



See inside for **INFORMATION ON:**

- Tourettes
- Portage
- 5 Day Offer

# & news & views

Wakefield Local Offer



# Welcome to the spring edition of News and Views



**Building stronger families**



**Hello,**

**We hope this newsletter finds you safe and well.**

Firstly, many thanks to Outwood Grange Academy and Outwood Academy City Fields for choosing our front cover. To celebrate World Down Syndrome Day, we are not only wearing our colourful #LotsOfSocks but also feature the Wakefield and District Down's Syndrome Support Group on page 4.

You asked for information about deaf services on the Local Offer which you can find on page 5.

On pages 6 – 7 you can find the second part of our feature on Tourettes Syndrome (TS), which gives some strategies for supporting children with TS at school.

We also have some guides and frequently asked questions on blue badges and short breaks on pages 10 and 11.

It is good to celebrate the positives in life, and a Wakefield parent of a child with SEND has done just that – read about 'A Positive Day in the Life Of...' on pages 8 and 9.

Finally, let us know what you enjoy about the newsletter and what else we can include by filling in our quick survey at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/65K7JK5](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/65K7JK5)

Happy reading,

**WESAIL**

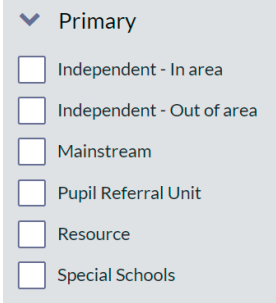
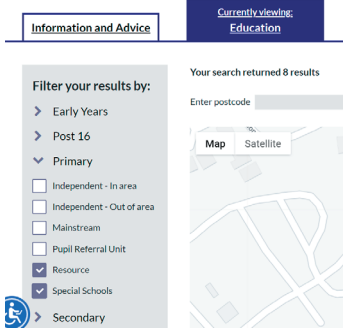
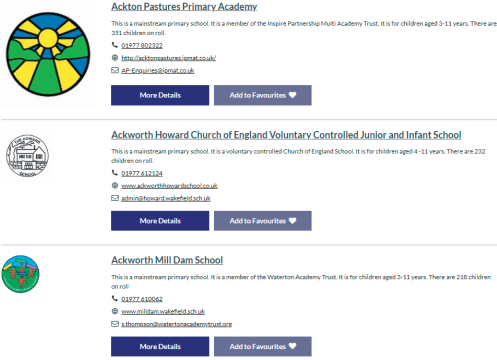

(Wakefield Early Support Advice Information Liaison Service)

## How To Find Education Providers on the Local Offer Website

	<p>Go to <a href="http://www.wakefield.mylocaloffer.org">www.wakefield.mylocaloffer.org</a></p>
	<p><b>Click on the Education button, or choose Education from the Directories menu.</b></p>
	<p><b>Go to the grey 'Filter your results by' box.</b></p> <p><b>Click on the age range you need, e.g., Primary.</b></p>



# How To Find Education Providers on the Local Offer Website continued...

	<p><b>Click on the type of setting you need, e.g., Mainstream.</b></p>
	<p><b>The search will then show you all the settings that you have ticked on the filter box (e.g., Mainstream).</b></p>
	<p><b>You can see each settings contact details.</b></p>
	<p><b>You can click on 'More Details' for more information. It will also show you a map of where it is.</b></p>
<p><b>If you need any further help or have any questions, please email <a href="mailto:wakefieldlocaloffer@family-action.org.uk">wakefieldlocaloffer@family-action.org.uk</a> or call 01924 965588.</b></p>	

# Wakefield and District Down's Syndrome Support Group



**Wakefield and District Down's Syndrome Support Group (WDDSSG)** is a small local charity, set up just over twenty years ago by parents to support people with Down's Syndrome (DS) and their families. We are run by our volunteer parents and, although it's a small charity, it's pretty amazing!!

Our first priority is fun and friendship and making a difference to young people with DS and their families. We try hard to create as many opportunities as we can for families to meet each other and build friendships to enable them to support each other. We use our events, activities, and social media groups to develop a community of people that can help each other navigate their journeys, through the highs and the lows, whatever situations they come across.

We love a party at WDDSSG, and we organise a range of events and trips across the year for our families. We run a monthly meet-up, Saturday Club, which welcomes families to drop in and have fun together. There's always a positive and friendly atmosphere, and it's very informal – anything goes!

Our Sunday Funday has just started back – we're booking out a soft play centre in Ossett just for us, every other month, so our families have another opportunity to spend time together and our kids, of any age, can enjoy the benefits of soft play. We also offer regular activity sessions, such as TriStars Active in Pontefract, which offers informal opportunities to practice sports such as boccia and indoor curling with friends and families.

Our older group gets together to share experiences such as meals out, the pantomime or our Valentine's Disco, and we've just created Little Stars too, our group for the families of under-fives, just starting out on their journey. Supersibs events are held every so often too, to help the siblings of our children with DS to build their own friendships too, with others with the same thing in common.

We have published our own book, 'What I Wish I'd Known,' written by parents and carers in our support group, all about what it's like having a baby with DS. This book is loved by many people, and used to support families when they first find out their baby has DS, and we have people all around the country contacting us to buy copies!

We try hard to raise awareness, in Wakefield and beyond, about Down's syndrome. There's often stereotypes about people with DS, and our group encourages people to see the person, rather than the syndrome. People with DS are all different, more like their parents and siblings than like another person with DS. Some people with Down's syndrome have achieved amazing things, such as TV presenting and acting, modelling and winning gold medals. However, most people with Down's syndrome are just ordinary folk, who happen to have DS, getting on with their lives.

Find out more about us and what we get up to on our web site [www.downsyndrome-wakefield.co.uk](http://www.downsyndrome-wakefield.co.uk) or our public Facebook page [www.facebook.com/wakeyDS](http://www.facebook.com/wakeyDS)



# Deaf services and information for Wakefield



## Support

As part of the Local Offer, there are several services that support deaf people across Wakefield and District. Read a bit about the services, what they can offer and how to find out more below.

### DEX

Deaf Experience Limited (DEX) have several different services.



The DEX Deaf Youth Hub puts on events for 11 – 17-year-olds.

The DEX Youth Council puts on events for 17 – 30-year-olds.

They run a BSL (British Sign Language) club for deaf people under 30 as well as an advocacy service for 17 – 30-year-olds.

DEX can also offer outreach, training and consultancy for professionals working with deaf and hard of hearing people.

You can find out more about their services and opportunities by visiting [dex.org.uk](http://dex.org.uk)

### Contact details:

Contact form [dex.org.uk/contact-us](http://dex.org.uk/contact-us)

Address: c/o Leeds Society for Deaf and Blind People, St Mary's Street, Leeds, LS9 7DP

### YouTube:

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCFen0Nyxx9At45lvuSpLHRQ/videos](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFen0Nyxx9At45lvuSpLHRQ/videos)

### WF-I-CAN

WF-I-Can have lots of videos with British Sign Language (BSL) that have been contributed by DEX. They are on the following topics:

- Managing Feelings
- Self-help tips
- Strategies to help your mood
- Managing anger
- Bullying
- Falling out with friends and family
- LGBTQIA+

Watch the videos by visiting [wf-i-can.co.uk/bsl](http://wf-i-can.co.uk/bsl)



### Wakefield District Society for Deaf People

The Wakefield District Society for Deaf People have many services to support people and families. These include:

- Support work (e.g., meal preparation, shopping, budgeting, travel training, form filling)
- Equipment (hearing aid maintenance, loop systems, smoke alarms)
- Lip reading classes
- Support for families
- 16+ service
- Deaf awareness training
- Interpreting service

You can find out more by visiting [www.wakefielddeaf.org.uk](http://www.wakefielddeaf.org.uk)

### Contact details:

Telephone Number: 01924 375958  
SMS/WhatsApp: 07760482372

Email: [enquiries@wakefielddeaf.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wakefielddeaf.org.uk)

### Sense Saturday

Sense Saturday is a short break provision from the charity Sense. They offer different types of breaks such as days out, activity groups and short residential trips. Some of the activities they do (depending on need and location) are:

- Swimming and hydrotherapy.
- Cookery and baking.
- Fun fitness classes like dance, yoga, Tai Chi, or Zumba.
- Training in key life skills, like using public transport, libraries, or shops.
- Messy sensory sessions.
- Making arts and crafts, including digital art, pottery, woodwork and more.
- Activities in the community, like horse riding, trampolining, or climbing.
- Music sessions.
- Growing things and gardening.
- Relaxing in a multi-sensory room, experiencing different colours, sounds and textures.
- Learning how to use IT and technology.
- Taking day trips to the cinema, theatre, zoo, or natural beauty spots.



### Contact details:

Address: Sense Centre Leeds and Wakefield, Leeds Road, Robin Hood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF3 3BG

Phone: 0113 205 9500

Website: [www.sense.org.uk/places/leeds-and-wakefield](http://www.sense.org.uk/places/leeds-and-wakefield)

# Tourette Syndrome (TS) and schools

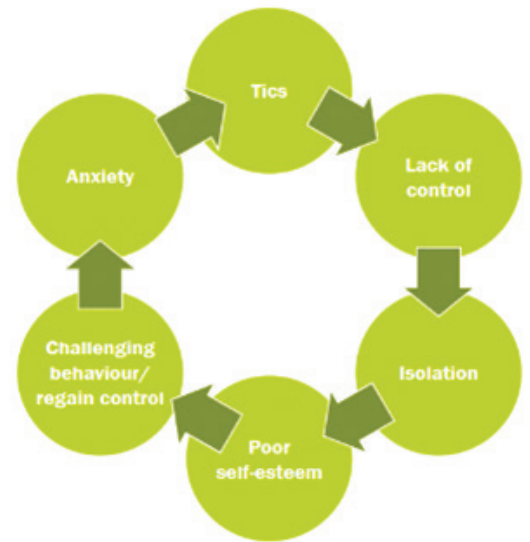


## With thanks to Tourette's Action for this article.

The huge amount of stigma that surrounds TS often limits the confidence and self-esteem of those diagnosed, especially young people. This is why it is so important for schools to be properly educated and have the right support in place, so our children feel fully understood and accepted by the school community. It's always best to encourage a child to talk about their TS. It's important that they understand what's going on for themselves and, if possible, encourage them to share with their friends. Education and awareness is the key!

## Tics vs neuro-typical bad behaviour – the magical question

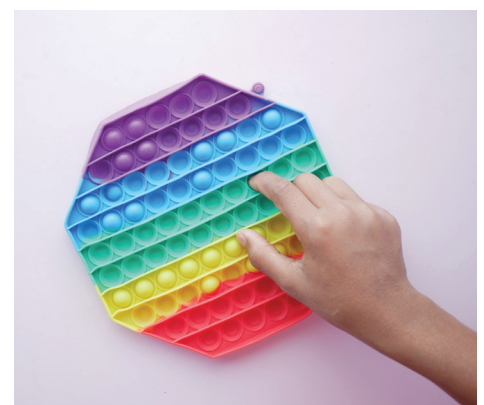
This is the main question that gets asked by teachers and support staff. There is always a reason for what appears to be 'bad behaviour'. Tics are sudden repetitive movements or sounds. Children with tics can sometimes come across as being 'badly behaved' as tics can appear to be in context, so it's up to teachers to find out why they are displaying such behaviours. Consider this – It's much easier for a child to come across as the class clown and be told off than it is to show their tics and appear to be labelled by friends as weird or strange. If teachers are ever unsure if something is a tic or negative behaviour, then we must always assume it's a tic. It can be impossible at times to unpick if a tic is genuine but we would advise teachers to get to know the child rather than challenging and questioning them all the time. After an incident talk to the child and ask the child: What happened? Why do you think that happened? How can we help you next time?



## How can school help children with TS – suggested strategies

All children with TS are unique and will experience different tics, triggers and have varying needs but these are some basic strategies that should apply to most children with TS and what we would recommend teachers try first with the children:

- Approach the child and family to find out how their TS affects them and keep communication as open as possible.
- Try not to respond to tics unless they really require a response e.g. danger/safeguarding of other pupils.
- Make a personal passport/one-page profile all about the child to share with all teachers.
- Consider a careful seating plan.
- Consider giving the child a time out card/leave room.
- Make sure there is always a safe place for children to go and release tics if needed.
- Make sure children get regular sensory breaks/brain gym.
- Consider fidget toys. Distraction is a key with tics so this may help immensely.
- 5 minute earlier/later start time to the day (to meet a member of the pastoral team and go through their timetable, making sure they have all the equipment they need for the day)
- Build a relationship with the child so they feel understood and safe.
- Use visual timetables to aid understanding. Knowing what's coming up in the day to reduce any anxieties and feeling in control of themselves.



# Tourette Syndrome (TS) and schools Continued



- Use feelings chart where needed.
- Scale down work amount not difficulty.
- Check understanding after class input.
- Scribe/laptop? Find out how best the child learns/records ASAP. Encourage school to explore ways of recording your child's work. It may be that their tics get in the way of their writing for many reasons. The sooner they find a way to best record their work, the sooner they will get into a consistent routine and this will support their 'usual way of working' if any further support or intervention is needed.
- Awareness assemblies are an effective way to educate other pupils (celebrating differences). A whole school approach to understanding Tourette Syndrome can really help a child to feel accepted and understood. You can download our peer presentation to give to your school on [www.tourettes-action.org.uk/resource-239-what-is-ts-a-presentation-for-young-people.html](http://www.tourettes-action.org.uk/resource-239-what-is-ts-a-presentation-for-young-people.html).
- Consider alternative therapies to help reduce anxieties such as art, music, or Lego therapy to aid self-expression.
- Invest in good quality nurture programmes and emotional intelligence training to help promote well-being, self-esteem, and positive mental health such as: ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistance), MISP (Mindfulness in schools project) and Jigsaw (Personal, Social, Health and Well-being Education).
- Research and access any free alternative provision in your area that work with schools for example, Intensive Planning Team or Learning and Behaviour team.

You can download our free online teacher training by visiting [www.tourettes-action.org.uk/resource-210-presentation-ts-in-schools.html](http://www.tourettes-action.org.uk/resource-210-presentation-ts-in-schools.html).



# A Positive Day in the Life of...



"To local authority SEND (Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities) leads and services,

There are many things that are substandard, frustrating, and disappointing in the SEND (Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities) services world (I know the reasons for that are complex) but today I want to thank you for all that is good.



I spend Mondays with my son who is 19. I have a chronic illness. My son and I both suffer from fatigue, and I enjoy being able to spend some daytime with him before we both get tired.

We do some iPad and learning skills then we sometimes catch the free bus to town. I teach him to use Google Maps on his phone. I encourage him to look for landmarks and show me, where to go, when we walk to Sun Lane pool.



We have a free gym membership, Aspire. We are so grateful for it!

We go in the gym, when he is motivated to move, especially through music, he comes alive and it's a joy to see. We have fun in the pool. When he meets his target for lengths, we go in the sauna, and he introduces himself to everyone and asks their name. He loves people.

We open a bank account together and I show him how to check how much he has. If he's spent up, he knows it's a Greg's sausage roll, but he looks forward to having enough to offer to buy me lunch in a cafe 😊

When we are tired, we are so grateful for the disabled badge. Last week we parked outside Wakefield One. We loved learning together in the museum and reading in the library. He loved getting his own library card and bringing the books home.



We booked the climbing wall with his Aspire card. He was scared. His muscles are weak. But with a bribe of tea out, singing his favourite song, and a lot of encouragement (I can be very persuasive) he reached our goal and loved flying back down on the rope like Spiderman. The next week he made it to the top! I was so proud of him and of myself! Special needs parents give so much in persuasive and creative energy.

We loved our swim in Aspire in the Park pool, and he liked the praise he got, all day, for being so brave and a video call to show his brothers what he had done.

We have a cinema card. We go there when we are too tired for anything else!

We have a Max Card and National Trust card. He loves to plan his activities on his

Google calendar, and we are going to try going a bit further on the bus when it warms up.

When he was little, we used to drive miles for learning opportunities. There were no local clubs that we were aware of (except the Wakefield District Downs Syndrome Support Group, which is great!).

Now there is so much. He goes to Chime at Wakefield Theatre, Stride, and there are more! At these learning and fun opportunities, he gets to spend time with friends, and we get to spend time together. Priceless to us! We are so grateful for all the good that Wakefield SEND leads and services do to aid families in the challenges they face.





# A Positive Day in the Life of... Continued



I had an aunt with Down Syndrome. I am so grateful for the progress we have made as a society. In a world of addiction and pleasure seeking, my son experiences joy, a higher level of happiness, and that joy, is transferable to those who are open to it.

Profit is poorly measured in money alone. “

From a Wakefield Parent of a child with SEND.

For more information about the services and groups mentioned, see contact details below. Please note that we are not necessarily endorsing these but are sharing information on their behalf.

Google Maps - [www.google.com/maps](http://www.google.com/maps)

Aspire - [www.wakefield.gov.uk/sport-health-and-leisure/memberships](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/sport-health-and-leisure/memberships)

Blue Badge - [www.wakefield.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/parking/blue-badge](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/parking/blue-badge)

Wakefield Libraries - [www.wakefield.gov.uk/libraries-and-local-history/your-local-library](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/libraries-and-local-history/your-local-library)

Cinema Card - [www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)

Max Card - [wakefield.mylocaloffer.org/information-network/about](http://wakefield.mylocaloffer.org/information-network/about)

National Trust - [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/membership](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/membership)

Wakefield and District Down Syndrome Support Group - [downsyndrome-wakefield.net](http://downsyndrome-wakefield.net)

Chime - [www.theatreroyalwakefield.co.uk/take-part/chime](http://www.theatreroyalwakefield.co.uk/take-part/chime)

Stride Theatre - [stridetheatre.co.uk](http://stridetheatre.co.uk)

upskill and participate in several work experience/placement opportunities.



# Blue Badge Scheme



## What is a Blue Badge?

Blue Badges are for drivers, passengers, or children with severe mobility problems and for those who are registered blind.

Badges allow people to park closer to the places they need to be. Badges are given to enable a person to undertake a journey that would otherwise not be possible, or very difficult. The scheme only applies to on-street parking.



## Who can apply?

A person can get a badge if they are over two years old and meet at least one of the automatic criteria listed below. Proof that they meet the criteria must be provided.

## What are the automatic criteria?

You can get a Blue Badge if you (or the person you are applying for):

- Receive the High Rate of the Mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Receive a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and have been awarded 8 points or more for the 'moving around' activity of the mobility component;
- Receive Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and have been awarded 10 points specifically because you cannot undertake any journey because it would cause overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant.
- Are registered as severely sight impaired (blind)
- Have a terminal illness and not expected to live more than 6 months

## Can I get a badge if I don't meet the automatic criteria?

A person who doesn't meet the automatic criteria may still qualify if they meet the assessed criteria below.

## What are the assessed criteria?

You may be able to get a Blue Badge if you (or the person you are applying for):

- Have a disability which means you are unable to walk or have considerable difficulty in walking from a vehicle to your destination

- Have a disability which causes you to experience very considerable psychological distress, or be at risk of serious harm, or pose a risk of serious harm to any other person when walking from a vehicle to your destination (you have a hidden disability)
- Regularly drive a vehicle and have a severe disability in both arms
- Have a child under 3 years old who must always be accompanied by bulky medical equipment
- Child under 3 years old who needs to be kept near a vehicle at all times

## Can I get a badge for my organisation?

Organisations concerned with the care of disabled people can apply for a Blue Badge for vehicles like minibuses or specially adapted vehicles if they:

- Care for and transport disabled people who would meet the eligibility criteria for an individual Blue Badge; and
- Have a clear need for an organisational badge rather than using the individual Blue Badges of people it transports.

## How do I apply or renew?

The fastest way to apply is on-line for both new and renewal applications.

You will need to provide up to date evidence as part of your application and may need to attend an assessment to determine if you qualify.

To find out more and apply online visit [www.wakefield.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/parking/blue-badge](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/parking/blue-badge)

## What if my badge is lost or stolen?

If your badge has been lost or stolen please call Customer Services on 03458 506 506.

How do I contact the Blue Badge scheme?

Blue Badge  
PO Box 700  
Wakefield One  
WF1 2EB

[bluebadge@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:bluebadge@wakefield.gov.uk)

0345 8 506 506

[www.wakefield.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/parking/blue-badge](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/parking/blue-badge)

# Short Breaks



## What are short breaks?

Short breaks are services provided to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This helps them to experience things that other children do, at home and in their community. Short breaks services also enable family carers to continue to provide the care that enables children with disabilities to be fully part of their families.

A short break can be:

- Accessible fun activities in the community
- Support to access fun activities in the community
- Day time or overnight care in the home or elsewhere
- Services to help carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.

## What are the types of short breaks?



### Universal

This is the support available to everyone through universal settings, such as children's centres, youth centres, libraries, parks, leisure centres and social activities. Most children and young people with SEND who need a short break will receive them through these services.



### Targeted

Targeted short breaks activities are designed specifically to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.

There are lots of activities and services in the community that can meet specific



needs, e.g. autism-friendly cinema screenings, disability sports groups, a youth group for children with learning difficulties.



For more information about Universal and Targeted Short Breaks, please look at our **services** and **things to do** pages on the Local Offer website.

If you want to find childcare, please see **Families Information, Early Years Service**.

### Specialist

Specialist short breaks are for children and young people with needs that cannot be met by other types of short breaks, e.g. children who need specialist medical equipment, personal care, or support from specialist trained workers. Specialist short breaks are designed to enable children with complex needs to enjoy fun activities in a safe environment and/ or give families a break from caring.

### How do I access short breaks?

Universal short breaks can be accessed without an assessment. Providers of Targeted short breaks may have their own criteria.

To request an assessment for specialist short breaks, please contact

- Your local **Family Hub**
- Children's Social Care Direct on 0345 8 503 503.

An assessment of need is required to access specialist short breaks. This is completed by the Complex Care Needs Team (CCNT) if you meet their **eligibility criteria** or the Short Breaks Assessment Team. For more information see an **Assessment of Need** on the Local Offer website.

## What is an assessment of need?

The Council has a duty to assess the needs of children and young people and their parent carer who requests an assessment, or who appears to need support. This is a legal right and is regardless of the level of need. An assessment is usually a discussion between you and a trained person from the Council. This could be a social worker or an assessment worker.

The assessment of need looks in detail at these three areas:

- Child's needs and development
- Parent/carer's needs
- Family and environment

The holistic assessment of need gives a clearer picture of any support that may be needed. Parent carers can also ask to have their own needs assessed if required.



## Why would I ask for an assessment of Need?

An assessment of need will help you, your family and anyone working with you, to identify:

- What you and/or your child's needs are; for example own physical health and mental health, family factors (such as a single parent, any relationship difficulties)
- What support you may already have in place;
- What things you and/or your child may still need help and support with (these are called unmet needs);
- What you and/or your child feel will help make a difference for your family; and
- What extra support to organise that may help.

Find out more and search for Short Breaks services by visiting **wakefield.mylocaloffer.org/short-breaks/about**

# Upcoming Events



## Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) drop in session

11th April 9.30am – 3pm  
The Hut, Airedale Business Centre, Kershaw Ave, Castleford WF10 3ES



## Looking after your sleep (for 16-25 year olds)

3rd May 1.30 – 3pm  
Online via Wakefield Discovery College  
[www.wakefieldrecoverycollege.nhs.uk/courses/online-discovery-college-courses/looking-after-your-sleep-16-25](http://www.wakefieldrecoverycollege.nhs.uk/courses/online-discovery-college-courses/looking-after-your-sleep-16-25)



## Speech and Language Therapy drop in sessions

30th March, 20th April 9.30 – 11.30am  
Featherstone Health Centre, Victoria Street Featherstone WF7 5EZ

27th April 9.30 -11.30am  
Stanley Children's Centre, Long Causeway, Stanley Wakefield WF3 4JB



# Max Cards

Have you got a Max Card? It can help you go on days out for free or with a discount. A discount is when you get money off the usual price. A Max Card lasts for 2 years. A Max Card is free if you join the Information Network. This is also called the IN. You can join the IN by visiting <https://wakefield.mylocaloffer.org/information-network/how-can-i-join/>. For places you can visit, go to <https://mymaxcard.co.uk>



If you have lost your card, or it has expired (this means the date has run out) then contact the IN. They will help you get a new one. You can email them at [informationnetwork@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:informationnetwork@wakefield.gov.uk) You can also ring them on 01924 302471.

