

## **ISLE OF WIGHT SHORT BREAKS SERVICES STATEMENT**

**As at October 1<sup>st</sup> 2011**

### **What is it for?**

Under new legislation which was brought in this year (on 1 April) relating to Carer's Regulations and Short Breaks, each local authority in the UK is required to publish a statement telling parents and carers of children with disabilities what is available for them in their local area, how to access activities and support and how parents/carers have been involved in the process.

The Government programme 'Aiming High for Children with disabilities' ran for three years (four for 'pathfinder' authorities who led the way with good practice) and was funded in three main ways: £340 million was provided to the NHS to support short breaks, equipment and palliative care; £340 million of ring-fenced (protected) money was given to local authorities for short breaks and child care and grant funding was also given to the Contact A Family organisation to increase the role parents and carers played in shaping future services.

The success of 'Aiming High for Children with disabilities' has led to the development of these new regulations, which are intended to sustain the good progress made in providing more services and activities for children with disabilities.

### **What is my role in this?**

Parents and carers play an important role in shaping future services. By either taking part in consultation events, surveys, or a simple questionnaire, to sitting regularly on strategic groups, parents can influence and shape services so that they respond to what families need.

The purpose of the October statement is to help us to plan our short break services for the year 2012 and beyond, alongside welcome feedback from parents and existing short breaks providers. It will help to ensure that we 'buy in and provide' the range of short break services that parents and carers require.

Last year, both parents and children with disabilities and young people were involved in the commissioning process – both in assessing bids and interviewing potential providers. The providers commented that this was a real test of their service and what they could offer.

As before, we will invite both parents, and children and young people to be involved with this process, to ensure that the organisations chosen provide a service which is:

- i) suitable;
- ii) provided at a time that parents and children require; and
- iii) which meets their needs.

## **How this statement has been prepared**

This statement has been prepared in consultation with parents, children and young people, staff in the Family Information Zone, and professionals from social care, and health who lead on the strategic development of services.

## **Who is responsible?**

The lead officer responsible for developing short break services is Moira Henderson, short term breaks implementation officer who reports to Simon Dear, commissioner for longer term interventions, who in turn, reports to Ali Matthews, deputy director for safeguarding.

## **What use is the statement?**

In light of the current exciting changes in social care, and the new 'Reclaiming Social Work model', there are key changes to the ways in which services are being delivered. As such, this statement is a 'live, working document' that will be regularly reviewed and revised.

We hope that this statement will help us to plan future services reflecting what families want.

We would like as many families to have a chance to comment on the statement so wider consultation will be led by our parent forums, with young people and supported by professionals and this will take place during the spring months.

The statement will be regularly revised and updated on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects the views of our children and young people and their families.

## **Publication and Review**

We will ensure that our short breaks statement is published on our local authority website, linked to the Family Information zone and the Isle of Wight NHS. In addition, the statement will also be published on the Parent Voice website – a website belonging to a voluntary group of parents who represent parents whose children have special needs who support us in providing better services and who want to reflect the views of as many parents and carers as possible.

A copy of this statement can be downloaded from the following site:

Family Information Zone                      [www.wightchyps.org.uk/](http://www.wightchyps.org.uk/)

Or, if desired, a copy of the statement can be accessed via:

Local authority website	<a href="http://www.iwight.com/homepage/">www.iwight.com/homepage/</a>
Primary Care Trust website	<a href="http://www.iow.nhs.uk/">www.iow.nhs.uk/</a>
Parents Voice	<a href="http://www.parentsvoice-iw.co.uk/">www.parentsvoice-iw.co.uk/</a>

We will use our ongoing partnership and consultation with parent forums on the Isle of Wight, to make changes and improvements and to ensure that our short breaks continue to reflect the needs of all the different families living on the Isle of Wight who have children with disabilities.

## **What is a short break?**

A short break enables children with disabilities and young people with an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, relaxing and having fun with their friends. They also provide families with a 'break' from their caring responsibilities; they give parents and carers a chance to unwind, rest or to spend time with their other children.

A short break can be of one hour upwards and consist of an evening activity, after-school activity, weekend or holiday activity.

Our parents have told us that they want more short breaks which provide them with time to themselves – either for leisure opportunities, work or training but have also asked for short break activities which involve the whole family or siblings, who can often benefit from this opportunity.

## **Why focus on children with disabilities?**

All children have needs. Some have learning difficulties, behavioural difficulties, health problems or disabilities. Whatever their level of need, children require positive opportunities for development and fun, just like any other child.

Children with disabilities and their families have the same human rights as others do, including the right to the same quality of life as those who do not live with a disability.

All families are, however, different. Some prefer to manage themselves; others require support, ranging from information, advice and guidance to more complex packages of care involving a key worker for their child. Short breaks should be seen as part of the care package that is available in the context of social care services.

## **What of prevention?**

A key principle of early intervention or prevention is to provide sufficient support to families so that problems are identified early and support given, so that difficulties don't increase. Parents have indicated that information, advice and guidance is crucial to them – as well as being able to speak to someone at the end of the phone. Lesley Forde, our information officer for families who have children with special needs, learning difficulties or disabilities (SEN/LDD) provides a valuable service at the Family Information Zone.

Lesley can signpost families to advice about grants, payments and childcare as well as explaining the range of support services and activities which exist to support families who want these.

## **Do needs stay the same?**

A child's needs will fluctuate over time, as will those of a young person or parent/carer. They are not static and need to be assessed and regularly reviewed.

It may be that families can benefit from information and support from universal services i.e. those services that are available to all, such as:

- GPs and surgeries;
- health visitors;
- children's centres;
- libraries;
- Family Information Zone;
- childminders and nurseries;
- holiday clubs;
- educational support from Parent Partnership and school Sencos.

However, it may be that a family's needs require more support and intervention from health, education or the local authority (statutory services). Most often, it is appropriate to make an assessment of the child's needs. This can be in the form of either a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or initial assessment.

The CAF is quite an in-depth assessment that aims to provide a coordination of support and a time-limited intervention, ie, six weeks of support.

An initial assessment may highlight support that may be sufficient. If not, however, a more in-depth assessment – known as a core assessment - may be completed. This usually involves a key worker and the agreement and involvement of the family. A care plan will be written and this may involve the input of several agencies; for example, the children's disability team (CDT), an occupational therapist, paediatrician and so forth. All care plans are subject to ongoing monitoring and review to ensure that the package of support provided is appropriate and is meeting the child's needs.

All parents/carers of a disabled child have the right to ask for an assessment of their child's needs.

### **What short breaks are on offer?**

Short breaks should be seen within the context of the wider social care support network that exists on the Island. It is important that families have the appropriate information they need, understand who to talk to and how to access services.

### **What can we offer you?**

**Beaulieu House** is a specialist residential unit that offers children with disabilities and severe and complex needs the opportunity for an overnight stay, giving their families some respite. Beaulieu House also offers tea visits, where your child can familiarise themselves with the setting and 'outreach' i.e. the opportunity to go into the community with support.

The **Carisbrooke Contact Centre** offers a range of services, but most importantly, help to enable your child to wash, toilet themselves and dress. This is called domiciliary care. The Contact Centre will also help your child to access the community with support.

The **Family Link** scheme offers families of a disabled child the opportunity to link with another family. Carefully selected, these family links often last for years, giving the disabled child time with another family – whether during the day time or overnight.

All the above 'in-house' services are accessed through an application made to the Family Support Panel by a key worker or core assessment that identifies the child's needs.

**Core Childcare** is a private organisation who were commissioned last year to provide overnights and some day care for children with disabilities. These overnights take place at their carer's home. Core Childcare also offer a series of 'family fun' days which offer a variety of activities during the holidays.

Two specialist clubs exist for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. **Gamezone** runs for teenagers on a Tuesday evening at the Isle of Wight College and the **Lego Club** runs on the first and third Saturday of the month for five to 18 year olds.

A third after-school club for Autistic children aged four to 11 is planned for alternate Wednesdays at Binstead Community Centre called the **Ryde Spectrum Club**. This will provide opportunities for socialisation, play therapy and include children with ADHD and Asperger syndrome.

If you are more adventurous and fancy the idea of tree climbing, then **Goodleaf Tree Climbing** may suit your child. Goodleaf provide you with an opportunity to join **Special Branch** – club for those who climb and also offer bushcraft days, run by **Challenge & Adventure**, where your child will have the opportunity to live outdoors and challenge their orienteering skills.

If football appeals to you, you might want to join the **Isle of Wight Inclusive Football club** which has been so successful that two clubs run after school based at Sandown and Carisbrooke. These welcome all children who are keen on football - one offers more relaxed play; the other competitive playing.

**UKSA** also offer your child the opportunity to try out a range of sailing and watersports taster days in Cowes. However, if further progression is desired, the **H2O Club** is the place for you (an opportunity to sail for a few hours each weekend for six weeks). The **West Wight Sports Centre** also runs specialist swimming sessions on a Friday afternoon and opportunities for 1:1 tuition.

If you enjoy play and a range of fun, rewarding activities, then your child might access play through the **Play Rangers** who will provide play sessions at the special schools. These are fantastic fun and offer your child 3.5 hours of play and exploration. Or, you might prefer to access one of the **YMCA's** day camps during the holidays where you can visit the forest, beach or take part in a series of fun activities.

If you enjoy petting small animals and scenic settings, you can try fishing at **Nettlecombe Farm's** three fishing lakes. Here you can have specialised tuition or you can enjoy a break in one of the farm's holiday cottages.

To find out more about what's on offer, contact Lesley Forde at the Family Information Zone on 01983 821999.

### **What does the NHS provide by way of short breaks?**

The NHS can provide specialist equipment for those children and young people who require either wheelchairs, for example, to get around. Normally, these children will be assessed by a physiotherapist or occupational therapist before the equipment is

matched to their needs. Alternatively, the child's needs will be assessed through a Continuing Care plan that will identify the equipment needed.

The NHS also provides regular and sustained funding each year for a **Learning Disability Nurse** who works at Beaulieu House and who also provides training and support to other staff and to families.

**Specialist nursing** may be required in the child's own home. This can be met by community services as required.

For those children requiring **palliative care**, a service has been commissioned from Naomi House Hospice in Winchester. Naomi House are now running a six-month pilot in which they are providing a 'hospice at home' scheme whereby those children who meet their thresholds for access, can receive 16 days of breaks in a year. These 16 days can be accessed at Naomi House or parents/carers can choose to break up the sessions into four hours once a week or a combination of the two. For those parents who would prefer to look after their children at home, the Paediatric Nursing team support families as required.

Another children's hospice in West Sussex, also provides up to 16 nights free of charge for those children requiring palliative care. You will need to be referred to this service by a healthcare professional or parents/carers can refer their own children. However, parents/carers will have to pay the costs of transport to and from this location.

For more details search on [www.chestnut-tree-house.org.uk](http://www.chestnut-tree-house.org.uk) or contact:

Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice  
Dover Lane, Near Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9PX

Telephone: 0845 450 5820

The NHS also contributes **training to develop the workforce**, eg, by offering training to all professionals working with children, young people, families, foster carers and Family Link. Not all children with disabilities require nursing care, but the family will be given the training they require from their community nurses as their needs evolve: when to recognise that the child is unwell, as each child will be different.

For more details about how services are commissioned in the NHS, contact:

Rachael Hayes, at St. Mary's Hospital, Isle of Wight or on  
[Rachael.hayes@iow.nhs.uk](mailto:Rachael.hayes@iow.nhs.uk)

For questions about paediatric nursing, please contact Rebecca Hepworth, Community Nursing at St. Mary's Hospital, IOW or on  
[Rebecca.hepworth@iow.nhs.uk](mailto:Rebecca.hepworth@iow.nhs.uk)

### **How do I find out about all these activities and more?**

Contact Lesley Forde, the Information Officer for SEN/LDD at FIZ on 01983 821999 or look on Parents Voice website: [www.parentsvoice-iw.co.uk](http://www.parentsvoice-iw.co.uk)

There will be a payment for each of these activities, however, you should not pay more for your disabled child than any other parent. The charge will vary according to the nature of the activity.

### **How do I access a short break?**

You will be asked to fill out an enrolment form when you enquire about a short break. This will ask you some basic contact information and will enable us to plan our services more effectively in the future. You can find a copy on [www.iwight.com/council/aiminghigh/howdoiac.asp](http://www.iwight.com/council/aiminghigh/howdoiac.asp)

If you have any queries about the above, please contact Moira Henderson, Short Breaks Implementation Officer on 525790 or via [www.aiminghigh@iow.gov.uk](mailto:www.aiminghigh@iow.gov.uk)

### **How will I know that my child can access a short break?**

Your child can access a short break if they live on the Isle of Wight and:

- are in receipt of higher level disability living care component allowance;
- have a statement of special educational needs;
- have undergone a professional assessment, eg, core assessment, common assessment framework or a professional diagnosis (from a paediatrician or psychologist).

Your child may also be receiving a service from one of the following:

- Children's disability team.
- Physiotherapy service.
- Portage service.
- Early support team.
- Beaulieu House residential unit.
- Family Link.
- Occupational therapy service.
- Acute nursing team.
- Early support team.
- Sensory support team.
- CLASS team.

Children and young people can access a short break if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a 'substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.' This may include a physical or learning disability, or a hearing or visual impairment. It includes children with Autism and Asperger's syndrome and children who may have challenging behaviour as a result of their learning disability. It also includes children who have complex needs and who may have palliative, life limiting or a life-threatening condition.

Children will also be able to access a service irrespective of their age, race, religion, gender or nature of their disability.

### **How do you ensure what is fair?**

This is a very complex question and there is no easy answer. Every child and young person is different and, as such, their needs are individual. This is why the

assessment process is so important as it helps to identify what is needed and from whom.

Not everyone requires or welcomes support or intervention. Others may only require support for a limited period; whilst some families may require support to prevent a crisis from worsening. It is important to have a range of services that can support families whatever their needs, and this is what we are trying to develop, in addition to existing services.

We have considered various ways of ensuring that access to short breaks is fair. For example, a voucher system was proposed following experience of the 'AHfDC' programme, the idea being that each family registered for a short break would receive the same number of vouchers with which to access a short break. However, this idea is proving to be difficult to translate into practice and might not be workable. Providers identified some of the key difficulties in implementing this with regard to fairness and the practicalities of needing timely funding 'up-front' with which to plan for services and to recruit appropriately trained staff.

Another suggested method of delivery is via what is known as a Smartcard, which is being currently developed. This would enable families to access a range of services and to receive points on their card. However, this is currently in its developmental stage. It may be that individual commissioning approaches used in other parts of the country and our own models, may provide the answer. These tools often require the families to complete an individual assessment of their needs that are then matched to the resources required.

This is an ongoing area for development. Our intention is to be fair, equitable and transparent about what services we provide as far as possible.

### **How do you know what we want?**

The 'Aiming High for Children with disabilities' programme had four key principles – information; transparency; assessment; participation and feedback. It was based on:

- the need to provide information for parents and carers;
- ensuring that you are clear about how services are provided;
- assessment, ie, how to find out what your child's needs are;
- participation and feedback.

The Isle of Wight Council is committed to these principles. Both participation and feedback are core to ensuring that we respond to your needs.

As part of the AHfDC programme, four consultation events were held with parents, professionals and children asking what was needed. This targeted a comprehensive range of participants.

### **Parents and carers told us:**

"We can't access any facilities without parental support."

"No clubs are available with support."

"I had no knowledge of Aiming High or Family Link."

“My son’s difficulties put such a strain on us as a family ... it would be great to have a few hours’ quality time and just be a normal family.”

“I don’t know what is available or how to access clubs.”

“Not enough help in school holidays. For working families it is difficult to juggle everything.”

“Extend service providers.”

“It would be good every now and then to have a night when your child was looked after by someone else, just to give the rest of the family some time together.”

“I think increasing awareness of the short breaks as well as clear explanations of how to access them would be useful. A lot of the time people are either not aware of the opportunities or not sure how to get their child enrolled.”

**Parents asked us to consider the following when planning and commissioning short breaks for their children:**

- Effective information services – someone to talk to on the phone or in person.
- Information about benefits, direct payments; what information and guidance parents can access.
- Better changing facilities.
- Staff training and an understanding of disability awareness.
- Play equipment that is accessible and safe.
- Specialist clubs for children with disabilities.
- Opportunities to mix with children who are not disabled.
- Safe, secure venues with staff who can be trusted and who are consistent.
- More activities for siblings and the whole family.
- A wide variety of activities, including more challenging ones.

**Parents identified the following barriers to accessing activities:**

- A lack of information about what’s available, how to access this and how to find out about support, information and guidance.
- Insufficient changing rooms and facilities for families.
- Lack of staff training and awareness at activity centres.
- Concerns about site security and safety of venues.
- Lack of awareness from others about disability.

***“You said, we did”***

The information officer’s role was funded by the Family Information Zone (FIZ), in response to parents’ request for better information on services and advice and guidance. FIZ is an excellent place to seek information about childcare, training, direct payments, grant funding, pre-school settings, inclusion or short breaks – to name a few. The Disability Register was also relaunched in response to parental requests.

***“You said, we did”***

Parents met with professionals (and are still meeting with them) to ensure that more children and young people can access sport and leisure centres by providing easy adjustments, eg. wet wheelchairs, moveable hoists, lower level units and larger lockers and increased staff training and awareness. We are currently consulting on whether or not families would like a sensory room located at each leisure centre.

***“You said, we did”***

We developed a training programme for providers and professionals to ensure that those working with children with disabilities have more knowledge and understanding of disability, barriers to communication, transition, managing challenging behaviour and understanding specific syndromes such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

***“You said, we did”***

Providers (of short break activities) meet regularly at Provider Forums and regular safeguarding audits and visits have been undertaken to ensure that all children are safe, and free from harm. Site security, access to children by members of the public, and safeguarding have been high priorities in our commissioning plans.

***“You said, we did”***

Parents requested play equipment that was safe, accessible and stimulating. As a result of parental involvement, two play parks have been adapted and specially built (Seaclose and Beaulieu) so that children with disabilities can enjoy and benefit from these facilities.

***“You said, we did”***

Both specialist and inclusive short breaks have been developed and commissioned in response to your desire for choice. Funding has also been given to direct payments so that those families who wish to provide their own short break activities can do so. Parents, in particular, requested equine therapy and contact with horses for their children. There are plans to provide this as from October onwards for children and their siblings. Look out for ‘Bodster’ and ‘Horse Haven.’

***“You said, we did”***

You made it clear that parents wanted to access short breaks with their children, so we have provided a range of short breaks that accommodate this.

***“You said, we did”***

Parents have also identified that there is a great need for improved changing rooms and toilets for disabled young people. We are looking into plans for improving services in this area currently.

***“You said, we did”***

Parents wanted to know that services that their children use are safe and that staff are ‘disability-friendly’. As a result, we have commissioned the Wightmark to offer a quality assurance standard i.e. to show parents that a service is well run, safe and aware of disability and the need for inclusion. All our providers will be asked to undertake the Wightmark by March 2012.

### **Parents identified as important:**

- Honesty – about resources and access to services.
- Being involved in the design of services.
- Being able to spend time with siblings.
- Being able to spend time as a family together – not necessarily on their own.
- For their child to socially interact with others and to be able to develop their independence.
- Being able to sleep, read a book, leave the door unlocked ... have the time to do nothing.
- Affordability – “some breaks are too expensive.”
- Having some control over their lives.

We have worked hard to try and provide what parents and carers have asked for and will continue to work with parents and carers to do this.

### **Some comments from parents:**

“All the AH activities that we have used have been excellent and X has thoroughly enjoyed them. All the staff have been very understanding and patient. Thank you so much!!!”

“Hi, just had to say how much X enjoyed his day in the woods. He came home exhausted, smoky, and dirty. but so happy and excited at the things he had achieved. Although he had been in Feb, I think he had enjoyed it more in the summer. Thank you for organising the activity and to those who run the day.”

“The staff were brilliant, a dramatic improvement on our previous visit. There was a good mix of male/female young/older staff. They were very friendly and welcoming from the moment we entered the building. The staff remembered each child's name and seemed very confident when talking to them. They encouraged the children to play games, table tennis, crafts or just to sit, chat and spend time with them. I was able to speak to some of the other mums, giving my daughter some space and independence. She loved chatting to the staff, who seemed happy to spend a good amount of time with each child.”

“The tree climbing was fantastic!! X was so brave and got on straight away with it, he went as high as he could go, 50 feet up. The equipment they had for him was great. He said it was the best thing he had ever done in his life. Next time we can all have a go, looking forward to it.”

### **Children and Young People told us they'd like to:**

- do more sailing, canoeing, kayaking;
- horse riding;
- play more musical instruments;
- swim or access the gym at other leisure centres;
- go to museums, concerts, theatres;
- stay at Butlins;
- travel to the mainland, eg. Portsmouth Spinnaker and London;
- visit more places on the Isle of Wight with friends;
- go out for meals;
- learn new skills;

- go to clubs and after school clubs.

***“You said, we did”***

We provided three all-terrain wheelchairs for easy access to the beaches, forests and beautiful parks of the Isle of Wight. Currently, these are kept at St. George’s school, Beaulieu Residential unit and Dinosaur Isle (so as to give easy access to the beach).

***“You said, we did”***

We commissioned challenging and adventurous, outdoor activities such as sailing, windsurfing, kayaking and canoeing at UKSA; tree-climbing and bush craft sessions from Goodleaf Tree Climbing; day camps from the YMCA; coarse fishing and contact with animals at Nettlecombe Farm.

***“You said, we did”***

We met with the leisure centres to provide specialist swimming sessions and to see how to best use capital funding to make easy adaptations to remove barriers to swimming and gym access. Parents have also worked hard with leisure centre managers to view new plans for improved facilities to ensure that accessibility is key.

***“You said, we did”***

You have asked us for more opportunities for young people to learn new skills i.e. socialising with others, teamwork, resilience and communicating with others. Each short break provider knows how important these skills are.

***“You said, we did”***

We bought a caravan so that children and their families could access the beach and facilities of the Island with other families and friends. We will respond to feedback that asks for more fencing below the caravan, a stronger shower chair and possibly, extended ramp.

***“You said, we did”***

We ensured that some play parks – such as the Beaulieu play park and Seaclose playground – are more inclusive and accessible for children with disabilities. Mark King of Level 42 opened Beaulieu’s playground in the summer.

***“You said, we did”***

You wanted more opportunities to make friends and to play with equipment or I.T. So, the specialist Lego club was established and Gamezone for teenagers so that you could make friends, enjoy other people and equipment.

Our ongoing consultation with parents and carers and children and young people has enabled us to assess and plan for the needs of our local children with disabilities’ population ensuring that we have a range of high-quality short breaks that have all been agreed and identified through our consultation.

Our aim is to ensure every child with disabilities has had the opportunity to access short breaks.

Our short breaks programme to date has included:

- Residential care
- Home care
- Holiday activities – both inclusive and specialist
- Out of school activities
- Overnight short breaks
- Family Fun Days

We recognise that we still have gaps in provision and need to develop the market for short breaks, especially for those young people with specific needs, eg. ASD, who are under-represented, as well as those children with physical difficulties, so that they too have a voice and the opportunity to influence short break delivery.

There are current plans to develop a befriender/mentor service so that young people can interact with people their own age and take the steps necessary – with support – towards achieving more independence. Also to ensure that existing services – clubs, activities and organisations – are more inclusive; removing barriers to access so that all children and young people can enjoy their activities.

We plan to provide organisations and schools with an Inclusion Handbook with a range of resources and training opportunities to remove barriers to activities.

### **How will we find more short break providers for next year?**

We plan to use a grants prospectus, ie, the opportunity for any organisation or voluntary group to apply for funding in order to deliver our stated aims which are:

- for more children with disabilities to be involved in short break activities than before;
- for more inclusive provision (ie, without barriers),
- for parents/carers to feel supported and that their disabled child's needs are being met.

Our requirements – in the form of the prospectus – will be published in October. We invite potential providers to bid for funding and to say how our main aims will be achieved in the way that parents and children or young people want. A panel will decide which applications will be successful and as before, parents and children/young people will be involved in this process.

Those successful at these bids will provide services as from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2012.

If you would like to add your comments as to what might be provided for your child or young person, please respond either to the short term breaks implementation officer on 525790 or contact Parents Voice with your views - [www.parentsvoice-iw.co.uk/](http://www.parentsvoice-iw.co.uk/)

### **How do you respond to emergencies?**

All families experience crises from time to time and may require additional funding to help them through the crisis. This may be due to having no extended family or

network of friends nearby who they can call on to help. Our aim is to support families during particularly difficult times in whatever way is most appropriate.

If you require information, advice or guidance, please contact the FIZ team on 01983 821999.

If the concern involves a safeguarding issue i.e. any potential or actual harm to a child or young person under 18, then the person concerned should contact the First Response Team who are based at the St. James' Centre, Newport on 01983 814374 (or out of hours service 01983 821105) for advice and support. Any further investigation is then the responsibility of the social care team and the police.

Other useful contacts are:

Hampshire Police: General enquiries 0845 045 45 45	Emergency: 999
National Child Protection Helpline	0808 800 5000
Child Line	0800 1111 (24 hours)

If you have a medical concern about the well-being of your child, you should contact your GP or the paediatrician who may be working with your child.

St. Mary's Hospital	01983 524081
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### **What if parents would prefer to organise their own packages of support?**

Sometimes parents and carers would prefer to manage their own short breaks. They can do this by using 'direct payments' which provide families with money instead of direct services. This means that a family can buy in their own short breaks' carer thereby becoming 'employers'. For example, a family may employ their own home sitter or carer (someone already known and trusted by the family). Some families may choose a mixture of direct payments and services whilst others may choose to just have direct payments.

If you would like to find out more about the Direct Payments service, please contact Cheryl O'Fori on 01983 525790 or [Chery O'fori@iow.gov.uk](mailto:Chery O'fori@iow.gov.uk)

It is worth pointing out that direct payments are not for everyone. Not only will you become an employer, but you will also need to complete various administrative tasks.

### **Transport**

Currently, our most of our providers do not offer transport to and from locations. However, we appreciate that transport is needed by many families in order for their children to access a short break. We also know that transport can be expensive and time-consuming – so we will be working in the future with our parent forums to ensure that we can improve this situation and, where possible, provide transport. We will work with our providers and our colleagues in Adult Services to ensure that where possible and where appropriate, young people are supported to become independent travellers.

For those children requiring access to healthcare services on the mainland, both Red Funnel and Wightlink provide discounted fares. You will need to evidence with a letter that your child requires regular visits to the mainland for treatment.

For more details, contact Rachael Hayes on 01983 524081 or [Rachael.hayes@iownhs.uk](mailto:Rachael.hayes@iownhs.uk)

### **What of transition?**

Moving from one important phase of life to another is called 'transition'. A good example of a key transition phase is the journey towards preparing for school for the first time. Here, the early support team provide a valuable service to the parents of children with disabilities or complex health needs, by advising and supporting parents so that the transition to school is as smooth as possible.

Further key stages in a young person's life are the transition to (formerly middle) and then high school, and the need to begin planning for the future and employment choices. Another key transition stage is usually at eighteen when the young person is judged to be an adult.

The Education Participation Team provides information, advice and guidance in relation to education, training and employment to all children and young people who have a statement. Here, at the age of fourteen, a specialist adviser from the team will contribute to a Transition plan (drawn up by the Senco), which is designed to map out the pathway through school to future employment and adulthood. The adviser will continue to support the young person, parents and/or carers until the young person reaches adulthood.

At the age of 16 years, if the young person wishes to transfer to further education or government-funding training, then the transition plan and statement stop and a 'Moving On' plan (S139a) is completed. This signposts the support that the college or training provider will need to provide to the young person.

The team can also write these 'Moving On' plans for children without statements who they feel can benefit from this support if they are leaving school and entering work-based training or further education.

Our aim is to support children as they become young adults and take their place in the world. Developing positive activities for young people is a key part of ensuring that they have the right skills and attitudes to take part in the community.

For more details contact: education participation team on 01983 525927

Youth Connexions:  
29 High Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1SS

### **Universal Services and Inclusion for all (compliance with the Equality Act 2010)**

The Isle of Wight Council has signed up to the 'Every Disabled Matters Charter', which has nine key commitments. These can be accessed by going to: [www.ncb.org.uk/edcm/LA%20Charter%202010.pdf](http://www.ncb.org.uk/edcm/LA%20Charter%202010.pdf)

Action 7 highlights the importance of enabling children with disabilities to be able to access universal services. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been superseded by the Equality Act 2010 which means that we all have a responsibility to ensure that everyone can access services.

Hants County Council have produced an inspiring guide called 'Inclusion Resource Project'. This contains really good information about inclusion and access and can be found at:

[www3.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/specialneeds/shortbreaks/aiminghighproviders/inclusionresourcepack.htm](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/specialneeds/shortbreaks/aiminghighproviders/inclusionresourcepack.htm)

As above, we are working hard to try to improve access to activities for all children with disabilities.

### **What is the Inclusion Support Grant?**

The grant exists to provide a contribution towards the cost of paying for a place for a disabled child, whether to enable the parent to access a short break, or training or employment. Applications for this funding are usually made at specific points in the year.

Ten hours are offered per week for holiday provision and five hours per week for access to an after school club.

The funding enables the setting to provide either 1:1 or 2:1 support for a child with additional needs.

Currently, in order to access this service, your child will need to have:

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder plus severe learning difficulties and/or behaviour which is challenging;
- complex health needs – either life-limiting conditions, palliative care and/or associated impairments;
- a requirement for special equipment or adaptations (complex moving and handling needs).

Parents will require this childcare in order to take up or continue employment, education or training.

For further details about this provision, please contact Abi Wilkinson, Early Intervention Development Officer on 533523 or via [Abigail.wilkinson@iow.gov.uk](mailto:Abigail.wilkinson@iow.gov.uk)

### **How do we know that things are improving for families?**

We ask all our short break providers to provide us with regular reports and feedback as to who is attending their activities and how much these are enjoyed. Feedback can take any variety of forms, eg, photos, snapshot comments on an email, anecdotes, parent questionnaires or evaluations – the important thing is that we receive feedback on the services we provide.

Parents are represented on key strategic groups.

We are open to feedback from families and young people and consult regularly with Parent Voice and local support groups.

### **How do you recruit new short break workers?**

The role of a short break worker is a very varied one. Often short break workers perform a variety of jobs, perhaps – for example, working with young people in

school during term-time, then working on a holiday play scheme during the holidays. They might also undertake direct payments work or act as a voluntary Family Link worker. Flexibility and the ability to adapt are of key importance, as is the need to recruit the right people with the right attitude and training.

Basic training should link to the recommendations made by the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and include:

- disability awareness and discrimination;
- current laws surrounding disability;
- safeguarding;
- the importance of communication;
- managing challenging behaviour;
- health and safety;
- transition.

As last year, a series of training workshops will be offered covering these areas. However, currently carers are subject to a whole range of different rules depending on where they operate. It is important however, to have a workforce that is safe, and well trained in order to care for and support children with disabilities.

For more details about workforce training and development, contact:

Paul Barnard or Sarah Teague on 01983 527565 [paul.barnard@iow.gov.uk](mailto:paul.barnard@iow.gov.uk) or Sarah Teague on 01983 817280 or [sarah.teague@iow.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.teague@iow.gov.uk)

### **What of the immediate future?**

A current consultation is being conducted as to the needs of families and children and young people with Autism. This will share valuable information as to what sort of short break activities families want for their children in the future and where gaps in services exist.

Current consultations also relate to what capital funding should be spend on and whether or not each leisure centre should have a sensory room? For more details of these, please access the Parent Voice website: <http://www.parentsvoice-iw.co.uk/>

The Wightmark is being reprinted at this point in time and there are plans to ensure that all providers undertake the Wightmark by March 2012.

As mentioned, the Grants Prospectus will be published in October inviting more applications from interested organisations and voluntary groups who would like to offer short breaks.

Our aim is to continue to consult and work alongside parents and professionals in order to develop services that are needed.

### **Useful Contacts**

FIZ – the Family Information Zone	11 Orchard Street, Newport Isle of Wight PO30 1JZ 01983 821999
Parent Partnership	11 Orchard Street, Newport,

	Isle of Wight PO30 1JZ 01983 825548
Parent Voice	<a href="http://www.parent.voice-iw.co.uk">www.parent.voice-iw.co.uk</a>
Children's Disability Team and Adoption Team	Oak House, Halberry Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight P030 2ER 01983 525790 Out of hours 821105
Fostering, Looked after Children and 16+ Team	Children's Service Centre, Atkinson Drive, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 2LS 01983 525790
First Response Team (for any child-protection concerns)	St. James' Centre, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5HE 01983 814374 (Out of hours 821105)
Direct Payments Officer	Cheryl O'Fori c/o Oak House, Newport, IOW PO30 2ER 01983 525790
Education Participation Team	Youth Connexions: 29 High Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1SS 01983 525927

## **The regulations**

### **Breaks for Carers of Children with disabilities Regulations 2011**

#### Interpretation

2. In these regulations –

“the 1989 Act” means the Children Act 1989;

“carer” means a person who provides care for a disabled child and who is – (a) the child's parent, or (b) a person who is not the child's parent but who has parental responsibility for that child; and “disabled” has the meaning given in section 17 (11) of the 1989 Act (2).

#### Duty to make Provision

3. in performing their duty under paragraph 6 (1) © of Schedule 2 to the 1989 act (3), a local authority must –

- (a) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be unable to continue to provide care unless breaks from caring were given to them; and
- (b) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be able to provide care for their disabled child more effectively if breaks from caring were given to them to allow them to-
  - i) undertake education, training or any regular leisure activity,
  - (ii) meet the needs of other children in the family more effectively or
  - (iii) carry out day to day tasks which they must perform in order to run their household.

#### Types of Service which must be provided

4 – (1) In performing their duty under paragraph 6(1) © of Schedule 2 to the 1989 Act, a local authority must provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, a range of services which is sufficient to assist carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively.

- (2) In particular, the local authority must provide, as appropriate, a range of –
- (a) day time care in the homes of children with disabilities or elsewhere,
  - (b) overnight care in the homes of children with disabilities or elsewhere,
  - (c) educational or leisure activities for children with disabilities outside their homes, and
  - (d) services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays

### **Short Breaks Services Statement**

5 – (1) A local authority must, by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011, prepare a statement for carers in their area (a “short breaks services statement”) setting out details of –

- (a) the range of services provided in accordance with regulation 4,
  - (b) any criteria by which eligibility for those services will be assessed, and
  - (c) how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of carers in their area.
- (2) the local authority must publish their short breaks services statement, including by placing a copy of the statement on their website.
- (3) the local authority must keep their short breaks statement under review and, where appropriate, revise the statement.
- (4) In preparing and revising their statement, the local authority must have regard to the views of carers in their area.

### **GLOSSARY**

Accessibility	Ensuring that everyone can take part in an activity and is not prevented from doing so eg. by lack of ramps or staff training
AHfDC	Aiming High for Children with disabilities programme which ran from 2008 – 2011, now called Short Breaks
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
CAF	Common Assessment Framework – a tool which is designed to pull all professionals responsible for a child’s well-being together with a short-term plan to support the child’s identified needs. The CAF is usually written by a Lead Professional who coordinates actions.
CLASS	Curriculum Language and ASD support service
Commissioning	The process of identifying needs and buying in services to meet that need
Discrimination	Treating people differently when all people should be given the same opportunities or activities
Domiciliary	Care given to assist an elderly or young person in their home, usually with washing, toileting and dressing.
Early Support Team	Work to support children from 0 – 5 years with SEN/LDD in early years’ settings, the home and during transition to school.
Equitable	Fair and balanced
Intervention	Linking a family with a service or support package; preventing build-up of difficulties
Legislation	Laws of the land
Palliative care	Where nothing medically can cure the condition, but only be

	used to relieve the symptoms
Parents/carers	The term 'carer' means a person who provides a substantial amount of care on a regular basis for a disabled child, a child with additional needs or health issues
Portage	Refers to a home-visiting educational service for pre-school children with additional support needs and their families.
Prevention	Taking charge of a situation of meeting identified needs early, so as to prevent difficulties from getting worse
Provider	Someone who runs a club or activity which can be described as a 'short break activity'
Ring-fenced	Money singled out for a particular purpose only
S139a – 'Moving On' plan	'Moving On' plan drawn up for those young people – who may or may not have a statement – who are entering further education or work-based training. Designed to highlight what support the young person needs from the college or training provider.
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator – every school has a Senco who is responsible for ensuring that the needs of children are met
SEN/LDD	Special educational needs, learning difficulties and disabilities – a catch-all phrase in common use
Sensory Support Team	Provide educational advice and support for pupils with sensory needs (hearing or visual impairment) from diagnosis in a range of settings.
Transition plan	Part of the legal requirement of the Statement of SEN. This requires that a Transition plan is drawn up and regularly reviewed as part of the process of mapping out a young person's progress towards adulthood and employment.
Universal services	Services such as your GP, or local library, or health visitor which are available to everyone.
Wightmark	A quality assurance mark i.e. a sign to parents and carers that a business or small organisation are following basic correct procedures in terms of their operation. We have worked with Wightmark to make it more 'disability aware' and inclusive.