



Short Breaks Statement and how to access short breaks and activities for Disabled Young people in Bath and North East Somerset



Introduction

This document specifically focuses on short break provision for children and young people with a disability aged 0-18 years in Bath and North East Somerset. This document has been put together with the views and support of key partners and stake holders including the Parent Carer Aiming High group, the Disabled Children's Strategy group.

In recent years access to short breaks for disabled children has significantly improved as the volume and range of short breaks has increased. The short breaks that are commissioned by the Council and parent carer groups; report that this has led to improved outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families and has also provided evidence for those planning and providing services. Examples of improved outcomes include young people venturing out into their local community and being supported to develop independent skills.

Since October 2011 there is a duty for local authorities to provide a range of short breaks for disabled children under the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children's Regulation 2011. These regulations require each local authority to produce a short break statement. The needs of disabled children and their families are evaluated to through timely consultations with children, young people and their families, through data collected such as attendance sheets, performance levels and levels of satisfaction of services commissioned by the Council as well as demographic data and reach data. By collecting data in this way the Council can demonstrate value for money and set out clear outcomes when developing strategic plans and commissioning of short breaks. For example, by using the demographic information below informs the Council where best to place services in the area.

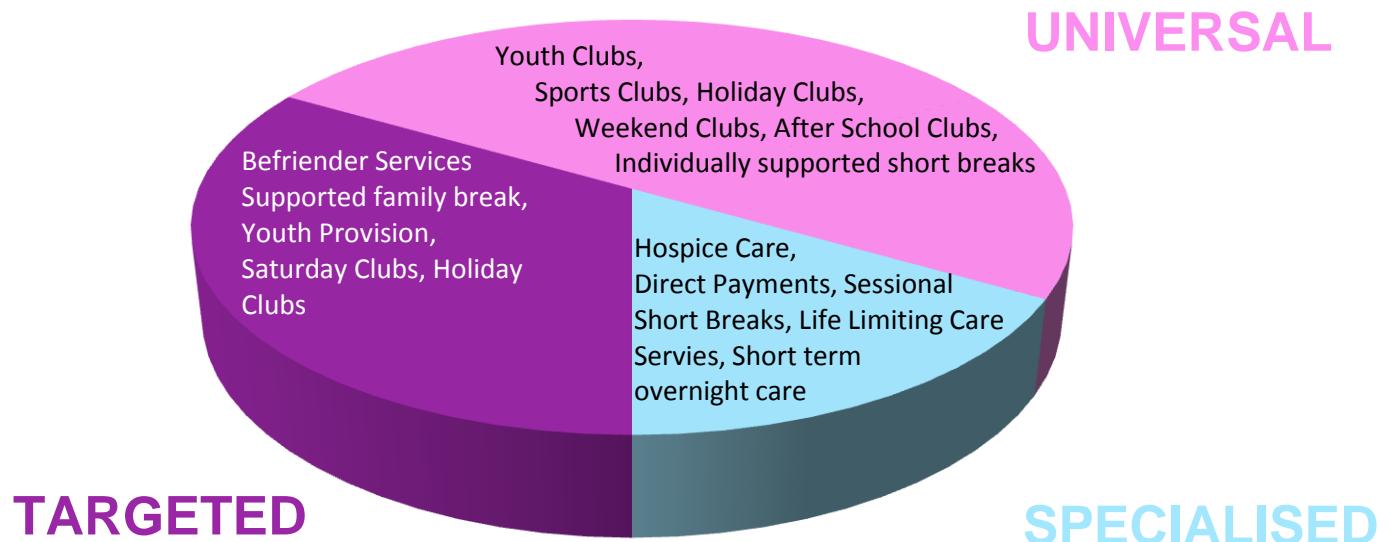
Population of Disability

LAP	0-6 years	7-13 years	14-19 years	Total
Bath	174	574	335	1083
Norton Radstock	121	354	167	642
Chew Valley and Keynsham	48	182	81	311
Pupils with postcode that cannot be matched	28	173	237	438
Pupils with no DOB or over 19	0	0	0	4
Totals	371	1283	820	2478

Source: Education Management System and Care First database July 2011



Range of short breaks



Range of Short Breaks

The aim of offering a range of short breaks is to ensure children and young people with disabilities have the necessary support to access and participate in society. Mainstream services and specialised agencies should work alongside each other and offer fair access and offer the same opportunities to disabled children including those with a sustainable and permanent disability so that disabled children and young people can make positive connections and develop friendship with their disabled and non-disabled peers. Short breaks also provide the opportunity for young people to go out to places in their local community and develop independence skills.

A short break can last a few hours to an overnight in or away from the home. They can take place in a community setting; the child's own home; the home of an approved carer or in a residential setting. They can take place during the day, in the evening, during the weekend or during school holidays. Short Breaks also provide parents and families with a necessary and valuable break from caring responsibilities.

What is a short Break?

Short Breaks were previously known as 'respite care'. A short break takes place to allow families to spend time together, with or without their disabled child, doing ordinary family things. As well as providing a break from caring, short breaks offer disabled children and young people the opportunity to go places, have fun, spend time with friends, develop independence skills and increased self confidence in a range of activities both indoor and outdoor and in the wider environment.



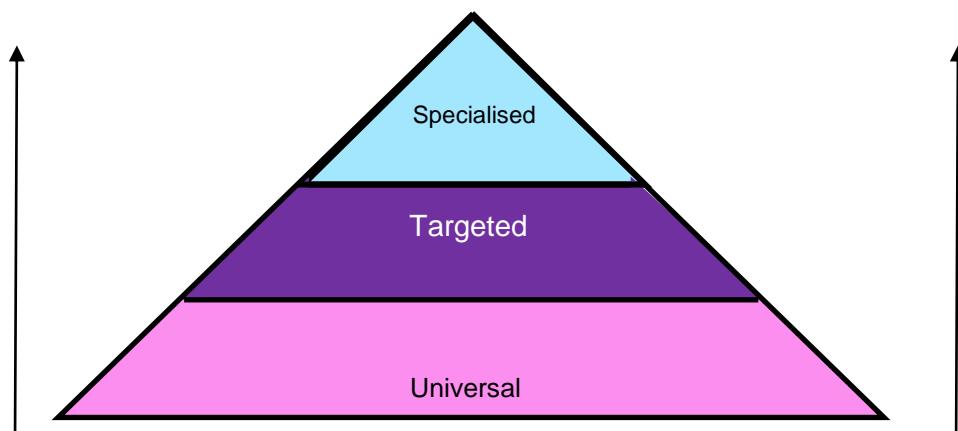
Who is entitled to a short break?

Children and young people are eligible for short breaks 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.” (Source: Disability Discrimination Act 1995; Equality Act 2010). This may include:

- Physical or mental impairment
- Sensory impairment
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Children who may have challenging behaviour as a result of their disability
- Children who have complex healthcare needs and who may have palliative, life limiting or life threatening conditions

How to access Short Breaks and activities for disabled children

Bath and North East Somerset believe that in order for services to be provided fairly and within an equality framework there must be consistency throughout all of Children's Services. Some services can be accessed by contacting the provider directly e.g. holiday play schemes whereas other services such as short term overnight care will require an assessment. The level of support a child would need to access provision depends on the severity of the child's disability and the needs of the rest of the family. This support is categorised into three levels



Many children will access a mixture of services, some specialised ones that are provided through an assessment and some that are accessed through universal and targeted activities, which have been commissioned from voluntary or independent sector groups.

Universal services

These are services available to all children and young people and cover educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their home. They include activities at youth clubs, sports and leisure centres and after school clubs. Universal services will be the first point of contact for many families. Providers of short breaks services and of children's and young people's universal play and leisure services, take active steps to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that access for disabled children and young people is possible.

Disabled children would not need an assessment to access universal services. Parent/carers should contact the provider of the provision directly. Some providers request that application forms for holiday schemes are returned up to 6 weeks before the provision is to take place. A youth worker may wish to contact the family to ask questions about the individual needs of your child.

The Council has a Development Worker for Disabled Children and their Families who can provide specialist advice and support for families in the area. This could include advice around sensory impairment, physical disability, learning difficulties and behavioural problems. The worker also produces a LINK newsletter produced three times a year which contains useful information and local news updates on activities or projects in the Bath and North East Somerset area.

Some clubs may need additional support or need to access specific training for a disabled young person to access a club. To encourage and improve access to universal services, additional help or funding may be offered to families to access a short break provision. The Short Break package funding can be applied for through a professional that works with your child such as a youth worker or School SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) Please contact the Family Information Service for more information.



Targeted Services

The Council recognises that families may have additional needs if they are bringing up a disabled child and the children or young people may need extra support, either short or long term, to be able to take part in activities. Targeted services aim to offer support to prevent difficulties building up and to encourage children and young people to try new things. Examples of targeted services include youth clubs, Saturday clubs and holiday clubs that are specifically run to support the individual needs of disabled young people. Other targeted services include daytime care in the homes or in the local community of disabled children as well as services available to assist carers in the evening, at weekends and during school holidays.

Access is not necessarily dependant on a formal assessment although each service may operate their own criteria. Some services will be available for children assessed as needing a short break through a multi-agency integrated assessment process. This is a voluntary process where a lead professional such as a health adviser, school teacher or youth work professional supports the family to identify what interventions and services can be offered. The aim is to offer earlier interventions to prevent difficulties escalating and to increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for disabled children and their families.

The Council commissions two family inclusion play workers who use their experience and expertise in play to help people understand how important play is in supporting children's emotional and physical development. One worker is based in Bath and one in Norton Radstock. Their job is support children and young people to enjoy play opportunities and try new things.



Specialist Service

Specialist services are available to children and families who have carried out an assessment through the Disabled Children's Team. To access specialised services eligibility criteria are used to determine the level of service required for each family. To find out more information about the assessment process, please follow this link. <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/children-young-people-and-families/families-disabled-children/short-breaks-disabled-child-0>

In order to access an assessment, parent carers can contact the Disabled Children's Team on 01225 825 307 and ask for an initial assessment. This assessment will look at the needs and circumstances of the family and recommend what support, if any, is needed. A core assessment is undertaken and specialised services provided to children and families with the most complex needs. These include overnight short breaks in or away from the family home and could take place with family carers or individual support workers who will facilitate the use of community facilities. Services are also available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays.

Specialist palliative care health services for children and young people with life limiting conditions are commissioned. These include short breaks at a Children's hospice as well as an overnight service in the child's home.

Some families choose to source their own services through direct payments which enable them to employ their own carers, contract with an agency for the care or purchase a break from a provider. Support is available for families who decide to take this option. To access direct payments families will need to go through a formal assessment. The Council commissions a service to support families with their direct payments and can provide advice on how this might work. Please contact the Disabled Children's Team for more information about Direct Payments.



Feedback from families using short break services

I like coming to the club because we can do things we can't do at home

It helps her having somewhere to go where she is understood and accepted for who she is and not made to feel different.

I didn't go with my friends but everyone there was more friendly

It is really good to see so clearly that R is so confident away from her home environment and that there is such a strong structure of learning around the 'play' activities.

My sister likes me now. I have my own space

Transport

Other feedback received from families relates to the low levels of accessible transportation getting to and from Short Breaks which can be an issue for some children, young people and their families. The Diamond Travel card offers free off-peak bus travel for older people and those with disabilities who live in Bath & North East Somerset. To access more information about the diamond travel card please follow this link <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/parking-and-travel/public-transport/bus-passes> or contact the Family Information Service for more information. The council is planning a short break commission due to take place in the near future where families will be consulted about transportation

Transitions for disabled young people

Bath and North East Somerset Council have developed a transition pathway to support young people and their families through the transition process using person centred approaches. Transition to adulthood is about helping young people and their families to prepare for the changes in services that they may receive. The transition process also takes into account that sometimes a lot more planning needs to happen to ensure the transition to adulthood is as smooth as possible for young people with additional needs. In B&NES we recognise that good transition planning needs to be based around four specific areas (Pathways)

1. Education, training and employment
2. Independence and housing
3. Health
4. Friends, relationships and community

Further information about the Transitions process please follow this link or contact the Family Information Service <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/children-young-people-and-families/transition-adulthood>



Workforce development

There are a number of ways professionals can receive additional training to support a disabled child who they are working with. All new council employees undertake induction training, where a section of training looks at communication techniques with children of disabilities. Specific courses around children and disabilities are accessed through the two special schools in the area and include:

- ASD enabling effective inclusion
- How adult empathy supports children's emotional development
- Supporting Children with physical disabilities in School.

The family placement team also carries out a number of courses relating to understanding and supporting disabled children in the home environment. The Council also offers training for professionals that covers sexual health training and include strategies to support the sexual health needs of young people with learning disabilities and supporting parents and carers to talk to their children about sex and relationships.

Additional training for practitioners supporting disabled children in mainstream settings can be accessed funding through the short break package funding which is a small grant made available to support individual disabled children in mainstream settings and is mentioned in the section Universal Services.

Where do you go to access information?

Information on short breaks is available in a wide variety of accessible formats including leaflets, on the internet and by telephone to all families in Bath and North East Somerset area. For up to date information about the range of short breaks and specific schemes please contact the **Family Information Service (FIS)** team on 0800 0731214, Text 07980998906 or email fis@bathnes.gov.uk. You can also ring FIS to contact the Development Worker for Disabled Children and their Families. FIS offers impartial advice covering a range of topics supporting families and children aged 0-20 years. Specific information about short break services can be found here: <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/children-young-people-and-families/families-disabled-children/short-breaks-disabled-children>

The FIS team has also developed an easy to access directory of services for children with additional needs called **The Rainbow Resource**. It contains information on health, education, transport, leisure, benefits advice, careers and employment, practical help and support. The Rainbow resource is available to view at www.rainbowresource.org.uk

Parent carers and, where appropriate, young people are fully involved in all aspects of short breaks development and are involved in making key decisions about short break provision. As a result, the development of the range of short break services has grown reflecting the needs of families in the area. If you would like to have your say and get involved please contact Parent Carer Aiming High (PCAHL) group. They can be contacted at the Carers Centre in Radstock on 01761 431388 or through www.pcah.org.uk



Future plans for Short Break Services

In order to sustain lasting change within Bath and North East Somerset the Council needs to be able to demonstrate which services and interventions are effective and where further improvement and/or growth is needed. That is why the Council works closely with providers of short breaks and families of disabled children to regularly review practice; systematically collect and analyse data.

Parent/carers have actively been involved in shaping this short break statement. We are hoping to work with children and young people on the statement in the near future through working with The Children Society and the Youth Service. Through timely consultations, the views of parent carers and their disabled children and young people using short breaks and providers of these services will continue to be heard and will influence decision making about commissioning to sustain and develop short breaks.

The Council will also be working with a wide range of professionals and families in Bath and North East Somerset to develop future policy changes such as the Special Educational Needs (SEND) Green paper and the introduction of the personalisation agenda for children and young people through the Children and Families Bill. This Bill will also require local authorities to publish and keep under review 'a local offer' which informs families about services they expect to be available in health, education and social care for children and young people with special educational needs aged 0-25. The intention of the local offer is to improve choice and transparency for families. We will continue to develop short break opportunities for families in conjunction with legislation such as the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that the Council comply with the act as well as developing seamless, high quality services for disabled children. This statement will be reviewed yearly.

Contacts

For more information about this statement, contact:

Kay Sibley, Project Officer, Short Breaks for Disabled Children, Bath and North East Somerset Council, Riverside Offices, 01225 39 5437, kay_sibley@bathnes.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Additional Information

Definitions

The Children's Act 1989 sets out legal framework for how services for children and their families are provided.

This policy and procedure relate to children and their families who are in need. As such the definition is taken from the Childrens Act 1989. Section 17(1) states that "it shall be the general duty of every local authority:

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need; and so far as is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs".

Child in Need definition

The Childrens Act section 17(10) states that a child shall be taken as in need if: A 'child in need' may be:

- disabled
- unlikely to have, or have the opportunity to have, a reasonable standard of health or development without services from the local authority; or
- unlikely to progress in terms of health or development; or
- unlikely to progress in terms of health or development; without services from the local authority

Disability Definition

The Childrens Act section 17(11) states that a child is disabled if:

"he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed"

'Development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development; and 'health' means physical or mental health.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and the Equality Act 2010 defines disability as:

"A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities"

Those covered by the DDA definition would include anyone who permanently unable to use a limb, see or hear. Children or young people with a learning disability or with a long lasting clinically well – recognised mental illness.

The meaning of long term is lasting, or being likely to last, at least 12 months.

Short Breaks Definition

The Short Break Implementation Guidance 2008 defines short breaks as:

"Short breaks provide opportunities for disabled children and young people to spend time away from their primary carers. These include day, evening, overnight or weekend activities and take place in the child's home, the home of an approved carer, a residential or community setting.

Provision of short breaks should be based on an assessment of the whole family addressing both their personal and social needs. Short breaks occur on a regular and planned basis and should be part of an integrated programme of support which is regularly reviewed”.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Green Paper

The green paper “support and aspiration – a new approach to special educational needs and disability” was published by the coalition Government in March 2011. It proposes:

- A new approach to identifying SEN through a single early setting-based category and school-based category of SEN
- A new single assessment process and education, health and care plan by 2014
- Local authorities and other services will set out a local offer of all services available
- The option of a personalised budget by 2014 for all families with children with a statement of SEN or a new Education, Health and Care Plan
- Give parents a real choice of school; either a mainstream or special school
- Introduce greater independence to the assessment of children’s needs

Personalisation Agenda

Personalisation is a social care approach described by the Department of Health as a meaning that “every person who receives support, whether provided by statutory services or funded by themselves, will have choice and control over the shape of that support in all care settings”.

While it is often associated with direct payments and personal budgets, under which service users can choose the services that they receive, personalisation also entails that services are tailored to the needs of every individual, rather than delivered in a one-size-fits-all fashion.

Family Information Service (FIS)

The Family information Service provides comprehensive impartial information for families, professionals and young people in Bath and North East Somerset area. All enquires are dealt with in confidence.

Family Inclusion Play Worker

A Family Inclusion Play Worker supports children and young people to enjoy play opportunities and try new things or as a support to start attending an activity regularly. A home visit is arranged to meet the family and build a clear picture of what is needed and steps are agreed to work towards positive outcomes

Development Worker for Disabled Children and their Families

The worker provides specialist advice and support in the area. This could include advice around sensory impairment and physical disability to learning difficulties and behavioural problems.

SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator)

The SENCo takes day to day responsibility for provision made for individual children with a Special Educational Need (SEN) working closely with staff, parents and carers, and other agencies. The SENCo also provides related professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high quality teaching for children with SEN.

Direct Payments

If you qualify for help through an assessment you can choose to receive a 'direct payment' to buy services you need to meet your needs as a family. On the whole this is instead of receiving services direct from the council.

Contacts

Disabled Children's Team (DCT) 01225 825307

Family Inclusion Play Workers

Bath: Bath Area Play Project Tel: 01225832479 or email: enquires@bapp.org.uk

Norton Radstock: Wansdyke Play Association 01761420660 or email: admin@wpa-play.com

Family Information Service (FIS)

Tel: 08000731214, Text 07980998906 or email: fis@bathnes.gov.uk

Development Worker for Disabled Children

Mary–Jane Middlehurst 01225 395343

NOTES: