

**SERVICE FOR EARLY YEARS, SCHOOL SERVICES & SPECIAL NEEDS**

**LDD4**

**PROCEDURE NO:**

Short Breaks Strategy for Disabled Children

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PROCEDURES CANCELLED OR AMENDED:	Aiming High for Disabled Children's – Short Breaks for Disabled Children December 2011 Short Breaks Strategy for Disabled Children 2013/14
REMARKS:	This policy should be read in conjunction with all existing SBC and <b>LOCAL</b> policies and procedures.
SIGNED:	Jane Wood
DESIGNATION:	Director, Wellbeing

**AS A MANAGER YOU SHOULD ENSURE THAT:-**

- You read, understand and, where appropriate, act in accordance with the policy
- All people in your workplace who need to know see this procedure, are aware of its content and you ensure that all staff act in accordance with the policy
- This document is available in a place to which all staff members in your workplace have access

**AS AN SBC OFFICER/ MEMBER OF STAFF YOU SHOULD ENSURE THAT:-**

- You read, understand and, where appropriate, act on this information
- Discuss any issues with your manager or supervisor which you do not understand

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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.1 Purpose**

1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out the Slough Borough Council approach to providing short breaks for disabled children in accordance with The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011. This should be seen in the context of the ongoing development of the successful short break service that the Council has developed over the last 5 years which has enabled children to enjoy short breaks, having access to a wider range of opportunities, enabling parents to have breaks from caring and in many cases, preventing family breakdowns.

### **1.2 Scope**

1.2.1 This strategy relates to all short breaks offered to children with disabilities which in turn provide breaks for their carers.

1.2.2 It is appropriate that this strategy be read by all staff that work with the Short Break programme and all parents, carers, children and young people who utilise or wish to utilise the service, all staff that work in the early intervention teams within Slough Borough Council and their partner organisations.

### **1.3 References to Legal, Central Government and Other External Documents, Including Research**

- Aiming High for Disabled Children  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/vocabularies/educationtermsandtags/7029>
- Aiming High for Disabled Children – Short Breaks Implementation Guidance  
<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00755-2008>
- The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011

#### **1.4 Slough Borough Council References**

- Short Break Statement (December 2013)
- Carers Strategy for CYPPB

#### **1.5 Definitions**

CYP – Children and Young People

LDD – Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

Disabled child – “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<sup>1</sup>”

#### **1.6 Roles**

- N/A

#### **1.7 Authority to Vary the Procedure**

- CMT
- DMT

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<sup>1</sup> *Section 17(11), Children Act 1989*

## 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 In Slough we have a vision for our Short Break Service for children and young people (CYP) with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) which we set out in our initial Short Break Transformation Strategy. This is:

**“to enable as many disabled children and young people as possible to remain living at home with support from community services to lead normal family lives and have access to universal settings or more specialist local services in accordance with their wishes.”**

2.2 We have been working towards achieving this vision and reviewing our progress with parent/carers, CYP, professionals and Providers. We have also collected data every year to help us to know whether we have increased the number of CYP accessing short breaks and provided a greater level of day and overnight breaks.

2.3 During 2010 we obtained feedback from parents/carers and young people that indicated that the fundamental approach adopted in our Short Break Strategy remained appropriate to meet the needs of the children and their parents/carers. There was evidence that access to a range of short breaks had enabled children and young people to remain living at home and avoided the need for them to move to long term residential provision.

2.4 During 2012 we obtained further feedback from 103 parents/carers. The vast majority of parents/carers indicated that the short break service:

- is well advertised, easy to find and easy to book;
- includes activities that were suitable for their child and they enjoyed themselves;
- made an excellent difference, helping parents/carers and families as well as CYP;

The overall view of parents/carers is that the service is excellent.

2.5 In 2013 feedback was gathered from 72 parents/carers. Again, the overwhelming feedback is that the short break service continues to be excellent and, in particular it:

- is delivered in suitable venues and locations;
- provides excellent help to parents and carers;
- provides excellent benefits for families as well as CYP

2.6 The local data sets out the level of provision made and the funding associated with this. This level of detail has proved useful in planning and developing services and continues to be collected despite the ring fenced grant ending.

### **3 THE BREAKS FOR CARERS OF DISABLED CHILDREN REGULATIONS**

3.1 These Regulations came in to force on 1 April 2011 and relevant sections are included below as these are significant in relation to the ongoing strategy for the provision of short breaks to disabled children in Slough.

3.2 The local authority must:

- (a) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be unable to continue to provide care unless breaks from caring were given to them; and
- (b) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be able to provide care for their disabled child more effectively if breaks from caring were given to them to allow them to:
  - (i) undertake education, training or any regular leisure activity,
  - (ii) meet the needs of other children in the family more effectively, or
  - (iii) carry out day to day tasks which they must perform in order to run their household.

3.3 The local authority must provide services designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children to continue to do so, or to do so more

effectively, by giving them breaks from caring. This must include, as appropriate, a range of:

- (a) day-time care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere,
- (b) overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere,
- (c) educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes, and
- (d) services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.

3.4 There is also a duty to publish a Short Break Statement setting out details of the services and how these are accessed, including eligibility criteria, and how these services will meet the needs of parents/carers in Slough. This Statement was originally written with contributions from parents/carers and has recently been reviewed as is required in the Regulations. The current Statement is attached as Appendix 1.

#### **4 THE SHORT BREAK SERVICE AND THE REGULATIONS**

4.1 The approach taken in Slough has been to develop services which fit neatly within the headings contained in the Regulations:

- we have consulted widely with parents/carers and young people in developing our services and reviewing them;
- the short break service has simple eligibility criteria;
- we aim to take sufficient account of the needs of the parents/carers in this work;
- we need to ensure a link to the development of childcare for disabled children and we are suggesting a more seamless approach for families;
- we have provided a range of activities outside the child's home, during weekends, evenings and school holidays;

- we have provided overnight care although overnight care within the child's home has been limited as this has not been a high priority for parents/carers;
- we have built an ongoing evaluation process in to the funding arrangements along with the collection of data about services provided, quality checks and financial monitoring;
- we will ensure that short breaks are included in development work for the special education and disability reforms (Education, Health & Care Plans);
- we ensure that short breaks contribute to planning for transition to adulthood and aim to develop independence.

## **5 SEN REFORMS**

As per the Children and Families Bill and the new legislation that this entails, significant changes will be happening across all services supporting children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) from birth to 25 years. From September 2014 Statements of SEN will be replaced by person-centred, outcome-focused Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans.

As part of the new legislation, a Local Offer will be published providing information for parents and professionals of all services available locally for children and young people with SEND and how these can be accessed. As part of this more personalised approach, Personal budgets will be made available to give families more choice and control. Short Break services are likely to be included in the range of services available to families.

More information on the Children and Families Bill can be found on the following link:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/a00221161/>

This Strategy and the Short Break Statement will be revised to reflect any changes to the way in which short break services are provided as a result of this new legislation, although we remain committed to supporting the principles that underpin this strategy and that have led to its ongoing success.



## 6 THE ONGOING STRATEGY

We will continue to provide a range of activities as described below with much of this provision made through grant funding to local voluntary organisations. Based on feedback from parents/carers we will continue to put greater emphasis on developing the capacity of universal services and this will be reflected in our commissioning plans.

### 6.1 Universal Settings

We will offer a grant for a local organisation to provide specialist support to develop inclusive practice in universal settings including the provision of additional staffing on a time limited basis. We will ensure that training is available and support can be provided with risk assessments and care planning for CYP with complex needs including health/medical needs. The aim at the start of October 2013 was to establish six new 'Universal Providers' and to support around thirty children. In particular we were aiming for children that had not previously accessed any short breaks through Slough.

By December 2013 The Beehive Foundation was already supporting twenty-four children, of whom twenty are believed not to have accessed a service before and are aged between two and eighteen. The Beehive Foundation had also established fifteen universal providers for Slough Children.

### 6.2 Day trips

We will continue to provide grants to local organisations to develop a range of options for day trips for CYP with LDD and ensuring that CYP with mobility difficulties can participate successfully. We will include the need for term time activities as well as holiday activities. We will ensure that parents/carers **do not** have to attend the activities with the CYP.

### 6.3 Sporting activities

We will provide grants to local organisations to expand on the opportunities for CYP to participate in a wide range of sporting activities all year round. We aim to continue to develop opportunities for more CYP to be included in mainstream activities and will target funding at an organisation able to provide

specific support with inclusion as described in 6.1 above. We have previously provided funding for equipment such as adapted Go Karts, hoists, wheelchair bicycles, ice hockey equipment to ensure more activities are accessible to all.

#### **6.4 Independence but fun: shopping, cooking, travelling, volunteering**

When allocating grants to local organisations, we will continue to include the need to establish opportunities for CYP to develop their independent living skills and this will be reflected in our grant allocations. These activities must be seen as fun whilst offering a break to both the CYP and their parents/carers but we intend to continue our focus on developing skills for independence linked to our work on transition from childhood to adulthood and personalisation. We will also invite organisations to develop opportunities for CYP to be involved in volunteering such as with the RSPCA to support removing barriers to employment. Where appropriate we will ensure that CYP are learning the skills to travel more independently through this strand of activity. One parent reports that “my child is more confident and independent since accessing short breaks”.

#### **6.5 Indoor Activities: arts, crafts, music, computers, drama, cinema**

CYP have clearly identified a desire to continue to take in part indoor activities with their friends. This includes the more traditional arts, crafts and to a lesser extent drama, but also included music, DJ-ing, computer games and cinema trips. As above we will continue to invite organisations to provide these opportunities to CYP with LDD through access to clubs.

#### **6.6 Overnight breaks**

6.6.1 Overnight breaks will be made available through:

- Breakaway
- Arbour Vale House
- Family sitting service (limited)
- Home from Home service
- Manor Green Respite Care Unit (Health)

6.6.2 We aim to provide a flexible but comprehensive residential service meeting as many needs as possible within Slough. The Home from Home Service is a popular service with parents/carers and CYP and we increased the number of carers and availability of overnight provision for disabled CYP through 2012/13. We also provided funding for an accessible vehicle to ensure the service continues to offer good provision.

## **7 HOUSEKEEPING**

### **7.1 Eligibility Criteria**

7.1.1 The majority of parents/carers have found the criteria clear and the Information Leaflet and Statement helpful. We have found the criteria to be clear and easy to use but there is a risk that demand could outweigh our provision as the criteria are wide reaching. The current eligibility criteria are:

- the CYP requires additional support to access a short break within a universal setting; or
- the CYP requires targeted provision that has been commissioned through the Short Break Service; or
- the CYP requires specialist short break provision in order to meet his/her needs. Overnight short break provision is only available where the CYP meets the criteria for social care with the Service for Children with LDD or following a health assessment for health funded overnight provision.

7.1.2 If it is necessary to limit provision due to demand, this will be done on the basis of assessment of individual needs. We will involve parents/carers in this process.

### **7.2 Referrals/requests for provision**

7.2.1 Where provision is arranged through grants to local organisations, we will expect referrals to be made direct to those organisations. Organisations will continue to be required to provide us with information about the CYP that access their provision.

7.2.2 Residential aspects of the Short Break Service are considered to be more specialised and will be accessed through the CYP's Social Worker and/or Specialist Nurse.

7.2.3 We will make use of Direct Payments to parents/carers wherever possible to allow greater choice and control.

### **7.3 Urgent access**

7.3.1 We have not changed our view that urgent access to the Short Break Service is necessary in some instances and this will be through direct contact with the child's Social Worker or Specialist Nurse. For those without either of these professionals working with them urgent access may be made through the Family Information Service. Where necessary, urgent care will be arranged making best use of current providers including in-house services in accordance with the child's needs and the presenting situation.

### **7.4 Advertising**

7.4.1 We will continue to advertise short breaks as widely as possible and will engage with Special Voices to support us to raise awareness with families. We will ensure that the Slough Services Guide holds the relevant information and all professionals working with CYP in Slough are aware of the service. Based on feedback from parents/carers we will continue to work with providers to ensure all activities are widely advertised and in plenty of time to support ease of booking.

7.4.2 We will review our Short Break Statement by December 2014 to ensure it remains accurate and appropriate.

### **7.5 Collaboration between organisations**

7.5.1 We will continue to meet regularly with short break providers and actively promote collaboration between organisations to ensure a comprehensive package of breaks across Slough as well as making best use of existing resources.

7.5.2 We will continue to encourage providers to provide a consistent approach to the provision of transport and charging parents/carers.

## 7.6 Feedback including complaints

7.6.1 Compliments, comments and complaints procedures and forms are available from:

- Website: [www.slough.gov.uk](http://www.slough.gov.uk) Tel: 01753 787630
- Website: [www.berkshireeast-pct.nhs.uk](http://www.berkshireeast-pct.nhs.uk) Tel: 01753 821441

## 7.7 Workforce

7.7.1 As this service is now embedded, funding for a specific post for this purpose ceased in 2012. The Service for Early Years, School Services and Special Needs will manage the process with support from the Contracts Manager, Strategic Commissioning Manager and Performance and Information Manager.

## 7.8 Risk Analysis

7.8.1 There is a risk that the Short Break Service will not be sustainable if insufficient budget is allocated and this is likely to lead to an increase in referrals to Social Care. Parents/carers currently report that services for CYP with LDD are improving and that their feedback is being used to develop services.

7.8.2 There is a risk that the increasing population in Slough, increasing complexity of need and the financial pressures will lead to CYP receiving fewer short breaks and putting greater strain on families.

## 7.9 Funding

Based on the above plans and availability of funding, our expenditure plan for short breaks is:

<b>Short Break Expenditure</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Support for inclusion in universal settings	£50,000
Medical Training	£7,500
Grants for day trips, sporting activities, indoor activities, independence clubs, access to volunteering opportunities.	£240,000
Resources e.g. printing/advertising	£2,500
Home from Home Short Break Service	£45,000
Arbour Vale House	£466,569

Breakaway Residential Respite Unit	£679,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,490,569</b>

## 8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Appendix 1 Short Break Statement