



Short Breaks Service Statement

Information on Short Breaks for children and young people with disabilities or additional needs in the London Borough of Sutton

The Short Breaks Statement will be kept under review and formally reviewed either annually or when any changes are proposed (whichever is sooner) by the Children and Young People's Disability Service to ensure that it continues to meet children and parents/carers needs.

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Introduction

This Short Breaks Services Statement provides information about the services that are available, how they can be accessed and how they have been designed to meet the needs of families with disabled children living in the London Borough of Sutton.

The current legislative framework that underpins the Local Authority Short Breaks Service for disabled children and their families is;

Paragraph 6 of the Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 requires Local Authorities to provide a Short Breaks service designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children. In addition to this duty the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 came into effect on 1 April 2011. The regulation requires each Local Authority to produce a Short Breaks Services statement so that families living in their authority know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for accessing these services, and how the range of Short Breaks is designed to meet the local needs of families with disabled children.

Short Breaks are designed to improve and promote better outcomes for children and young people with disabilities and their families. Consultation and feedback with children and young people, parents and carers helps to guide the development and commissioning of short break activities.

We aim to continue to provide a range of short break services for children and young people with disabilities, between the ages of 0 and 17 years (up to the young person's 18th birthday), who live in the London Borough of Sutton.

We recognise that all families have different needs and requirements for support and provision at different times, and that those needs can fluctuate. In Sutton we have developed a tiered model of support which includes universal provision that families are confident can meet their needs and the needs of their children, as well as core and enhanced provision and support.

Our Aims

The provision of a Short Break aims to:

- Promote the health, safety and well-being of disabled children and young people, ensuring they can fully participate in family and community life, enjoying themselves with friends and making decisions about their lives
- Prevent family crises through the provision of the right level of support at the right time

Our aim is to:

- Provide positive experiences for children/young people to encourage social and emotional development and prevent social isolation
- Help children/young people develop independence
- Provide an important break from caring responsibilities to allow parents/carers to recharge their batteries or spend time with other children or partners/friends.
- Empower families to make informed choices about short break services they access
- Improve and promote better outcomes for children/young people with disabilities and their families/carers
- Ensure fair access to services

We want to work together with children, parents/carers and providers to:

- Enable families to find and access services for themselves within the Local Offer that meet their needs with minimal intervention and requirements for assessment.
- To develop short breaks services that meet their needs.
- To recognise that all children and young people are unique and may require different levels of support and different types of short breaks depending on their needs and circumstances and those of their family.

We understand that all families are different so they will need varied levels of support and types of short breaks. Many families' needs will be met through locally-available universal services. Some families will need more support than others because of the nature of their child's disability and its severity, and some families may need more support because of their individual circumstances. This is

why we assess each child and family who meet the initial eligibility criteria, to ensure we provide the right level of support.

What is a Short Break?

Short Breaks form one element of the support offered by the London Borough of Sutton to children and young people with disabilities and their families. They provide opportunities to spend time away from their primary carer, take part in positive activities and work towards agreed outcomes, while also giving much needed breaks for the parent/carer. Short Breaks are personal to individual needs and can include day, evening, overnight, weekend, or holiday activities in a range of settings including the family home, a residential setting or a community setting.

Eligibility Criteria - Our Tiered Approach

Short Breaks are for children and young people who:

- Have a disability that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
- Need support to take part in leisure activities
- Are between 0 and 17 years old
- Live in the London Borough of Sutton.

Once the above criteria has been established, the London Borough of Sutton uses the Functional Needs Assessment, in combination with an Early Help Assessment or Short Breaks Review, to determine the level of support required for your child and family. The holistic assessment will determine whether your child is eligible for Universal, Core or Enhanced Short Breaks support.

Tier One: Universal Services

The London Borough of Sutton believes that disabled children and young people should be able to access universal services, experience fun and enjoy themselves with friends, just the same as other children and young people. We promote inclusion, and support our young people to enjoy the company and friendships of their non-disabled peers, as well as increase their confidence, life skills and

independence in the community. We are currently exploring new ideas for developing our range of short breaks including specialist and non-specialist services in universal settings.

When we assess for short breaks we take into consideration your child's ability to access universal services either independently or with some support.

We also offer the iCount card, and families who are not eligible for a funded short break but whose child has a disability can still access this. The iCount card is directly linked to the Disabled Children & Young People's Register. This is a secure database that captures information about all children and young people aged 0-25 years with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) living within the London Borough of Sutton.

The information that you provide is used anonymously to show the use of and demand for services in Sutton. It helps us to plan, monitor, and develop appropriate facilities and services for disabled children, young people, and their families. Once registered you can request an iCount card which gives your child and their carer access to subsidised entry fees to many universal attractions within Sutton, and throughout the country.

Tier Two: Core Offer

The Core offer is for children and young people with disabilities assessed as having needs over and above those that cannot be met through universal activities.

The Core Short Breaks Offer is:

Option 1:

Term Time – A contribution towards one weekly after school club or one alternative weekend activity

School Holidays – A contribution towards one session during each school holiday week for a maximum of 10 sessions

Option 2:

Term Time – Up to a maximum of 3 hours of Personal Assistant support via Direct Payments

School Holidays – Up to a maximum of 6 hours of Personal Assistant support via Direct Payments

You may wish your child or young person to access universal activities or sport clubs that cater for children with disabilities as part of their weekly short break activity. It is important to us that there are a range of options to meet the identified need and planned outcomes from our assessment. To do this you may need the support of a personal assistant to take your child to an activity, which will enable you to have a break. Option 2 may be best suited to this, whilst we fund the PA support, parents fund the activity.

Tier Three: Enhanced Offer

Enhanced short breaks are for those families who require a higher level of short breaks with extra specialist care. The assessment will consider the impact of your child's disability on the family unit as well as environmental factors. Examples of the need for the enhanced offer include parents with significant health needs of their own; a child's disability impacting upon sibling wellbeing; children with complex medical and/or physical needs; families with more than one child with disabilities.

Not all families that experience these circumstances will require an enhanced support package because people manage their challenges in different ways. Our assessment will look at each unique situation combined with the child's needs in order to determine eligibility for an enhanced package of support.

The short breaks provided will be in addition to the core offer as outlined above. The enhanced short breaks offer may include overnight stays, and/or increased specialist short breaks in term time and the school holidays, pending the recommendations of the social worker assessment.

Choice

It is important to us that children are able to share their views, wishes and feelings about their short breaks. Furthermore, we recognise that parents and carers know their child best and are well placed to identify a suitable activity or short break. Your

worker will help you in identifying whether your chosen activity will meet your child's assessed needs and work towards the planned outcome.

If you are unsure what groups and activities are available in the borough, please do ask your specialist support worker or social worker for any recommendations they may have. You can also contact the Family Information Service on 0208 770 6000. They have a detailed directory they can filter to an activity of your choice (e.g. all Karate clubs in the borough). The Local Offer is another useful resource and suitable activities may be found on the website:

https://www.sutton.gov.uk/w/about-sutton-s-local-offer-website?p_l_back_url=%2Fweb%2Fguest%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dlocal%2Boffer

Transition

We want the transition from children's to adult services to be an exciting and optimistic time for young people, and to support them as they become adults and take their place in the world.

In Sutton we start preparation for adulthood when young people are 14 years old. We begin their Preparation for Adulthood plan and work with the young person, their parents or carers, and the other professionals involved to help create a smooth transition into adulthood. For those children aged 16 + who receive short breaks we also attend their EHCP Annual Reviews to ensure that we align our targets and actions to help achieve the best outcomes for them.

When a young person turns 17 we will make a referral to Adults Social Care for a Care Act assessment. This assesses their eligibility for Adults' Services social care support, and by making a timely referral we help to provide continuity and consistency for the young person.

How we measure impact and outcomes

We want to make sure that our short breaks services are high quality and improve outcomes and life opportunities, and this is informed by gathering feedback from parents and carers, children and young people, our short breaks providers and partner agencies.

We work collaboratively with our short breaks providers and partner agencies to achieve positive outcomes for all children and young people accessing services. Providers work in partnership with families so that they are involved and included in the on-going improvement and development of each service. For example, some providers will seek feedback from children and young people during the group sessions they attend in order to plan future sessions and programmes. We quality assure our service through regular meetings with our commissioned providers in which we obtain feedback on their services and the progress individual children are making.

In Sutton we want to ensure your short breaks package is making a positive difference to your family. To do this we consider what is important to you and what you want to experience from your short break. Our support packages are designed to meet one of the following outcomes which will be agreed with your worker:

Family Resilience - you and your family will feel stronger and better equipped to provide good care to your child when times are demanding. Whether this is due to challenging behaviours or complex health needs the support should improve the quality of your family life and relationships. This may help you if you worry that without support your family could struggle to meet your child's needs.

Social Integration - your child will experience positive and fun age-appropriate interactions with other children that make them happy. This may help you if your child cannot access leisure activities with other children or has limited social opportunities to make friends.

Independence - your child will learn new skills that will equip them to achieve their full potential in adult life. This may help you if you feel your child lacks the confidence or skills to be independent.

Each year a review is carried out which assesses these outcomes to ensure the short break continues to meet your family's needs. We will seek updates from you, your child and the provider of your short break. If the outcome has been met, then your short breaks package will be reviewed for the following year to ensure that the short break remains beneficial and purposeful for everyone. It may even mean that you no longer need the support of a short breaks package.

How we listen to the views of children and young people with disabilities

We carry out regular sessions with children and young people so that we can hear their thoughts and ideas about the type of short breaks that we offer. We consult with a range of young people, including those who are non verbal and who have severe learning disabilities, about their short breaks. Where possible we will co-produce services with their involvement.

What children and young people have told us

Our children and young people recently shared that they would like to do things with friends and seek activities that help them make friends. They would like the opportunity to do things in the holidays, and as they get older they want help with practical topics to support the transition to adulthood.

How we listen to the views of parents and carers

The London Borough of Sutton values the views and opinions of parents and carers to help shape services for children and young people with disabilities, and undertakes regular consultations about the types of short breaks their children enjoy.

We hold a number of information sharing, consultation and participation events across the borough at community venues and specialist schools. At these events, we ask families what they want us to consider when planning and commissioning short break services. We also work closely with our Parent Carer Forum, who provide feedback to us about current needs and future expectations.

Families continue to play a key role in the shaping and development of services. The main themes that have emerged during the consultations are as follows:

- having a choice of short break activities, particularly holiday provision
- opportunities for disabled children and young people to socialise and develop friendships
- short break services that support disabled children with complex needs
- short breaks services delivered with consistent staff from familiar venues which offer a safe environment

How we ensure short breaks are safe

All short breaks providers are quality assured to ensure they provide a high standard of service. This involves them providing a range of information about their organisation, including evidence of their safeguarding procedures and staff training. They must also demonstrate that they follow a safer recruitment process, and employ staff with relevant experience reflecting the needs of the children and young people they work with.

All short breaks providers have had a Quality Assurance review carried out by our Quality Assurance team. Commissioners meet regularly with our providers to review services and seek feedback from parents, carers and young people about services.

Reviews

All packages are reviewed annually. The proposed package and review period will be discussed with the family prior to being presented to our resources panel. Any review period must consider key transition points for the child. For example, primary and secondary school transition and transition into adulthood.

Further Information

For more information about our Short Breaks, please visit our website where there is a range of useful Bitesize documents for Short Breaks, iCount and Direct Payments:

<https://www.sutton.gov.uk/-/children-who-need-additional-support-short-breaks>

For more information regarding the Children and Young People's Disability Service, or to make a new referral for a short break or iCount card, please contact the Children's First Contact Service on 0208 770 6001 or by email

childrensfirstcontactservice@sutton.gov.uk