



Short Breaks Service Statement

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Leeds Short Break Services Statement. The aim of the Statement is to provide parents and carers with information on:

- The range of short breaks services provided in Leeds
- Who can access short breaks
- How to access short breaks
- How short breaks are designed to meet the needs of disabled children/young people and their parents/carers

This document has been informed by consultation with disabled children and young people, parents/carers and other stakeholders. The Short Breaks Services Statement will be kept under regular review and updated every 12 months.

2. Background

Through the Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme (2008-2011), the Government sought to transform short break provision for disabled children and young people. The aim was to improve the lives of disabled children, young people and their parents/carers by transforming the quality, quantity and range of short breaks provision.

From 1st April 2011, all Local Authorities must provide a range of short breaks to meet the needs of different kinds of disabled children, young people and their parents/carers. This is a statutory duty. Local Authorities must also produce a Short Breaks Services Statement by 1st October 2011.

3. What are Short Breaks?

A short break gives disabled children and young people enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers and also gives parents and carers a valuable break from caring responsibilities. Short breaks can include activities which last: a morning; an afternoon; an evening; a day; overnight; a weekend; or longer. And can take place in: the child's own home; the home of a carer, a residential or community setting. A short break can last from a few hours to a few days.

Childcare for parents to enable them to attend work or access work related training is not a short break, however, childcare settings can be used as a short break.

4. Access to Short Breaks

Short breaks are available for children and young people, aged from birth up to their 18th birthday, who are disabled and / or those with complex health needs where the disability has a significant impact on their lives. This includes children and young people with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders, sensory impairments and physical impairments.

Families can contact most services themselves to arrange a short break for their child. To access more specialist services, such as health nursing short break provision and overnight provision or a combination of services, a Core Assessment is required to identify this need.

If a child needs support to access a universal, play and leisure service such as brownies, cubs or youth clubs and they are not accessing any other similar type of service, two hours a week support should be available to support their access. In addition, five hours per week activities could be provided during school holidays.

Children and young people with multiple additional needs, who require more services than that offered by universal services or two hours support a week, are entitled to up to 4 hours per week or 16 hours per month of short break services. In addition, five hours per week support can be provided in school holidays. Where children need extra help to access the service such as signing support or personal care, the service will be able to access funding for this.

We want to ensure there is transparent, fair and equitable access to short breaks so that all families have the opportunity to access services of their choice in their local area. Disabled children, young people and parents/carers should be able to take part in activities just like their non-disabled peers. The additional support a disabled child may need to be included should not be an extra cost to their family. However, some activities and services have a cost, which families are expected to pay whether a child is disabled or non disabled.

5. Needs Assessment

There is currently no register of disabled children in Leeds and no single source of information can give a completely accurate estimate of the number of disabled children. There are 1,890 children and young people with Statements of Educational Need (SEN) in Leeds but we know there are many children with disabilities who don't have statements (and not all children with statements have a disability). We can estimate figures to help us plan services. There are 169,900 children and young people living in Leeds aged 0 – 18 (inc 18) years old. Of these, we know about 7% will have some sort of disability – 11,900¹.

Leeds Children's Services has always involved children, young people and parents/carers in planning Short Breaks. We have collected parent/carer surveys to obtain experiences and views, held consultation events, worked with children and young people to review short breaks and included parents/carers and disabled children/young people on evaluation panels to decide which providers and services to fund.

Consultations have highlighted that:

- 'Most disabled children want to access universal services',
- 'Sometimes additional support is required for universal services so that disabled children can fully participate in the same activities as their peers' and
- 'Disabled children and their families want a single point of contact which gives advice and support about how to access short breaks'

We want to:

- Improve information about what short breaks are available locally and how disabled children and their parents/carers can access and make informed choices about short breaks,
- Improve ways to enable disabled children and young people, parents and carers to effectively participate in the planning and delivery of short breaks.
- Reduce bureaucracy and;
- Develop more responsive and personalised services.

¹ Office for National Statistics estimate based on the General Household Survey 2011

6. Short Breaks currently in place in Leeds

Currently in Leeds, we have a range of short break services available, which offer different levels of support and different types of activity for disabled children and young people. This includes holiday activities, after-school clubs, overnight short breaks, support to access community-based activities and short breaks for siblings.

Universal Provision

All children and young people have a right to inclusive universal provision. This includes the right to inclusive education and health, right to inclusive leisure activities and the right to a safe, secure and happy family life. Universal services such as youth clubs, brownies, extended school activities, Children's Centres and play schemes are key in ensuring disabled children have fun and enjoy the same things as other children and young people

Universal Plus Provision

Sometimes additional support is required for services in order that disabled children fully participate in universal provision. In Leeds, we have services that build capacity in universal services and enable disabled children to participate in the same activities as their peer groups. For example, the Leeds Inclusive Support Service can offer advice, financial support, equipment and training to enable a child with learning disabilities to be fully included in their local Brownies Club. This does not remove the legal responsibility that service providers have to be fully inclusive.

Targeted Provision

Disabled children may require targeted service provision to meet their short break needs. In Leeds, we have a number of services such as play schemes and youth clubs for disabled children, some of which use specialist activities to build confidence and then support disabled children to move to universally accessed short breaks. Others provide befriending support for disabled children in order to build their confidence to access short breaks.

Specialist / Highly Specialist Provision

For a minority of disabled children more support is required. These services include shared care in foster care or residential establishments or family placement. In some cases, disabled children may attend specialist educational or health settings, which may also provide short breaks.

Developing Short Breaks for the Future

We are committed to providing a range of short break services and improving these services to best meet the needs of disabled children, young people and parents/carers. We will work to ensure universal services are able to meet the needs of disabled children by offering training, advice and support. We will work in partnership with disabled children, young people and parents/carers to monitor and improve accessibility, quality and performance of all services.

We are currently planning short breaks for 2012 onwards, with the involvement of disabled children, young people, parents/carers and other stakeholders. This includes providing funding for new services, improving participation and involvement, improving communication and information and continuing to train the workforce.

Transport

Parents and carers are expected to provide their own transport to and from activities but where this is not possible, consideration can be given to providing help with transport. We want short breaks to be widely available at a local level so families do not have to travel large distances. We also want services to support young people to use public transport wherever possible to maximise their independent living skills.

Transition

We want young people to enjoy growing up and becoming adults. The 'It's My Life': The Leeds Multi Agency Transition Strategy 2011-2015, has been produced for all agencies and staff who work with young people (between the ages of 14 and 25) in a time of transition in Leeds. The aim is to break down barriers in transition from children's to adults' services and help services work together to support young people and families to plan for adulthood.

Further Information

Detailed information on short breaks services available can be found within the Disability pages on The Family Hub website:

<http://www.thefamilyhubleeds.org>

Further information on eligibility for short breaks can be found in the Disabled Children's Allocation Procedures, also found within the Disability pages on The Family Hub website: <http://www.thefamilyhubleeds.org>

For further advice and support to access short breaks, Leeds Inclusion Support Service (LISS) provide **One Point of Contact**. They offer advice and support on play, childcare and Short Breaks for disabled children and young people aged between 0 -19. They can also offer advice and support about the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). LISS Tel: 0800 0851879 (free phone).

'It's My Life' The Leeds Multi Agency Transition Strategy 2011-2015 is available here:

http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Advice_and_benefits/Community_advice/Young_people_information_and_advice/Transitions_Service.aspx

Short Breaks Information available from:

The Family Hub

www.thefamilyhubleeds.org.uk

0113 247 4386/0800

family.hub@leeds.gov.uk

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