



POWERED BY



Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am delighted to let you know that this year your young person has been given the opportunity to sign up to **NCS with The Challenge**, a once-in-a-lifetime experience for 15 - 17 year olds taking place in their summer holidays, that builds skills and confidence and helps them get ahead in work and life.

National Citizen Service (NCS) offers 15-17 year olds the chance to take part in outdoor activities, meet new friends in a safe, supportive environment and develop valuable skills that future employers are looking for. The programme is split into 3 parts as follows:

1. Adventure - 5 days, 4 nights away from home at an outdoor residential centre. In teams of 12, young people take part in physical activities designed to challenge them and encourage teamwork skills.
2. Discovery - 5 days, 4 nights away from home. Young people budget and cook for themselves, while learning new professional skills.
3. Action - 8 days, non-residential. Young people work with local charities to plan a project that will impact their local community. They develop project planning skills, while learning to think about the world around them.

We ask you to complete a detailed medical and support information form, and we tailor our support to meet individual needs. In the past, we have provided one-to-one support workers, wheelchair accessible canoe and climbing equipment, transport support and specialist dietary support. In previous years we have supported young people with a variety of additional needs including BESD, ASD, ADHD, mobility issues, PMLD.

Depending on the nature of the young person's needs, the time to confirm their place on NCS can take between **4 to 12 weeks**. We carry out detailed follow up processes that can involve, but not be limited to: requesting a copy of their EHC plan; feedback or consent from doctors, or other professionals who work closely with the young person; going through a full list of follow up questions. All of this information is gathered in our comprehensive online application process; because of this, please ensure that your young person's application has been submitted as soon as possible, to provide the best chance of getting a place as places are filling up fast.

Delivering the programme costs over £1500 per head, however as we are government funded all the challenge asks is for a contribution of no more than £50.

Following the event in your child's school **We can offer this program for £35 for 3 weeks**, following which the price will return to £50 - however financial assistance is always available. The application fee covers all accommodation, food, transport, individual support, and specialist kit for the residential parts of the programme.

You can find more details, and begin an application, at ncsyas.co.uk or you can call our central team on **020 3510 5050** to complete an application and ask any questions.

NCSYES.CO.UK / 020 3510 5050

NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE

Summer 2019

TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE ABOUT NCS:

020 3510 5050 / WWW.NCSYES.CO.UK

**YOUR SEN OUTREACH ASSOCIATE IS:
MOLLY TAYLOR**

EMAIL: MOLLY.TAYLOR@THE-CHALLENGE.ORG

TELEPHONE: 07392873476



POWERED BY



NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE

NCS – AN OVERVIEW

National Citizen Service (NCS) is a government backed programme that helps young people build skills for work, life and the transition into adulthood. It invites young people to be the best they can, whatever their background or ambition. The Challenge is the largest provider of NCS and delivers the programme with the support of local schools, and in partnership with local and national charities and businesses.



NCS is an exciting, part-residential youth programme that builds the skills and confidence of 15 – 17* year olds to help them get ahead. The programme has three parts, usually with breaks in between. Parts 1 and 2 are residential, whereas young people return home each evening during Part 3.

Each place is valued at over £1500, but government backing ensures that the full programme costs you no more than £50. This includes all accommodation, food, transport, equipment for NCS activities and **any extra support a young person may need**. As we believe that all 16 – 17 year olds deserve to take part in NCS, financial assistance can also be requested when signing up if you need extra help with the cost.



WHAT TO EXPECT

A Breakdown of the Programme

LOCAL PROGRAMMES THAT REMAIN FLEXIBLE

Each NCS programme is built from a local level, which allows us to cater to the needs of different communities whilst maintaining our highest standards. There will be variation between different programmes. Below is an outline of the structure. The NCS programme is 18 days in total, spread across 3 weeks. There are breaks between each part.



PART 1 – ADVENTURE – 4 NIGHTS STAYING AWAY FROM HOME

Participants will stay at an outdoor centre and, during the day, they will have the opportunity to take part in activities such as hiking, canoeing and rock climbing. All activities will be led by a trained professional. The group will be split into teams of 12 and this is great opportunity to bond as a team.

PART 2 – DISCOVERY – 4 NIGHTS STAYING AWAY FROM HOME

Staying in University style accommodation, participants learn essential life skills whilst they develop their Independence. Participants receive skills workshops in Public speaking, creative communication, and Budgeting – boosting both their CV and confidence for the future!

PART 3 – MAKE YOUR MARK – STAYING AT HOME AT NIGHT

Part 3 is a chance to make a difference. Teams will design a project which benefits the local community. They then pitch their idea in order to win funding and go on to carry out their project in the real world. Spread across 8 days and based in your local area!

GRADUATION

After completing NCS, participants will attend a formal graduation ceremony with their teammates and family. They will receive a certificate signed by the Prime Minister and automatically be enrolled in the NCS Graduate scheme which offers future opportunities.





SAFETY & SUPPORT

We take the safety of participants very seriously. We work with highly experienced partners, employ trained staff and comply with all relevant legislation.

LOGISTICAL ADJUSTMENTS

We are able to make a large number of logistical adjustments to our programme in order to adequately support a young person, based on availability. If you think a young person will require specific adjustments, please contact us as soon as possible and complete an application form. Adjustments may include things such as wheelchair abseiling, specialised transport, raised camp beds, and prayer rooms.

STAFF ADJUSTMENTS AND SUPPORT

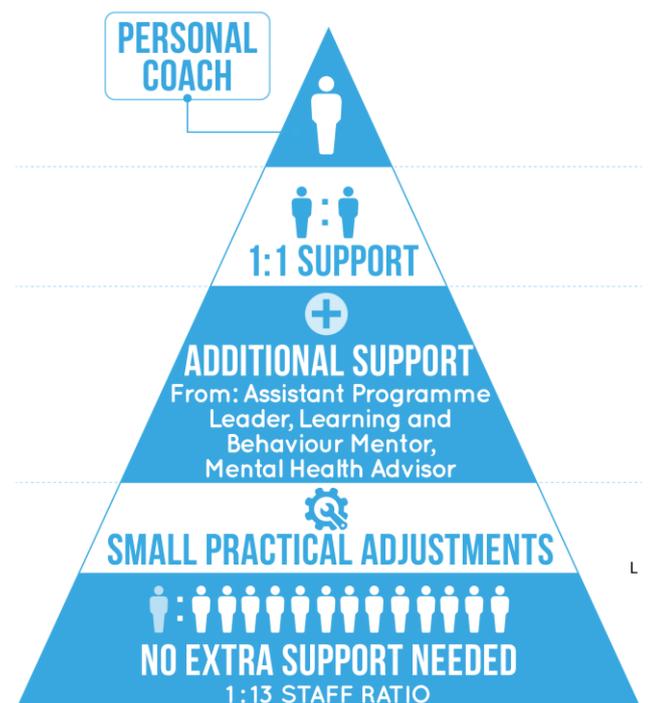
All staff are assessed, trained and DBS checked before the programme and the minimum staff to young person ratio is 1:12. In some cases we can offer more staff support for a young person, or 1 to 1 support. In the past we have provided support workers, wheelchair accessible equipment, transport support, specialist dietary support, and reasonable adjustments (Eg, ground floor room, programme in widgets/Makaton). After completing a full medical and support form, adjustments and support are provided on a case by case basis taking into account any follow up information, requests from the parent/Guardian, and the young person's needs.

PARTICIPANT CODE OF CONDUCT

Before starting the programme, all participants will sign a Code of Conduct outlining the behaviour expected of them. If a young person persistently or seriously breaks this code, then we will ask them to leave the programme.

RISK ASSESSMENTS AND EXPERIENCED CENTRES

All activities are risk assessed and we carefully select the outdoor centres we use based on their experience in working with a wide range of young people. All activities are adaptable to different needs.



HOW TO APPLY FOR NCS

1

Submit a completed application form

You can apply for a place on NCS through our website www.ncsyas.co.uk or by post. You will need to complete a full application form including payment and medical and support information.



2

We find you a provisional place

Once we have received an application, we will check if there is an available place. NCS is a popular programme and places are limited. If we are not able to offer your teenager a provisional place, we will put them on a waiting list.



3

We gather further information

If you have indicated that the applicant has medical, behavioural or support needs, we will contact you for more information on how we can support them on NCS. This can involve requesting a copy of an EHC plan or SEN statement and providing signed consent for personal care, night support and/ or medication management. If applicable, you can request programme adaptations to activities, accommodation, transport and/ or providing specialist equipment. We may also require feedback or consent from doctors or professionals that work with your young person.



4

We find a suitable Support Worker

If applicable, we will match your young person to a Support Worker to safely support them on the programme.



4

We confirm your place

Once we are satisfied we have all the information we need to provide appropriate support for your young person, we will confirm your space on NCS.

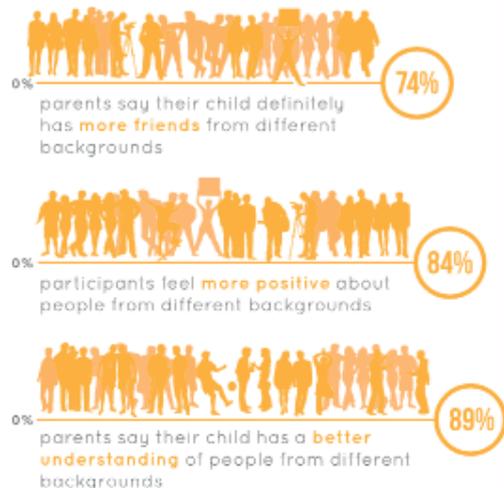


5

We send you information about the programme

About one month before your teenager is due to start NCS, we will send you your timetable and an information pack to help you prepare for the programme.

NCS facilitates making new friends and widening social networks:



Both parents and teachers – particularly those from schools with relatively low levels of diversity – value the social mixing aspect of NCS and think that participants benefit enormously from it.



Completing a medical form does not tie you in to the programme, but it will allow us to give you further information on how we could support your young person on the programme.

To start an online application, visit www.ncsyas.co.uk or call us on **020 3510 5050**

(Alternatively, contact your local team for more information)

Case study: Louie's NCS Experience



I would like to write about my son, Louie's experience on the National Citizen Service (NCS) programme this summer. Louie is unable to write this himself so I will try to convey his feelings and experiences.

When I announced the NCS programme to Louie's father, he was still quite doubtful and he expressed all the fears that I had to put aside. We were worried that no one would speak to Louie. However his father allowed me to go ahead and give Louie an opportunity of a lifetime.

Louie's one to one support worker, Tracy, was amazing. A lot of my fears vanished when I met her. She was so calm and gentle and very encouraging with Louie.

During the summer programme, some of the young people had made friends with Louie and he introduced me to them. They had got to know him really well.

I know that a lot of the activities were adapted to meet his physical needs (hypermobility and poor muscle strength). His new friends had also been there for him to give him encouragement and praise.

Louie's confidence has increased enormously since attending NCS. He has developed a real presence when he communicates. He feels more confident when he wants to speak or sing and his articulation of words and ideas has also really developed. In the past if he believed he could not do something, he would often give up but now he pushes through difficulties more readily.

Case Study:

Michael's NCS Experience



I couldn't believe a programme like National Citizen Service (NCS) existed. I was in disbelief as I want my son to take part in as many opportunities as possible. NCS proved to be a great programme that provided respite, but not in the usual sense. Michael got so much from NCS - meeting new people, trying new activities and living away from home with 'strangers'.

With Michael being non-verbal, he told me through smiling what a great time he was having. On the first day, Michael's support workers had to encourage him to join in but from then on, he was excited to meet his team and staff on NCS and went back with a massive smile on his face.

Michael is a very happy and easy going person but now he has more confidence with new activities and meeting new people. During NCS, Michael got involved with rock climbing, football and indoor cricket, to name just a few activities. He enjoyed his time at Portway Lifestyle Centre as he met people like him and made new friends different to those at his school.

When Michael wasn't busy participating in physical activities, he was learning new skills in the photography sessions, where he got to express his creativity. With photography being such a success, he was given a tablet for the rest of the programme which he used to capture all team events.

During the third week, Michael and his team were involved in a project with their social action partner, Coombeswood Canal Trust. Michael got stuck in and helped with several jobs including painting fences and sheds, gardening and hedge trimming. He also managed to spend his lunchtime on canal boat which he thoroughly enjoyed.

I would tell other parents don't be afraid. NCS is a great opportunity for your child to meet new people and build confidence. Everyone I spoke to along the way put the effort in and reassured me they would do everything they could to help him participate.

NCS works because of the people. Everyone is so nice and willing to help. NCS has helped me take the weight off my shoulders. I now know he can live with others and gain independence away from home. Michael's confidence and smile grew with each day on NCS.



Case Study:

Naeema's Story

Naeema has a hearing impairment, developmental delay and a heart condition, though this did not hold her back from thriving on NCS!

Naeema first heard of NCS at her school Abbey Grange, and was interested in meeting new people and raising her confidence. Naeema has experienced difficulties growing up following on from having a hearing impairment, developmental delay, anxiety and a heart condition. Naeema and her mum were keen for her to go on the programme but were unsure due to the additional needs she has. After the process of ensuring we could adhere to her specific needs, NCS bought an AED (Defibrillator). The staffing team recruited an amazing support worker, Alice and trained her and others in using an AED to ensure Naeema's safety. Due to specific transport needs, NCS paid for her travel to a programme in Bradford ensuring she would not miss out on the opportunity.

Before NCS

Before NCS Naeema was anxious, as she was travelling to a new area and was worried that she would not know anyone. After previously struggling to make friends, due to her hearing impairment, she was concerned that she would not enjoy NCS. Naeema met her support worker, Alice, before she went away on the programme at the information evening which really helped Naeema feel more calm, knowing she would know at least one person that would be going away and get on with them.

"I was interested in making new friends, before I have struggled with this due to not being able to hear. I have been on residential with a group for deaf young people though I struggled here to make friends, I wanted to make friends with lots of people who had similar interests and thought that something like this that was not in school and not disabilities would be a good place to meet people," Naeema told us.

Phase 1: Adventure

Naeema said "In the first week we went hiking and our Senior Mentor Helen, said we had to find out three facts about each other. I did this with two people but it really helped me to get to know those people and felt more confident."

"I definitely feel that NCS has helped to raise my confidence and given me the chance to try new things. I've been on residential before with my youth group for hearing impaired young people but I struggled to make friends there. I feel I have made friends here; at school there is no one who has the same disability as me and I struggled to speak to people at school, but here it is different and I've been encouraged to show what makes me different."

Phase 2: Discovery

"My biggest challenge was my hearing, the most useful thing was the public speaking session in Phase 2. During this I wrote a speech and shared it with the whole wave about what it is like to be deaf. The next day we went to visit our community partner and they made an effort to include me and make sure I could understand. It felt good to know people took on what I said and tried to action it."

Phase 3: Social Action

"During the Social Action part we were working with Adults with learning disabilities. This was my favourite part, I met a girl who was also deaf and we were using sign language to communicate. This gave me a chance to show the team what I could do and they all thought it was amazing! I was really proud of what I did there!"

Support Worker Alice

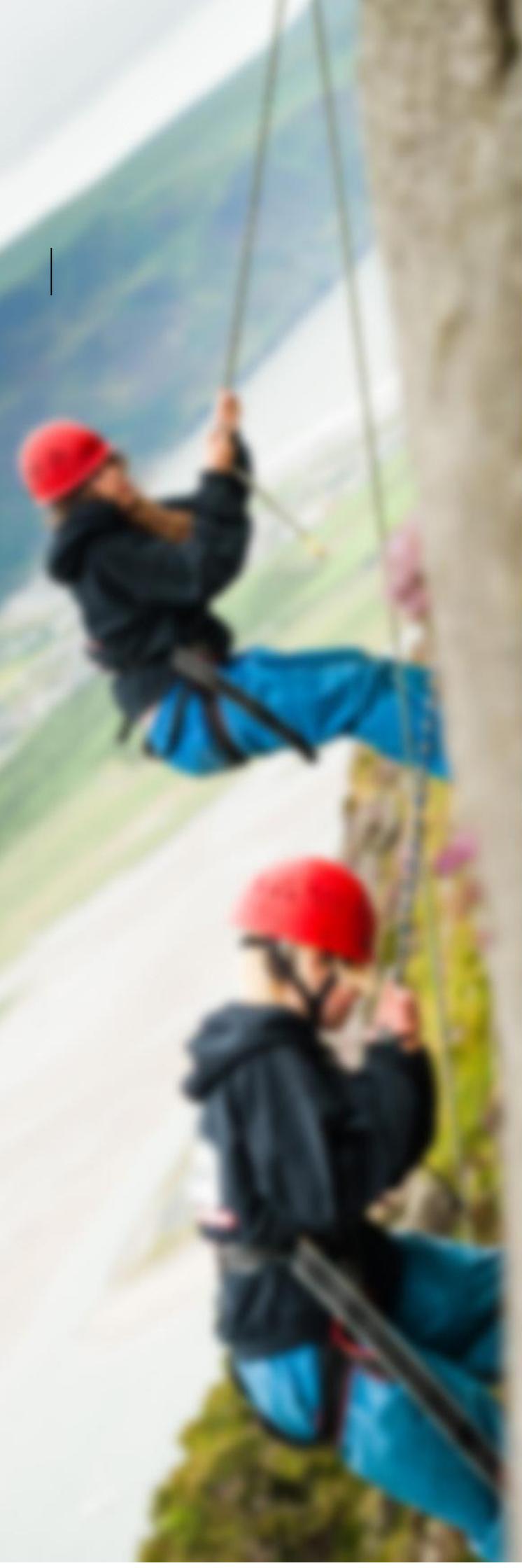
Naeema said, "I had a support worker at school and we didn't have similar interests, with Alice I feel it is different. I felt comfortable with her and felt easy to ask her for help. I struggle with talking to people because I can't hear them, Alice made it easy to understand what we were doing."

"I want to become a paramedic in the future, though because of my heart condition I was not sure I would be allowed, Alice has helped me get in touch with someone who works for the Ambulance service and see whether I will be able to do it. I feel that she has gone beyond what she needed to do."

Best part of NCS

"The best part of NCS has been growing in confidence. When Canoeing, the instructor asked who wanted to jump in the water, I really wanted to but was scared of what people would think of me. In the end I did it and realised people don't care! This will be helpful in the future knowing that people don't care about what you do. "

"I feel I will use things I have learnt here on NCS in the future. In September I am going to begin college, I feel after NCS I could start conversations and make friends there."



SAMPLE PACKING LIST - PART 1

This packing list may change so please check the packing list for your particular programme once you have a confirmed place.

CLOTHING (A GUIDE)

- T-Shirts
- Sweatshirts or jumpers
- Extra thermal tops
- Thick and thin socks for walking
- 2 pairs of trousers for walking (tracksuit bottoms or hiking trousers)
- Trousers / jeans / shorts
- Underwear
- Pyjamas / Nightwear
- Sunhat
- Swimwear (you will not be made to wear a swimsuit if you do not wish to)

Other Essentials

- A packed lunch for the coach journey on the first day
- Day bag (e.g. a rucksack)
- Waterproof jacket (if you have one)
- Torch (if you have one)
- Bottle for drinking water
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Sun cream
- Insect repellent
- Prescribed medication (if needed)

Other Essentials

- Note pad and pen
- Sunglasses
- Blister kit
- Walking boots (only if you already have them)
- Books or magazines
- Money (£10 max) *You do not need any money as everything is provided. However, there may be occasions where you can buy sweets etc if you want to.*

*Age Eligibility – Young people with a birthday before 31 August 1999 will be eligible to participate if they are not older than 17 on any part of the programme. There are exceptions to this, and for more information please contact us on 020 3542 2400.