

Short break services for disabled children, families and carers information statement 2023

Introduction and Background

Welcome to Hull City Council's Short Break Services Information Statement.

The aim of the statement is to set out details of:

- What is a Short Break?
- Who is able to access short breaks and how to do this (eligibility criteria)
- The range of short break services provided
- Parent and Carer involvement

The 2023 statement includes updates to services following reviews of the Leisure and Family Support Services (LAFFS) in 2022 and updates regarding overnight short breaks with the proposed opening of the new Limetree Short Breaks Home in December 2023.

Legal Duties and Responsibilities

Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 requires local authorities to provide short breaks for families with disabled children. This duty, which came into force on 1 April 2011, requires each local authority to produce a Short Breaks Services Statement. This is to enable families to know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for these services, and how the range of short breaks is designed to meet the local needs of families with disabled children.

Furthermore, local authorities must publish this statement on their website, keep it under review and revise it where appropriate including the views of parents and carers in their area.

How the statement has been prepared

This statement was originally produced in partnership with the voluntary sector and the Hull Parents' Forum. It is informed by ongoing feedback from children young people and families who use the services together with more targeted consultation activities.

The Statement will be kept under review on an annual basis.

What is a Short Break?

Short Breaks for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, come in many different forms. They can:

- Provide opportunities for disabled children to enjoy themselves and fulfil their potential through safe experiences with or without their parent or carer
- Give parent or carers a break from caring, enabling them to have time to undertake whatever they would like to do, such as leisure activities, day-to-day tasks, spending time with other family members or education/training opportunities.
- Enhance the abilities of parents and carers to care more effectively.

Short Breaks can last anything from a couple of hours, to an evening, overnight, weekend or longer and can be offered during daytimes, evenings, weekends and school holidays. Short Breaks can take place within or outside the home, in the community or in a residential setting.

For some short breaks an assessment of need may be necessary to ensure that the right level of support and short break activities/services are used.

Who can access Short Breaks?

Short breaks are available for children and young people from birth to their 18th birthday who are disabled, and/or have complex health needs where their disability has a significant impact on them and family life.

How to access short breaks

Universal short breaks can be accessed without an assessment. Providers of Targeted and Specialist Services may have their own criteria and/or carry out an assessment through home visit to ensure they are able to offer the best support. More specialist short breaks services for the most complex young people generally require an assessment through the Children and Families Disability Team and/or Health's Children and Young People's Continuing Care

For more information about how to access short breaks and current eligibility please visit Hull's Local Offer Website: <http://hull.mylocaloffer.org>

Or by contacting:

- Family Information Service and the Local Offer, telephone: (01482) 318 318
- Children and Families Disabilities Team, telephone: (01482) 715 155
- Children and Young People's Continuing Care through the Single Point of Access Team (for Community Children's Nursing Service, Continuing Care Team and Community Paediatricians), telephone: (01482) 221 261
- KIDS, telephone: (01482) 467 540

Universal Services

Generally, all children, young people and their parents and carers can access short breaks through a wide range of activities and services available in the local community. These are known as Universal Services.

Universal services are services that everyone can access. All children and young people have a right to inclusive universal provision. This includes the right to inclusive education, health, inclusive leisure activities and the right to have fun and enjoy the same things as other children and young people.

Universal services are everyday activities or events that are used as short break opportunities by most children, young people and their families. The majority of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to access a short break opportunity by using free or affordable local services within their local communities.

Universal services include Cubs, Brownies, Scouts, Girl Guides, before and after school clubs, various leisure activities, Libraries, community sports centre activities, youth activities, family activity days/events, group-based activities, early year's childcare, Children's Hubs and a range of support and activities delivered by voluntary and community groups.

The inclusion of disabled children is also supported through:

- Advice and information to settings through the Early Years Access and Inclusion Team. The Early Years settings (nurseries, pre-schools and childminders) are supported by the Area SENCOs to provide appropriate provision and interventions to enable children with SEND to access their free early education
- Early Years funding to improve the access of disabled children who need additional support in private and voluntary Nursery settings until their 5th birthday. This is available via the Early Years Inclusion Support Panel – Early Years settings can apply to the panel via their Area SENCO

- Family Information Service providing a range of information for parents and carers

There is also a wealth of Voluntary and Community Sector groups run by parents and volunteers across the city for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These include; Special Smiles, Downright Special and the Special Stars Foundation. For more information please visit the Hull Local Offer Website: <http://hull.mylocaloffer.org>

Targeted and Specialist Services

Targeted and specialist services provide short break opportunities suitable for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities with high, complex and multiple needs.

Parents and Carers can often refer direct and providers have their own eligibility criteria. Some services will usually require an assessment by the Children and Families Disability Team and/or Health's Children and Young People's Continuing Care.

Examples include; holiday play schemes, group based activities, supported breaks, specialist youth groups, day care and overnight short breaks away from the child or young person's home, overnight breaks in a residential setting or foster care, and care within the home and the local community through specialist providers.

Eligibility decisions are based on individual need, assessment and professional judgement, including to what extent the impairment affects a child or young person's life and the lives of those they live with and care for them.

As a guide it is anticipated that additional support will be available to children who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and who are eligible for a service from the Children and Families Disability Team and/or Health's Children & Young People's Continuing Care. This includes children and young people with:

- A significant permanent physical disability
- A life limiting or threatening condition,
- A significant learning disability,
- Autistic spectrum disorders with a significant global development delay which may include challenging behaviour.
- A significant sensory impairment

Not all children and families will need the same level of support and short breaks; some will need more than others because of the nature of their child's disability and impact on their family. Some families may need more support because of their individual family circumstances. This is why we need to assess children and families to ensure we provide the right level of support and short breaks at the right time. Requests for support might already have been highlighted by a professional who knows your family.

Direct payments and Personal Budgets

Children and families assessed as eligible to receive a service through the Children and Families Disability Team can choose to have a Direct Payment or Personal Budget to purchase alternative provision for a short break. Direct Payments can be used to employ a personal assistant (PA) for your child to provide a short break. Personal assistants can be family members (not living in the same house) and friends. Choices and Rights can also help families employ PA's. Following the assessment process, a Social Worker or Family Practitioner from the Children's Disability Team will provide information on Direct Payments and Personal Budgets. Families of Children and young people eligible for Continuing Care, may also choose how to use the service offered to meet their child's needs, including having the choice to have a Personal Health Budget to employ their own PA's for their child.

The range of targeted and specialist short breaks currently provided in Hull

We aim to be as flexible as possible in how we provide short breaks, responding to local needs, personalising the service and offering choice and creative solutions. We will continue to work together with parents, carers, children and young people, ensuring they are involved at all times when commissioning services.

Currently the following target and specialist short breaks services are available to families. Some short breaks can be accessed directly by families; other may require a specialist assessment through the Children and Families Disability Team or Health's Children and Young People's Continuing Care.

For more details, please visit the Hull Local Offer Website: <http://hull.mylocaloffer.org>

- Short Break and Fostering – for children with complex needs. Family based carers provide overnight breaks in their own home. To access this service please contact the Children and Families Disability Team on (01482) 715 155
- KIDS run a specialist play scheme during the summer holidays, giving children the opportunity to enjoy a range of outings and activities and to make new friends. KIDS also run youth groups for disabled children aged 8 – 18 years both can be accessed by contacting KIDS direct on (01482) 467 540
- Limetree Court provides an overnight short breaks service for children and young people aged 6 –18 years (18th Birthday) with complex health care, physical needs and challenging behaviour. To access this service please contact the Children and Families Disability Team on (01482) 715 155.

- Sunshine House is a Health facility offering short breaks for children and young people aged 0 – 18 years with long term conditions, life limiting conditions and/or complex health needs. Day care and/or overnight care is offered to families who meet the unit's criteria. A Children and Young People's Continuing Care assessment needs to be completed for this. For more information please contact Sunshine House direct on (01482) 976846. Referrals can be made by parents or other professionals involved by calling the Single Point of Access Team (for Community Children's Nursing Service, Continuing Care Team and Community Paediatricians) on (01482) 221 261
- The Leisure and Family Support Service (LAFSS) is a non-residential short breaks service offering groups, clubs and activities on evenings, weekends and school holidays, for disabled children and young people who are aged 6 - 18 years. LAFSS also run supported weekend breaks for families as well as Stay and Play activity sessions for 0-5 years which parents and children can attend together. Access to this service can be requested direct by parents and carers via the Children and Families Disability Team on (01482) 715 155. This service has expanded considerably over the last year following a service review and now provides a wider range of activities and support for more children. It also provides specialist support in the home for a small number of children where there is crisis. In 2024 LAFSS will be relocating to a new, larger building building, Lil Bolocca House, which will provide greater scope and capacity to develop the service further.
- Big Buzz and Buzzaballoo are youth club sessions for young people with disabilities run by the Youth Development Service. Big Buzz is held on Tuesday evenings 7 – 9pm for 16 – 24 year olds. Buzzaballoo is held on Wednesday evenings 7 – 9pm (term time only) for young people aged 11 – 18. Both sessions operate from Kingston Youth Centre on Beverley Road and have a variety of social fun activities such as arts, sports and games that encourage young people to interact with each other and develop their social skills. Big Buzz also works to support young people in the transition to adulthood through life skills workshops. Referrals can be made by families direct or by agencies working with families. For more information please contact Kingston Youth Centre on (01482) 331 238.
- Aiming High Inclusive Cycle Scheme is an award winning inclusive adapted cycling scheme with a range of specialist and mainstream bikes, enabling individuals, families and groups to cycle together and enjoy the health benefits of exercise and fun. The direct booking number is: (01482) 616 878

Parent and Carer Involvement

As an Authority, Hull is keen to ensure that access to short breaks is as easy and flexible as possible. We also want to make sure that there is fair and equitable access to services of choice in your local area. Parents and carers are involved in developing new services and developing existing services. If individuals would like to be directly involved, they should contact Julie Curtis-Dawton at LAFSS on (01482) 715 155

Useful Contact Numbers

- Hull Local Offer (based with the Family Information Service), telephone: (01482) 318 318. Website: <http://hull.mylocaloffer.org>
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