



**London Borough  
of Hounslow**

# **The Short Breaks Statement**

October 2011

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## **1. Who is responsible?**

The lead officer responsible for preparing and reviewing the Short Breaks Statement is the Team Manager for the Social Work Team for Children with Disabilities.

## **2. Legislation**

The Breaks for Carers of Disabled children Regulations 2011 came into force on 1 April 2011. In order to meet the requirements of the regulations, local authorities must have regards for the needs of the carers<sup>1</sup> in their capacity to care for, or continue to care, for their disabled<sup>2</sup> child and must provide a range of short breaks suitable to their need. A short breaks duty statement must also be prepared and published by 1 October 2011

In Hounslow services for children and young people with a disability are being developed within the context of the Children Act 1989 (2004), the Equality Act 2010, Carers Equal Opportunities Act 2004, the Carers and Disabled Children Act (2000). The Short Breaks Statement has been integrated into the Children's and Young Peoples Plan for 2011/12.

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

A short break was described by Together for Disabled Children (TDC) as "additional services required to support disabled children and their families; in other words, short breaks are services over and above the universal services expected and available to all families". A short break can be for just a few hours to overnight care or longer, e.g. a holiday, and could be within a variety of settings, including the child's home. Short breaks are designed to engage disabled children and young people in either one to one or group activities, which will be enjoyable, reduce social isolation and contribute to personal and social development and are usually undertaken away from their primary carer. A short break can be a range of activities; including sports, music sessions, going to the cinema, youth club, after school clubs, play schemes and/or residential care. Whilst all children should be able to access youth clubs, extended schools activities, community and leisure facilities – however, if additional support is required (e.g. the child requires support through a sessional worker service) – this may then constitute a short break.

Within Hounslow the short breaks on offer provide both specialist and access to mainstream activities for disabled children and young people up to the age of 18 years. Through the Hounslow Parent Carers Forum and a number of consultation events with parents/carers and disabled children and young people it has been acknowledged that some families want short breaks which are open to the whole family, including siblings and/or activities at times or within settings which are exclusively for disabled children and their families/carers.

1. Carer means a person who provides care of a disabled child and who is the child's parent and or has parental responsibility for that child

2. Disabled has the meaning given in section 17(11) of the 1989 Children Act(2)

Short breaks are not childcare, e.g. care when a parent/carer is working and requires care for their child.

#### **4. Carers**

Under the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000, carers aged 16 or over who provide a regular and substantial amount of care for someone aged 18 or over have a right to an assessment of their needs as a carer. If there is more than one carer providing regular care in your household, you are both entitled to an assessment.

Very occasionally, a 16 or 17 year old who cares for someone for a limited period may be entitled to an assessment. The Local Authority has a responsibility to make sure a young carers own well-being is looked after and that they receive the necessary support.

If you have parental responsibility for a disabled child, your needs as a carer will be assessed as part of a family needs assessment. You have the right to a family needs assessment under The Children Act 1989. You do not need to be the mother or the father of the child.

#### **4. Transition**

Children and young people can experience many transitions in their lives, and moving into adulthood is one of the major events in a young person's life. The progression of moving from adolescence to adulthood can be an exciting and challenging time as young people decide what they want to do. Major decisions include whether to continue studying or to get a job, and where to live. "Moving On" is the term that young people in Hounslow have chosen to explain the transition process in the London Borough of Hounslow.

This time holds particular challenges for young people with disabilities and mental health issues, who may depend on a range of services to support them. At this time young people need information about the choices and opportunities available to them, and they need to be listened to and supported in pursuing their dreams and aspirations.

The London Borough of Hounslow has a commitment to effective joint working and co-operation and there are a number of groups running to inform and advise professionals about individuals and their strengths and needs as well as putting in place structures to help departments work together (The 'Moving On' Protocol). The protocol helps describe who should do what, and when, in order to make sure that transition/Moving On works well for young people and their families.

Each year, usually in October, a Transition Information day is held where information on both children's and adult services is provided at an all day event. Workshops are provided for parents, carers and disabled young people.

There is an information pack and DVD about Moving On in Hounslow which is available for parents, carers and disabled young people. You can obtain an information pack or more information about Moving On in Hounslow by calling Charlotte Parkinson on 0208 583 3163.

## **5. Introduction & Background: the story so far**

In March 2007 the government launched Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC). Funding was provided to undertake this three year project which was to develop and improve short break provision for disabled children and young people. The aim was for the provision of short break to become statutory by 2011. The programme focused on a number of service areas for disabled children, these included Transition, Palliative Care, Wheelchair services and Short Breaks and included dedicated funding for Local Authorities and additional funding for Primary Care Trusts to develop services.

### Initial Consultation

Extensive consultation was undertaken to establish the type and level of need within Hounslow and a Steering Group, chaired by the Assistant Director, Specialist Services, was set up to manage the implementation strategy. The steering group comprised of professionals from key agencies and a strong representation from parents/carers of disabled children and young people. Additional consultation with parents/carers identified that short breaks should be open to children and young people with a range of needs and disabilities, and where possible access should be without the need for formal assessments. An Eligibility Criteria was developed which created three pathways of need, with pathway three being the highest level of need. The Eligibility Criteria allows disabled children, young people and their parent/carers to identify short breaks which will be most suitable and reduces the need for formal assessment to access Short Breaks.

A monthly Parent's Forum was established to ensure on-going discussion, consultation and review on the development of the Aiming High Short Breaks programme. Parents developed a 'wish list' of Short Break activities which their children would like to undertake. The Local Authority worked with providers to put together a programme of short breaks which could be accessed after school, on the weekends and over the school holidays. The provision and access to short breaks has steadily grown over the past three years with 827 children in the borough receiving a short break in 2010/11.

The short breaks passport was introduced, this is a care plan document designed as a passport for the carer and/or young person to complete detailing key information about the disabled child or young person's needs. The passport is given to the short break provider in order to improve and better meet individual children and young people's needs and improve the short break experience for the child, young person and their family. The passport can be used as a stand alone document for shorter breaks or for longer short breaks or children and young people with complex needs to start the care needs discussion between the provider and the family. This passport also aims to reduce the repetition some families feel of needing to repeat key information to professionals when accessing short breaks.

In addition to revenue funding, Aiming High provided capital funding in 2010/11. Again through consultation with disabled children, young people and their carers/families, it was agreed that this funding should be used to develop the

Redlees Play Centre in Isleworth as an inclusive adventure play site, where the needs of disabled children and young people are central to planning and development of the site. This site has a safe and secure outdoor play area with accessible play equipment and a sensory garden, the addition of a log cabin has extended the indoor space to comprise a play area, wet room, soft play room and redevelopment of the existing indoor space created a sensory room and a café area. The café area is to be run as a social enterprise with the Redlees Adventure Playground Trust (RAPT), and provide work experience opportunities for disabled young people.

Aiming High proved to be highly successful and in December 2010 the Government announced additional funding for Short Breaks through the Early Intervention Grant and as of 1 April 2011 legislation came into force requiring each Local Authority to undertake the Short Breaks duty.

## **6. The Future**

Voluntary Sector short break providers will continue to provide services in 2011-12 after extensive consultation and marketing for the Aiming High Disabled Children programme in earlier years. The Local Authority's Play Team will also provide play services for children and young people with disabilities at Redlees Adventure Playground and elsewhere until March 2012.

After 2012 we expect to have an enhanced short breaks service offering new Community Short Breaks, Redlees Adventure Playground and Young Carers Support Services within a coordinated procurement strategy that includes a number of Carers Services (both Children and Adults). We will consult with parent and carers as part of the commissioning process to ensure that the short breaks are tailored to meet their needs. We aim to obtain both excellent service provision and financial efficiency through this exercise, for services commencing in April 2012.

## **7. Consultation Process**

As of November 2010 additional consultation has taken place with parents and carers with regard to the Short Breaks Statement. In June 2011 all parent and carers of children and young people with a Statement of Educational Need or known to the Pre-school Panel in the borough were invited to complete a survey which sought their views on accessibility and delivery of short breaks in Hounslow.

The survey was available to complete via hard copy, online, as well as telephone support being available to assist the completion of the survey. We also consulted with young people through schools and short break providers. All the responses were collated and analysed. Of the 1250 sent to we received 211 responses which equated to a 16% return.

## What you said

### **Customer satisfaction**

#### Outcome

Of those who answered the questions, the survey showed that 77% were happy with the current short break service and 98% felt that the short breaks are fun and enjoyable. 97% felt that the staff were positive and friendly,

One parent commented *“always very friendly and helpful staff and always bend over backwards to teach the children the sport which they enjoy”*.

96% felt that the short break environment was safe and secure

#### Aim

We will continue to seek the views of disabled children and their families with regard to Short Breaks

### **What is a Short Break?**

#### Outcome

80% knew what a short break is.

#### Aim

We would like to improve on this to make it more clear and ensure that families understand what a short break is and how they can be accessed. We will continue to inform families about short breaks through a wide range of publicity as per our Communication Strategy and continue to make visits to settings to meet parents/carers and aim to increase knowledge of short breaks within this group to 90% by June 2012.

### **Accessing Short Breaks**

#### Outcome

In terms of ease to book onto a short break, 90% felt that it was either OK or easy.

#### Aim

We will continue to make booking a short break activity easy and seek feedback through the Parents Carers Forum.

#### *Impact of Short Breaks*

#### Outcome

100% of respondents felt that their child's behaviour had either improved or stayed the same. 54% said that family relationships had improved with 44% remaining the same.

#### Aim

Both research and anecdotal evidence has shown that short breaks have a positive impact on the child and family relationships. As previously stated, consultation with parents and carers of disabled children and young people in Hounslow has shown that 'short breaks' for the whole family have been particularly well received and 87% wanted more family activities. Therefore we

intend to increase the availability of family 'short breaks' by 10% in 2012/13, compared to 2011/12.

### **Complex Needs**

#### Outcome

From the recent consultation a small number of parents felt that the current provision of short breaks for children and young people who have either a physical disability or complex health needs could be improved.

#### Aim

We will undertake further consultation with this group of young people and their families, as well as with service providers in 2011/12 in order to develop a programme of short breaks and/or supports more suitable to their needs.

*"Before Teddy Cubs, I had never left my son alone ever. However, I saw how much he was enjoying himself, how much fun he was having and the bond he had with the co-ordinator, Angie and felt confident to leave him. Since Teddy Cubs, I have taken him to Sure Start as I am now much more happy to leave him with other people and I know he has a bond with the co-ordinator, Angie, who managed Teddy Cubs as well." Iffit Kahn, Parent*

### **Short Breaks Passport**

#### Outcome

Only 37% of parents had used the passport of which 91% felt that it was a useful document.

#### Aim

We will look at increasing the usage of the short breaks passport to 50% by June 2012 and 75% by June 2013. In order to achieve this we will work with providers of short breaks to increase usage and continue to inform parents/carers of the passport through the newsletter.

### **Design Options**

#### Outcome

To help us design an appropriate programme of short breaks, we asked families how long they would like a short break to be; families wanted short breaks with a range of variable lengths. 75% wanted a short break for their child to be a minimum of half a day. The activities which are currently on offer comprise of sessions of variable length, from 45mins of music therapy to full day family days out, and with assessment, overnight care within either a family carer or in a residential short break unit.

#### Aim

Together with commissioning in Hounslow, we intend to develop short breaks from 2012/13 which offer greater flexibility with regard to when the short break is taken and the length of the short break through developing better 'wrap around' short breaks with providers. We will work closely with the Redlees Adventure Playground Trust (RAPT) to support parents and carers to develop and commission their own short breaks for their children through a variety of funding streams, and it is envisaged this provision will increase as RAPT develops.

## **Work Force Development**

### Outcome

Some feedback showed a small group of parents/carers were not confident using short breaks for their child or young person because they felt that staff were not knowledgeable enough about their child's disability and how to meet their needs.

*"I need to know that the provider is well trained on my child's disability, know him very well or understand the behaviours that accompany his disability. Be tolerant and patient and he uses his time there to help to play properly."*

### Aim

In conjunction with short breaks, there is a training programme available to develop and/or enhance the short break workforce on a range of topics. This training is open to all professionals who work with disabled children in the borough; parents were also able to access some of these courses. The consultation demonstrated that 69% of parent/carers respondents wanted to undertake training and/or further education. This year we have put on courses particularly for parent/carers, which include managing stress, understanding jargon and building confidence. We will continue to discuss the learning needs of parents/carers through the Hounslow Parent Carers Forum.

## **Transport**

### Outcome

We understand that transport can be an issue for some parent/carers in accessing a short break for their child. Limited transport support to children where there is an identified need, for example, where families do not have access to their own transport and their child's disability prevents them from using public transport, e.g. severe challenging behaviour, is available. Previous feedback we have received from families has been the length of the short break can impact on their willingness to access a short break if travel is required.

*"I live in Chiswick and there are no many activities around here. I cannot drive and go places like Feltham or Heston. It would be great if the short breaks could provide transport. Also we could get more activities in Chiswick."*

Hounslow is a long narrow Borough stretching from Chiswick to Feltham, the Short Breaks team is mindful that with traffic this journey could take an hour by car, and longer by public transport.

### Aim

Therefore we will undertake a number of strategies to improve access to short breaks, this includes wrap around short breaks as described above, offering travel training to young people where it is appropriate and developing short breaks both within a central location at Redlees and within smaller venues and/or settings around the Borough. The short breaks team will also develop their knowledge of the support available to families of disabled children and young people in order that advice can be offered when accessing a short break, e.g. access to the taxi card scheme, use of the mobility component of DLA.

### ***The Carer***

Looking after the carer is also important (The Breaks for Carers of Disabled children Regulations 2011) so that they can undertake their responsibilities as a carer. To give the carers a break we have been providing family swim sessions which parents can access by themselves when their child is at school. We will aim to continue to 'care for the carer' and provide events and/or activities which support this, e.g. a short break morning which will allow parents/carers to experience provider sessions in order to develop their understanding what their child does on a short break. In addition we will continue to offer access to information, opportunities to shape service delivery and respond to feedback received.

## **8. The Eligibility Criteria**

To ensure that services are fair and transparent, the Eligibility Criteria for access to the Pathways is shown below.

The Pathways are designed to be indicative of the needs of a child or young person at the time they or their family access a service. The Pathway has three levels of need, Pathways 1, 2 and 3, which indicate the eligibility for access to the particular short break services offered. It is acknowledged that the needs of children and young people can change over time and therefore they may move through the pathways at different times in their lives. Below is an explanation of some of the characteristics of each Pathway and a table is attached which outlines the levels of need relating to each Pathway.

### **Pathway 1**

This offers access to mainstream activities with support from the services providing the activity. Pathway 1 services are open to all disabled children and young people, and will not usually require any form of assessment of need, although services may operate their own eligibility criteria, e.g. age based services. These short breaks can be accessed directly by the young person, their family or carer. The service provider and/or a specialist worker involved with the family can support access to Pathway 1 short breaks and activities. Specialist workers, e.g. teacher, Health Visitors, Portage worker, can help the family and young person to decide which short breaks and activities to access. These may include Youth clubs, sports and leisure activities, extended school activities, play groups in the community, or children centres.

### **Pathway 2**

Pathway 2 offers short breaks with support designed around a child or young person's particular needs, as well as the short breaks offered in Pathway 1. For this pathway, the service provider will discuss with the child, young person and their family the kind of support they need and want. Before the meeting, the service provider or one of the professionals involved with the child or young person may need to make an assessment of their needs. This will help everyone decide what support would be most helpful. Pathway 2 services will include more specialist short breaks provided through either mainstream or specialist services, and could include specialist youth provision, specialist groups and/or additional support to access

mainstream provision.

### **Pathway 3**

Pathway 3 is designed for the small group of children, young people and their families/ carers who need short breaks with extra, specialist care. This could be in a mainstream activity or a specialist type of short break.

Short breaks for this Pathway are available both with and without an Assessment of Need. Where an assessment of need has been completed the Resource Allocation Panel, which has members from the different services who provide support to disabled children, will consider the level of service required to meet the child or young person's needs and promote their welfare. This panel looks at the best way of providing and funding short breaks for children and young people with the highest levels of need. When they are looking at a package of short break support, the panel takes into account the assessed needs, the opinions of the specialists who work with the child or young person. The parents and/or carers' opinions about the kind of short break that they would find beneficial and the where appropriate the views and wishes of the child or young person are also considered. The panel brings everyone's ideas together to work out how best to provide the right short break package for the child/ young person and their family.

The type of services available at this level will include specialist play sessions, overnight short breaks, Direct Payments and a specialist worker who will offer care in either the home or the community.

## Pathways of Need

	Dimension	Pathway 1 Level of Need	Pathway 2 Level of Need	Pathway 3 Level of Need
Band A	Mobility	Able to walk unassisted, but with difficulty or poor co-ordination.	Walks, but only with aids or assistance. May use a wheelchair sometimes.	Full time wheelchair user and/or Mobility severely restricted without special provision.
	Vision	Severe or profound problem with one eye. Less than half visual field loss. Able to function independently.	Able to read print with simple aids or assistance. Defect of at least half visual field. May be eligible for registration as partially sighted.	Unable to read large print without intensive educational assistance or sophisticated aids. Registered.
	Hearing	Severe or profound hearing loss in one ear. Hearing loss 20-40 dB	Hearing loss 41-70 dB	Hearing loss >71 dB
	Functioning and Learning ability	Overall functioning slightly below expected level for age. May have a mild or moderate learning disability	Overall functioning around half expected level for age. Has a moderate learning disability	Overall functions significantly below expected level for age. Have a severe learning disability or a moderate learning disability and diagnosed ASD.
	Health	Known health condition, which is under control but occasionally interferes with everyday activities in a minor way.	Health condition that limits normal activities, including self-care and personal hygiene, access to services. May interfere with opportunities for development or education.	Diagnosed health condition, which is severe and potentially life threatening, and results in frequent hospital admissions that limits accessing developmental or educational activities. May be in receipt of Continuing Care or palliative care from Health Services.
Band B	Communication	Delayed language development only.	Delayed/ disorganised verbal communication causing difficulty. Speech supplemented by alternate communication method.	Uses communication other than words, e.g. symbols, makaton, BSL.
	Personal care	Child requires minimal support beyond that of their peers with everyday care needs; this will include toileting, washing and dressing.	Child requires practical support beyond that of their peers with everyday care needs; this will include toileting, washing and dressing.	Child requires assistance beyond that of their peers with all everyday care needs; this will include toileting, washing and dressing and can be problematic and need skilled intervention.
Band C	Safety and Supervision	Requires occasional supervision beyond that expected for their age. Poor sense of danger or risk of excitability.	Needs supervision to perform daily activities significantly greater than that expected for developmental age. Limited perception of danger to self or others.	Needs constant supervision during the day and night. Would place themselves or others at risk without supervision.
	Behaviour and Social Integration	Some mild, transient or frequent behaviour difficulties. Able to use local non-specialist universal services. Able to sustain limited peer relationships and social integration with support. Child requires support to access services.	Behaviour problems severe or frequent enough to require some specialist advice or provision. Significant support required to achieve social integration. Only able to sustain peer relationships with support. Child requires services to prevent or alleviate stress in the family.	Long-term behaviour difficulties make it difficult for the child to function appropriately most of the time, and maybe of risk to the child or carers without special provision. Dependence upon carer for social integration. Limited awareness of impact of behaviour upon others. Services required to prevent high risk of accommodation for the child.

Children and young people who meet one or more of the criteria within Band A are likely to meet that Pathway. Children and young people who meet one or more of the criteria within both Bands B and C are likely to meet that Pathway. For more information please discuss your son/daughters needs with the short break provider or Short Breaks on 020 8583 3636.

## 9. Programme of short breaks

There is a range of short breaks available to support disabled children and young people and their families, which can be accessed either with or without an assessment of need. Where possible we aim to offer short breaks both within mainstream and specialist settings, some short breaks are particularly suitable for children with specific needs, e.g. Autism and others are inclusive with non-disabled children and/or siblings. Short breaks are publicised widely through a half termly Newsletter which is posted to families with a child or young person with a Statement of Special Educational Need or known to the Pre-School Panel. In addition information about Short breaks is also available via the Hounslow website, ([http://www.hounslow.gov.uk/short\\_breaks\\_disabled\\_children](http://www.hounslow.gov.uk/short_breaks_disabled_children)), the Family Information Service and by calling the Short Breaks Team 020 8583 3636. A number of internal and external, specialist and non-specialist providers have been commissioned to provide short breaks. These comprise Three Wings Trust, Scope, Hounslow Play Team, Westbrook, Scope. Otaker Kraus Music Trust, Kids Cookery School, Brentford Sports

Hounslow Play Team provides a range of activities for children and young people between the ages of 0 to 18 years.

Westbrook is a short breaks unit which is rated 'outstanding' based in Heston.

Scope is a national charity who have been commissioned by Hounslow to provide specialist day care for young people in their homes.

In 2011/12 the following short breaks are available in Hounslow.

### Specialist Day Care

- Childminders – specialist provider of day care for children and young people from the age of 0 to 18 years.
- Sitting Service - Three Wings Trust
- Westbrook
- Tiny Tots supported by Hounslow Play Team

### Non-Specialist Day Care

- Hounslow Early years

### Specialist Group Based

- Hounslow Extra Club (HEC) Playscheme
- Play Team Play schemes
- Music therapy provided by Otaker Kraus Music Trust
- Sunday Drop-in (Redlees) supported by Hounslow Play Team
- Sunday Drop-in (Reflections)
- Westbrook Youth Club for young people aged 11 - 18
- Redlees Summer Youth Club supported by Hounslow Play Team and Three Wings Trust

- Redlees Evening Drop-in supported by Hounslow Play Team and Three Wings Trust

#### Non –Specialist Group

- A range of sporting activities organised by Brentford Sports
- Griffin Park Learning Zone running a summers reporters project
- Holiday Soccer Camps organised by Feltham Bees
- Fusion Leisure Service provide exclusive family swimming sessions and pool parties
- Heathrow Gym – access to soft play area for children and siblings upto the age of 8 years.
- Kids cookery for children between the ages of 5 and 12 years.
- Family fun-days
- Travel training supported by Dimensions Owl
- Watermans – family cinema and production viewings

#### Specialist Overnight Care

- Westbrook Short Break Unit
- Barnardo's providing specialist overnight care in the carers home

Short Breaks can also be accessed by using a direct payment.

### **10. How we will review the statement**

This statement will be reviewed at least on an annual basis in consultation with parent carers and young people to ensure that we are constantly adhering to the needs of children in the local authority. Consultation will start as early as January next year so that we capture more views than this year. The statement will be reviewed in May and will be published for 1 October 2012.

We will continue to work with the Hounslow Parent Carers Forum to ensure that their views contribute to the planning of the statement. The forum meets every month to discuss the needs of disabled children in the borough.

### **11. Getting Involved**

If you would like more information about Short Breaks in Hounslow, the support offered to disabled children and young people and their families, would like to attend the Hounslow Parent Carers Forum or simply have a question, then please contact the Short Breaks Team who will be able to help or pass on your details to the appropriate service.

Contact the Short Breaks Team on:

020 8583 3636 or e-mail [shortbreaks@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:shortbreaks@hounslow.gov.uk)

More information on short breaks and services to disabled children and young people can be found on the Hounslow website.