

A photograph of three children on a football pitch. In the foreground, a boy in a red football kit is leaning over a large white football. Behind him, another boy in a red kit is giving a thumbs up. To the right, a boy in a light blue shirt is sitting in a wheelchair. A football goal is visible in the background.

Barnsley Children, Young People and Families

Short Break Services Statement 2011/12



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Introduction

In May 2007, the government published *Aiming High for Disabled Children*, which set out how services should be working together to improve outcomes for disabled children by providing better and timely support to families. This was supported by the introduction of the *Aiming High for Disabled Children* short break grant. The government wanted the investment in short breaks to result in changes to the volume, quality, appropriateness, range, and capacity of provision.

Short breaks form part of a continuum of services that support disabled children and their families. Short breaks are provided to give:

- disabled children and young people enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers, thereby contributing to their personal and social development and reducing social isolation
- parents and families a necessary and valuable break from caring responsibilities.

These include day, evening, overnight and weekend activities, and can take place in the child's own home, the home of an approved carer, or a residential or community setting. Short breaks come in a variety of formats and each one can last from just a few hours to a few days, and occasionally longer.

From 1 April 2011, local authorities have to provide breaks from caring to families with disabled children, supporting them to continue to care for their children at home and allowing them to do this as well as possible. They have to make sure that they meet the needs of different kinds of parent and carers, including those who would be unable to provide care without a break, and those who would be able to care for their disabled child more effectively if they were given a break that enabled them to take part in leisure activities, spend more time with other children in the family or carry out day to day household tasks. A range of breaks have to be provided during the day, at night, at weekends and during the school holidays, in the child's home and elsewhere, and local authorities also have to prepare a Short Break Services Statement for parent and carers.

The Short Break Services Statement has to be published by 1 October 2011. The purpose of this is to give information about:

- the range of short break services provided in the local area
- how eligibility for short break services will be assessed and
- how the range of services are designed to meet the needs of parent and carers in the area.

The Barnsley Short Break Services Statement has been prepared by the Barnsley Disabled Children and Young People's Strategic Programme Board, which is a partnership between parents and professionals from social care, health, education and the voluntary sector. The statement will form the basis for the planning, development and commissioning of short break services for the year 2011/12 and beyond. The statement will be reviewed annually to make sure that it is up to date.

Needs assessment

Barnsley's current population is approximately 223,500 of which 24% or 53,640 are children and young people aged 0 to 19. Over 7,000 children in Barnsley schools have some kind of special educational need, and 1,123 have a statement of special educational needs. The 2001 Census shows that 2,408 children have a long term disability or illness that significantly limits their daily lives. In

2009, 156 disabled children in Barnsley accessed some kind of short break. This increased to 234 by March 2010 and 423 by March 2011.

Plans for the transformation of short break services in Barnsley were developed in consultation with professionals and disabled children, young people and their families. The consultation with children, young people and families highlighted that they wanted to do what other children do and feel part of their community, not apart from it. It emphasised the need for improved access to universal and more specialist play and leisure activities, such as holiday schemes, weekend and after school clubs and youth clubs, more personalised packages of support, and more information about what was available. The consultation also indicated the importance of ensuring the needs of siblings were met and making the transition from children to adult services as smooth as possible.

In March 2009, a short break visioning event was held to help develop plans. Key messages from the consultation, presented by parents, were those highlighted below.

What parents said they appreciated about short breaks in Barnsley in 2009

- Short breaks have been fantastic after a death in the family, and they enable James to visit places like the park and the cinema
- The short break foster carer uses my rules so Emily settles well there and back at home
- Paul has chance to mix with peers of his own ability
- Short breaks are very welcome and give our son chance to get out of the house with caring people
- Short breaks give us respite from challenging, difficult behaviour
- Overnight stays have given Andrew some independence and strengthened our relationship with him
- The time my child spends with the childminder is beneficial – I get the housework done and they get a break too
- The Greenacre fun club is excellent and the only social activity my child attends when not at school
- Our package is tailored to suit my daughter's needs

What parents said could be better

- Improved information about what services are available
- Activities on a daily basis through the school holidays
- Weekend activities during the winter months, and more post-16 activities
- After school clubs – my child is bored after school and wants to do activities that normal children do
- Transport to get to activities
- Flexible and accessible services
- Take into account the views and needs of siblings and young carers
- After school and weekend activities, like drama and dance
- More sports activities – Carl loves football
- Holiday and weekend activities that parents can join in with
- Activities near to where we live – not at the other side of Barnsley
- Properly supervised youth clubs and specific outings
- More variety of short breaks, and making sure disabled children are active

Transformation of short break services - 2009 to March 2011

One Path, One Door is Barnsley's strategy for children and young people with special educational needs, learning difficulties, disability and complex health needs. Transformation of short break provision is one of the objectives in the strategy. The objective says that short breaks will be provided to give disabled children and young people enjoyable experiences, thereby contributing to their personal and social development and reducing social isolation, and parents and families will receive a necessary and valuable break from caring responsibilities.

Prior to the short break transformation, there was a variety of short break provision in the borough, including residential provision, direct payments, childminding and outreach support. Gaps in provision included home-based short break provision for children with life threatening/ life limiting conditions, family placement short break services, and access to universal and specialist play and leisure opportunities.

Barnsley MBC was allocated additional funding for short breaks of:

- £259,200 revenue and £128,200 capital in 2009/10
- £836,200 revenue and £299,200 capital in 2010/11
- £736,000 revenue and £155,395 capital in 2011/12.

In addition, NHS Barnsley has identified additional ongoing funding of £170,000

The strategy for the development and allocation of short breaks in Barnsley has been based on the principles that disabled children's needs should be met wherever possible within their communities, the same as their non-disabled peers. They should have consistency of care and as few carers as possible involved in their lives. Short breaks should promote health, independence and inclusion, whilst recognising and valuing the child and their family's choice and preference.

Access to play and leisure opportunities

Most children and young people get a break from their parents, and their parents get a break from them, when they go to play and leisure activities after school, at weekends and in the school holidays. One of the key messages from consultation with disabled children, young people and their families was that they want to be able to do this too. In response to this, work has taken place with existing play and leisure providers, including early years, the youth service and the voluntary sector, to develop their skills to allow them to support disabled children to attend existing services, as well as to develop more specialist ones just for disabled children and young people, like Saturday clubs and specialist youth clubs.

In 2010/11, over 50 disabled children had short breaks with a childminder, or at a children's centre, after school or holiday setting, and Sandpit Nursery in the town centre now runs a Saturday morning club for disabled children aged 4 to 12. Children can enjoy a couple of hours play at weekends and parents can have a break or spend time with their other children.

The positive activities service supported 40 children with additional needs to attend the Summer Challenge at Elsecar in 2010 and has also set up specialist clubs at a number of venues across the borough, including one for young people with Aspergers syndrome.

The active sports and recreation service sought funding from the Aiming High programme to part fund a post of disability active sports and recreation worker with the football league. The post holder supports disabled children and young people to safely access a wide range of high quality, sport and active recreation activities. During 2010/11, over 40 disabled children attended holiday sports camps at Barnsley FC and Shaw Lane and a Saturday morning football club. The post holder has worked closely with BFit Barnsley, which offers coaching and competitive opportunities in various sports and activities to primary and secondary school children throughout the borough. In order for more disabled children and young people to be aware of these activities, and take part in them, three sports festivals were arranged and *Aiming High for Disabled Children* capital funding paid for specialist equipment, like wheelchairs and rowing equipment.

Active Space Mobile, a Barnsley based community arts organisation, was commissioned to deliver their Visibility project, an inclusive themed 'living story book' and arts activity project for children, both with and without a disability, each afternoon for a week during school holidays. Themes have included *Lost in Space*, *Cruise Liner* and *The Circus*.

For children with more complex needs, a scheme takes place at Greenacre School during the summer holidays, and Barnardo's run rClub two days a week throughout all the school holidays, as well as a Saturday morning drop in. Action for Children had an existing contract to employ outreach workers to support disabled children with more complex needs to access community based activities. They were provided with additional funding from the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme.

A 'small grants' project enabled small voluntary sector groups to apply for funding to run innovative community based projects. A parents' group successfully applied to run a session for all disabled children at Playmania soft play centre and a guide leader ran activity sessions at Silverwood scout camp. The Barnsley parent/carers' forum, that was set up as part of the Aiming High programme, has become increasingly empowered and sought sources of funding to set up services for all disabled children and their families. A specialist Saturday morning film club and Christmas trip to the pantomime are examples of this, where families can feel comfortable even if the children make a noise or shout out.

Consultation with families identified the need to effectively support the siblings of disabled children and young people and funding has been identified to meet this need. A sibling support service has been set up by Action for Children and offers ten week group based sessions. Positive activities also offer a more informal youth club in order for siblings to be able to continue to meet up after the more formal sessions have ended.

In order for disabled children and their families to enjoy days out together, capital funding has been used to put more inclusive equipment, like wheelchair and buggy accessible roundabouts, basket swings and sensory equipment into play areas at Elsecar Park, Bly Road at Darfield, Carrfield Recreation Ground at Bolton-on-Deane, Carlton Park, Millennium Green at Grimethorpe, Locke Park, Aldham House Lane at Wombwell and Churchfields in the town centre. A Changing Place toilet has been installed at Elsecar Park and plans are in place for Cannon Hall and Locke Park to have one installed in 2011/12. Changing Places toilets have a fully accessible, large changing bench, a hoist, and enough room for carers to assist the child or young person using the toilet and bench.

A range of all ability, accessible bikes have been purchased with capital funding and will be available for hire from summer 2011 at the inclusive cycling scheme that is being set up at the RSPB Old Moor Wetlands site. Families will be able to go cycling along the Trans Pennine Trail paths and enjoy the sights, sounds and facilities at Old Moor.

The physiotherapist service and active sports and recreation have run holiday biking schemes at Shaw Lane to enable disabled children to develop their skills, which they can then develop further at Old Moor.

Supporting services

In order to ensure that disabled children can access services in their own communities, are properly supported in short breaks settings, and staff develop the appropriate skills to care for them, additional specialist staff have been recruited to support the short break transformation. These include a physiotherapist and occupational therapist.

A children's learning disability nursing service, with two nurses and a support worker, has also been established to support families and short break providers with the management of medicines, sleep and behaviour. By supporting families in this way, disabled children should be more able to access community services, the same as their non disabled peers, and will be less reliant on specialist services. Families will also be able to do more activities together, as parents and carers will be able to get good nights sleep.

In order to ensure disabled children and their families are informed about, and involved in, service developments, a post of disabled children's information and involvement officer has been established to ensure information about services is available and act as a first point of contact for parents.

The post of parent partnership coordinator has been extended to support the parents' forum and ensure as many families as possible are involved in service development.

Specialist services

Some disabled children, young people and their families require more support than is available through universal and targeted play and leisure short break services, for example residential or family-based day or overnight services or domiciliary care. Specialist short break services have been developed in a number of ways.

A complex health needs short break nursing service has been set up, which includes nursing posts and health care professionals. The service provides home-based short breaks to children and young people with life threatening and life limiting illnesses, both during the day and overnight. Two short break foster carers have been recruited who offer day care and overnight short breaks in their home, primarily to primary school-aged children with autism and challenging behaviours.

The two existing residential short break units, Summerwell and Keresforth, have now been integrated into a refurbished building called Newsome Avenue, which opened in March 2011. The new integrated unit has a small annexe for young people with complex autism and challenging behaviours who find it difficult to be part of a larger group.

Personalisation

Direct payments enable families to have personalised packages of care by employing personal assistants or purchasing services directly from agencies. Additional funding has increased the number of families receiving direct payments. Care packages have been further personalised through the development of self-directed support and individualised budgets, particularly for young people in transition.

Safeguarding

All the short break services are required to have regard to the local child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures. All staff and carers receive relevant child protection and safeguarding training. Any concerns reported about a child's welfare when accessing services will be addressed in line with the [Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board](#) procedures.

Access to short breaks

A short breaks access and allocation process and procedure has been developed to ensure that access to short break services is transparent and equitable and promotes a social model of disability.

As most children and young people get a break from their parents, and their parents get a break from them, when they do a play or leisure activity, the process is based on supporting disabled children and young people to be able to do this too, wherever this is possible.

Universal services

Universal services are those services that are available to all children and their families. Some children may have additional needs that, under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Providers, should make reasonable adjustments to support. Universal services, such as youth clubs, 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. The disabled children's information and involvement officer provides a starting point for finding a range of activities available for children and young people, and will provide advice about reasonable adjustments.

Core offer – level 1

For some disabled children, there can be barriers to them being able to do the same activities as non-disabled children. Where this applies, a disabled child and family can access an activity-based short break without having to have an assessment. This could include going to Brownies, a children's centre or after-school club, or one of the other short break play and leisure activities.

Funding is available for disabled children to have up to one play and leisure activity a week (two hours a week in term time and five hours a week in a school holiday) if they cannot attend any other activities and do not receive any other short break services. This is called a core offer.

Support to access this can be through self referral to the disabled children's information and involvement officer, Jackie Griffin, telephone number is 0800 0345 340, who will complete a basic information form or can refer families to locality-based services that may be appropriate.

Common assessment – level 2

For families who need more support than the core offer (up to five hours a week and 10 hours a week in school holidays) then a common assessment (CAF) can be undertaken by a professional who works closely with the child and family (a teacher or health visitor for example). This assessment needs to identify why the child needs this additional support.

Specialist and complex needs – level 3

Families needing more than the second level of support, health nursing short break provision, any overnight provision, or a combination of services, are defined as having specialist needs. A social work assessment is needed for this level of service.

All services will be subject to review by the service provider, lead practitioner or social worker within an agreed period, to identify if support is still needed and appropriate.

Jackie Griffin, the disabled children's information and involvement officer, can be contacted for further information about short breaks. She is based in Early Childhood Services at Gateway Plaza and her telephone number is 0800 0345 340.

The disabled children's social work team can be contacted on 01226 715517.

Transport

Transport is needed by many families in order for children to get to their short breaks, but transport is expensive and time consuming. Parents and carers will be encouraged and expected to transport their children to and from short break services. If this is not possible, and it will be detrimental to the child or family if they do not receive the short break, consideration will be given to providing or funding transport. Whenever possible, and appropriate, young people should be supported to become independent travellers.

Continuing development of short breaks - April 2011 to March 2012

The short break transformation in Barnsley has led to changes in the volume, quality, appropriateness, range, and capacity of provision. Short break provision includes support for disabled children and young people to access activities in universal settings through an outreach service and by building the skills of providers, specialist play and leisure services, overnight breaks available in the child's own home and elsewhere, and significant breaks during the day in the child's own home and elsewhere. A process for accessing and allocating short break provision is in place, which enables families to have a small amount of support without an assessment.

Consultation in respect of this statement took place with families and professionals during summer 2011. The key message from this consultation is the need to continue to improve provision of information about short breaks and other services to families and professionals.

Funding

Although the additional revenue funding for short breaks from April 2011 has not been ring-fenced as it was during the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme, it has been included in the Early Intervention Grant. In Barnsley, £736,000 revenue for short breaks has been identified from this grant in 2011/12 and 2012/13. Additional capital funding of £155,395 has been allocated to Barnsley in 2011/12 for short breaks. The integration of Keresforth and Summerwell residential short break units has identified £300,000 savings with no loss of service. The majority of the additional revenue funding will be used to continue to fund the services that have been developed up to March 2011 and to train universal providers. The capital funding allocated for 2011/12 will be

used primarily to support the access of disabled children and their families to play and leisure opportunities.

The particular proposals are as follows:

- container and building work for the cycling scheme at RSPB, Old Moor
- a Changing Place at Cannon Hall
- inclusive play areas at RSPB Old Moor and Cannon Hall
- other equipment to support access to play and leisure, including the possibility of a town centre sensory room.

Review of care plans

Before the development of new services, families were not always able to use universal and targeted community-based services for a short break, but have had more specialist, higher cost ones, like residential short breaks, even though these may not have been the most suitable service. Some children may have had a number of short break services, where their needs may have been better met by having the service from just one provider, and families may have been allocated to a social worker when they did not need ongoing social worker support, just a short break. As the short break transformation has progressed, more options are becoming available in respect of both overnight provision and day care opportunities, and the core offer and common assessment levels of support have been put in place. A priority area of work for 2011/12 is to review the care plans of children who have a social worker and who receive short break services, to make sure they are getting the services that best meet their needs, and to identify a lead practitioner for the children who do not need ongoing social work support. This will also help to identify which services will be needed in the future.

Personalisation

Personal budgets are the preferred way of providing a service in adult services. Children's services will offer more young people aged 16 and 17 personal budgets in order for families to develop their understanding and confidence in managing them.

Commissioning

The sibling support service has been re-tendered during summer 2011 and is now to be provided by Barnardo's. The short break outreach service has been reviewed and a small outreach and group-based holiday service has been commissioned for young people on the autistic spectrum and who have behaviour that is challenging. Any savings will be used to fund personalised packages of support through direct payments or individual budgets.

Next Steps

In partnership with parent forums, and with children and young people, the statement will be reviewed annually to make sure that it is up to date. The next review will be completed by 31 March 2012 to enable it to be aligned with service planning and commissioning cycles. We will use the ongoing consultation with families and professionals to make changes and improvements and to ensure that our short breaks continue to reflect the needs of all the different families living in Barnsley who have disabled children.