

Bolton Short Breaks Services Statement 2011

Introduction

Welcome to Bolton's first short breaks services statement please read on to find more about:

- who can benefit from the services
- how breaks are being designed to meet the needs of disabled children and families
- the range of short break opportunities available in Bolton
- how to find out more about support available

Why produce the statement?

[The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations](#) came into force in April 2011.

These regulations establish in law the local authority's duty to provide short breaks from caring to assist parents and others with parental responsibility who provide care for disabled children

The regulations also require the local authority to produce a short breaks services statement and to keep it under regular review

We have tried to avoid producing a very lengthy document and have focused on key areas. However further sources of information are referenced if you wish to know more. Control and click for links to useful web pages underlined.



What is a short break?

What we mean by short breaks is the provision or commissioning of services by the council which aim to support disabled children and their families over and above universal activities which are available to all families.

They form part of the range of services which support parents of disabled children to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively.

Why are short breaks provided?

- Short breaks give disabled children and young people the chance to enjoy new experiences and make new friends with and away from their families
- Short breaks support young people to spend time away from their parents, learn independence skills, gain confidence and take part in activities which challenge them
- Short breaks enable parents to have a break from caring that they can use as they wish to take part in an educational or leisure activity, to meet the needs of the other children in the family, to catch up on household tasks or to have a rest.

Who can access short breaks?

Bolton's short breaks services are available for disabled children and young people aged from birth to 18. The description of disability used is from the Equality Act 2010 which brings together a number of existing laws, including DDA 1995 into one place so that it is easier to use:

" someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"

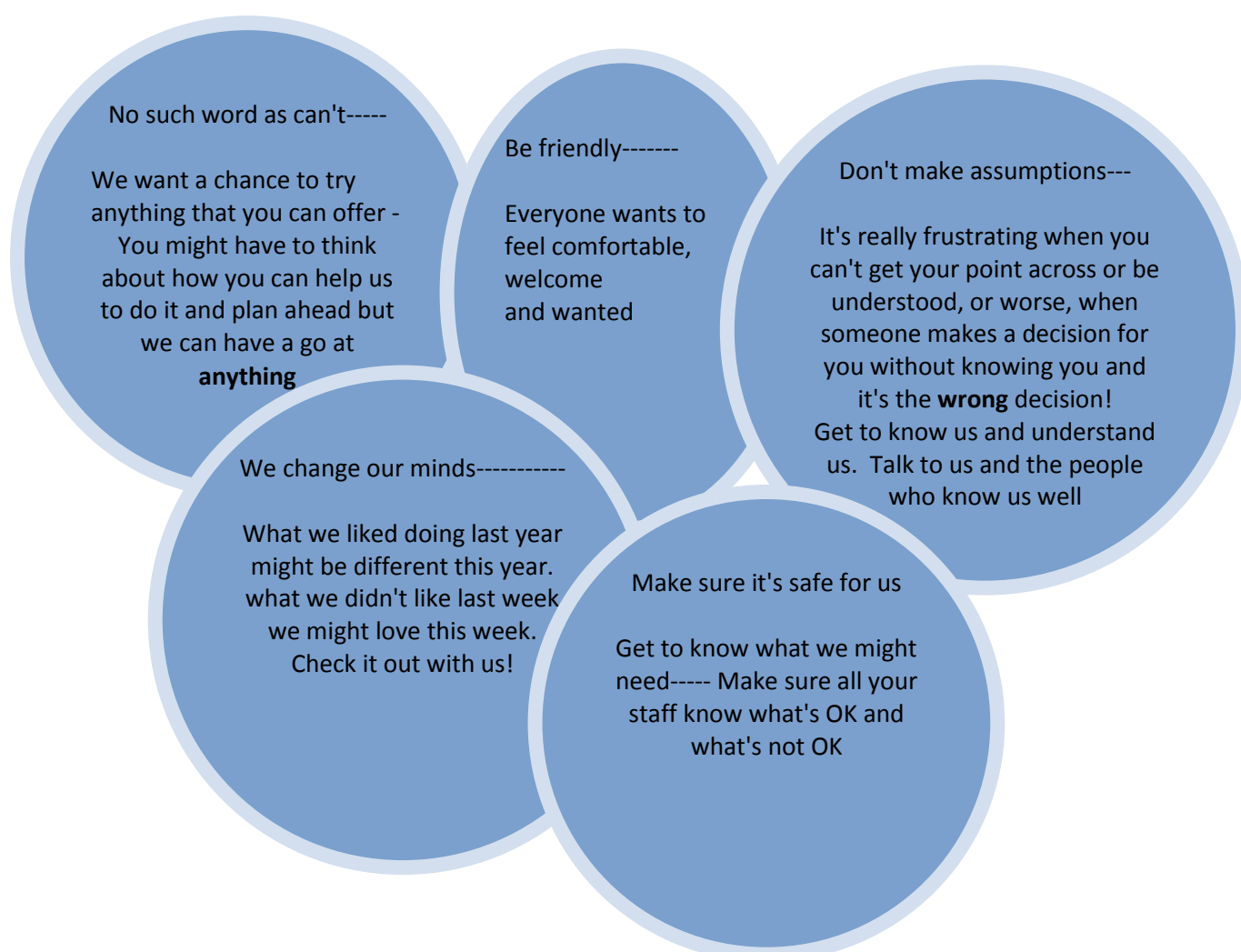
Parents are encouraged to register their child on [The Record](#), Bolton's disability data base; this will give them access to information about a range of short breaks available and enable them to use some services without the need for a formal assessment.

Contact: TheRecord@bolton.gov.uk or phone Claire Rutherford on 01204 337102

[A leaflet](#) is available with more details about eligibility for short breaks

Responding to need in Bolton

Over the last three years we have had regular consultations with parents and young people about what short breaks should look like and when they need to happen. Unsurprisingly young people are keen to have the same sorts of experiences as other young people of their age. They also want to feel welcomed and safe. This is some of the advice the Me2 group has offered providers:



Parents share their children's concerns that services should be welcoming and with staff who are both competent and confident in understanding and meeting young people's additional support needs. More than anything they want to trust the services looking after their youngsters and be assured they have both the knowledge and the right equipment. As families they want 'places to go that are fully accessible and properly equipped'. Parents said they welcomed short breaks **with** their children (with someone to share the caring) as well as **from** their children.

Results from a survey of 500 families in Bolton undertaken at the end of 2010 strongly indicated that the majority of families regarded regular short breaks over the summer as most essential with other holidays and daytime support at weekends coming next. After school activities and 1:1 support to enable a young person to enjoy leisure were also prized.

Bolton used Aiming High for Disabled children grant funding (2008-11) to improve its traditional services and invest in different forms of support in response to families' comments. We also invested in training across a range of providers and used capital funding to improve access. [Aiming High short breaks newsletter 2011](#)

Although this programme finished in March 2011 the authority has continued to fund many of these activities and work with our partners to encourage others as part of our commitment to disabled children and young people.

Services will continue to develop in line with council priorities and resources available and the council is committed to listening to parents and young people so we shape services to meet greatest need. We know for example from feedback from the holiday support offered in summer 2011 that it continues to be vital for families and opportunities need to be increased for 13-18 age group.

Services available

Opportunities that parents can use without formal assessment:

These generally take place during the holidays, after school or at the weekend. Most are regular but some are occasional

Examples of support might include:

- youth clubs
- sports and arts based activities
- after school activities
- school holiday schemes
- opportunities for young people to try things their peers do for example recent driving sessions have proved hugely popular with older teenagers



Some are provided through BRIDGES, Bolton's 'in-house' short breaks and family support service but most are provided/commissioned from other parts of the council and its partner organisations

Some of these opportunities are open to all and some are targeted at particular groups for example young people with ASC (autistic spectrum conditions including Asperger's syndrome), or young people attending special schools. Some activities offer parents a break from their children and might include an occasional 'residential' as part of the experience, but some support the family to enjoy an activity together in a supportive environment. There is generally a small charge as a contribution to the costs of activities and they can be booked directly. Popular activities might be oversubscribed.

Information

Details of these opportunities will be posted on the [Short Breaks and Activities](#) for disabled children page of the council website. For more information about a range of activities which can benefit disabled children and young people take a look at [The Local Service Directory](#) or contact Families Information Service on: 01204 338756/07789 031966

Or contact: TheRecord@bolton.gov.uk or phone Claire Rutherford on 01204 337102

Breaks which require further assessment:

Some young people need a high level of support to enable them to use community resources or be cared for at home or elsewhere to enable parents to have a break during the day or to have an evening out or regular overnight care.

Assessments for these services are carried out using the Common Assessment Framework, which looks at both the child's and the families needs. They will be completed by a member of the [Children with Disabilities' Team](#), which is a social work team, or a key professional who knows the family well, as appropriate, and agreed with the parents. Referrals are then made to a weekly meeting so that resources can be allocated in the most helpful and equitable way.

When assessing the support needed the following will be amongst the areas looked at:

- the particular additional support needs of the young person and the impact that has on them and the rest of the family including brothers and sisters
- if a parent is disabled or has chronic ill health
- the number of other caring responsibilities a parent might have including other disabled children
- the support the family receive from their family/social network or other services
- if a child is 'looked after' by the authority
- concerns about a young person's safety and general welfare at home

Parents can find out more about the assessment process by contacting Claire as above or the duty social worker on 01204 337100

Examples of support might include:

- day time provided by a BRIDGES team member or a befriender
- a sitter
- funding for support in a particular setting or it might involve a young person visiting an alternative family approved to offer care 'family link'
- overnight breaks with an alternative family
- overnight breaks in a residential placement for example one of the two fully adapted bungalows run by BRIDGES or from a special school, or an overnight sitter
- hospice provision

Where a young person has complex health or palliative care needs the local authority works closely with paediatric nursing services to ensure the most appropriate support package is delivered

If an assessment indicates that specialist short breaks services are needed families will be given information so they can decide whether they would prefer to receive a direct payment that is a cash sum rather than a service. This enables parents to arrange their own support.

More information on [Direct Payments](#)

How to find out more about support available

Disabled children and their families face a unique and often challenging set of circumstances that demand a unique and sometimes specialised response from both the universal and targeted services that support them and enable them to live an 'ordinary' life. Targeted short breaks might be only a part of that response which might also include support from:

- health
- education
- social care services
- transition to adulthood.

Following discussion with [BACPAC](#) Bolton's parent forum [The BIG](#) (Bolton Information Guide) was produced in 2010, copies of which can be ordered by parents through Families Information Service or The Record as above. This offers information on a range of local services and how to access them

Review

The short breaks services statement will be updated as information changes and reviewed annually. We welcome input into the review

Families wishing to comment on the statement or short break services can e mail shortbreaks@bolton.gov.uk or info@bacpacbolton.org.uk