plants and produce, whilst working together to enhance their social interaction.

Superstore

Our charity superstore on Portrack Lane in Stockton not only allows us to raise awareness and much needed funds, but also provides a base for our employability programme, which supports young adults with autism in gaining qualifications in employability skills and obtaining valuable work experience on the shop floor and coffee shop.

Services for parents/carers

Links parent support group (term time only)

Our Links group is for parents/carers of children who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or who have children going through the diagnostic process. The weekly programme is varied, with interesting speakers, workshops and an opportunity for an informal chat and light refreshments on the first Thursday of the month. There is a crèche facility available during this time – see across for further details.

When: Every Thursday during term time, 10am-12pm

Cost: None

No booking required.

Wednesday Evening Links (term time only)

For those parents/carers unable to attend our Links group during the working day, we also run a monthly Wednesday Evening Links group, again open to parents/carers of children who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or who have children going through the diagnostic process. We discuss general and specific issues in a friendly and informal environment, with refreshments available. (Crèche is not available for this service).

When: Wednesday evening 6pm-7.30pm once a month (see our website for specific dates)

Cost: None

No booking required.

Crèche

We provide a crèche facility for pre-school children with/without additional needs to enable parents/carers to attend our Links parent support group on a Thursday morning. Our crèche is managed by a qualified Level 3 member of staff, who is also first aid trained. Siblings are also welcome.

When:

Every Thursday during Links (term time)

Cost:

£5 per child and £2 for each additional child.

Booking is required.



New family induction

We offer the opportunity for parents who are new to Daisy Chain to meet a member of the Care Team for a tour of our facilities and to hear more about the services we offer that are available to them. Parents will be given information about how to register with us to allow them to access our services.

Available by appointment or at point of access to some services such as Activity Days - contact the Care Team for more information.



Training for parents/carers

We offer a range of autism awareness courses to parents/carers and family members of a child with autism who wish to learn more about the condition, covering topics such as the Incredible 5-point Scale and behaviour strategies, to name but a few.

For further details on training courses available, please visit our website or contact the Training Team.



Services for children and young people

Saturday Activity Days

Our Saturday Activity Days welcome families affected by autism to come and enjoy our soft play, farm, sensory play area and lots of other indoor and outdoor activities. Hot/cold drinks and snacks are available to purchase, but families are welcome to bring their own packed lunches.

Available to children who have a diagnosis of autism or those undergoing the diagnostic process and their parents/carers and siblings. Children are required to be supervised by their parents/carers at all times.

When: Every Saturday between 11am-3pm

Cost: £8 for the first child and £4 for each additional sibling that attends

Booking is required - booking opens at 9am on the Monday of the week you wish to attend.

High Need Activity Days

Our High Need Activity Days are specifically for children who are unable to access our Saturday Activity Days due to their specific needs. There are a variety of activities including soft play, sensory fun, outdoor play area and more, along with the opportunity to visit the outdoor animals from 1pm. Hot/cold drinks and snacks are available to purchase, but families are welcome to bring their own packed lunches.

Available to children who have a diagnosis of autism or those undergoing the diagnostic process and their parents/carers and siblings. Children are required to be supervised by their parents/carers at all times.

When: The third Sunday of every month between 11am-2pm

Cost: £8 for the first child and £4 for each additional sibling that attends

Booking is required - booking opens at 9am on the first Monday of each month.



Social Clubs and Youth Groups (term time only)

Daisy Chain runs a number of social clubs and youth groups for young people aged 5-17. The sessions are structured and provide opportunities for interactions and friendships between young people. Places are allocated to the young person for the club most suitable for them, based on the information provided to us in their care plan.

Available to young people who have a diagnosis of autism.

When: During term time on a fortnightly basis throughout the week (various times after school).

Cost: Contact our Care Team for details of costs and possible funding available (limited places available).

Toddler Group (term time only)

Our toddler group is for children under 5 with any additional needs and their parents/carers. The group aims to bring families in similar situations together, allowing them to share experiences and interact whilst the children can have fun in the soft play area and enclosed outdoor area.

Available to any child under the age of 5 with any additional needs and their parents/carers. Children are required to be supervised by their parents/carers at all times.

When: Every Wednesday during term time, 9.30am-11.30am

Cost: £5 per family

No booking required



Services for adults with autism

Employability Course

We run an employability programme to support young adults with a diagnosis of autism or those undergoing the diagnostic process in gaining qualifications in employability skills and obtaining valuable work experience in our Superstore on Portrack Lane. The course covers a range of topics and offers the students the opportunity to practice interview skills, take part in an enterprise project and build their C.V.

Supported Work Placements

We have made strong community links with a variety of businesses and charities in the local area to enable us to offer our students a supported work placement in line with their interests, strengths and career goals. Adults with a diagnosis of autism are given the opportunity to experience working life and show potential employers the skills that someone with autism can bring to a workplace.

For more information on our employability course and supported work placements, contact the Education and Employability Manager.

Adult Group

Our Adult Group is for young adults aged 18-30 with a diagnosis of autism. The group is relaxed and informal, meeting each Monday during term time with additional meetings over the school holidays. The group also go on planned outings of their choosing, such as bowling, visiting a local pub or visiting a theme park.

When: Every Monday during term time 6.30pm-8.30pm, with additional dates throughout the holidays

Cost: £10 per session

Spaces are limited – contact the Care Team for more information.



Services for siblings

Sibz – sibling youth group (term time only)

Our Sibz group caters for siblings of children with an autism diagnosis and is suitable for young people aged between 8-16. They enjoy outings, activity evenings and occasional education sessions, which help the young people understand more about Autism Spectrum Disorders. Sibz also have the opportunity to attend an overnight residential trip and occasional day trips during the school holidays.

When: During term time, our Sibz youth group runs on a Wednesday evening on a fortnightly basis.

Cost: £6 for the first child, £3 for each additional child

Spaces are limited – contact the Care Team for more information.



Holiday Services

Holiday Short Break Sessions

Our holiday short break sessions are for young people with a diagnosis of autism and split into three age ranges: 3-7 holiday club, 8-11 holiday club and 12-17 chill club. Activities include arts and crafts, visiting the animals, Wii/computers, cooking and games.

When: Various dates throughout the school holidays (see our website for details)

Cost: Contact our Care Team for details of costs and possible funding available.

Booking is required – contact the Care Team for more information.



Holiday Soft Play/Messy Play Sessions

Early years session - for children under 5 with any additional needs and their siblings.

School aged session - for children/young people aged 5-18 with a diagnosis of autism/undergoing diagnosis who are unable to access our social clubs and their siblings.

When: Selected Mondays during the school holidays.

Early years session - 10am-12pm

School aged session - 1pm-3pm

Cost: £6 for the first child and £3 for each additional child.

Booking is required – contact the Care Team for more information.

Additional Activity Days

Throughout the school holidays, we run additional dates for our Activity Days on each Thursday of the holidays (see Activity Days for criteria and costs).

When: Each Thursday during the school holidays between 11am-3pm.

Cost: £8 for the first child and £4 for each additional child.

Booking is required – booking opens at 9am on the Monday of the week you wish to attend.



Family Trips

We provide a variety of fun trips each Friday of the school holidays, available to all our families who are affected by autism to attend. These trips are a good opportunity to meet up with other families with children with autism and access a range of outings with support from Daisy Chain staff.

When: Each Friday during the school holidays

Cost: Costs vary, depending on the trip

Booking for each trip is required via our website



How to register with Daisy Chain

If you have a child who has a diagnosis of autism or is undergoing the diagnostic process and you want to access our services, simply visit www.daisychainproject.co.uk/forms/book-a-visit to enter your details and a member of our Care Team will be in touch. Alternatively, you can contact the Care Team by calling 01642 531248.



contact us...

call: 01642 531248

Email: info@daisychainproject.co.uk

Visit: www.daisychainproject.co.uk

Download the Daisy Chain App to keep up to date with our services



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