

Leicestershire **SEND**



**Leicestershire
County Council**



LEICESTERSHIRE CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABLED CHILDREN'S SERVICE

SHORT BREAKS STATEMENT.

1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021

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1. Introduction and Background

This information is for families living in Leicestershire who care for a child or young person aged up to 18 years with a disability. It includes information on the purpose of Short Breaks and the current range of Short Breaks available in Leicestershire and how to access them.

Our vision in Leicestershire for children with special educational needs and / or disabilities is the same as for all children and young people – for them to achieve well in their education, to be cared for in safe and supportive families, participate and be involved in their communities and lead happy, safe and fulfilled lives.

Short Breaks provide disabled children and young people with an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, relaxing and having fun with their peers. They provide families with a 'break' from their caring responsibilities, and also give parents and carers a chance to unwind, rest, spend time with their other children and give brothers and sisters an opportunity to enjoy family time too. Parents and carers may use their break time to enjoy a leisure activity or if they are studying, to support their studies. Examples of short breaks include holiday playschemes, family fun days, group activities and clubs, and services in the home.

Local authorities are required to publish a Short Breaks Services Statement so that families know what support is available, eligibility criteria and how the range of short breaks are designed to meet the needs of local families with disabled children.

2. Who is responsible?

The Lead Officer is Tom Common, Head of Service for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, who reports to Paula Sumner, Assistant Director of Education and SEND.

In Leicestershire, parents and carers are invited to be part of the 'Parent and Carer Forum' which takes a full role in co-production of services for children and young people with disabilities. There is a full commitment from Leicestershire County Council, the Parent and Carer Forum, children and young people and partner agencies to work together and share their expert knowledge and experience to keep Short Break services and the Short Breaks Statement under constant review.

Our aim in working together is that disabled children and their families have the information and support that they need to 'live ordinary family lives as a matter of course.'

This means that we are committed to:

- Co-design of services, achieved through listening to the views and experiences of disabled children, engaging with them and providing them with choices.
- Ensuring that disabled children and their families can take a full and active part in community life and use local services.
- Working with parents and carers as equal partners in the co-production and design of services so that these continue to develop and become increasingly responsive and inclusive.

This work supports us to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

3. The Leicestershire Short Breaks Offer

Only residents of Leicestershire are eligible for Short Breaks support from Leicestershire County Council.

We recognise that each child and family is unique and will have different levels of support from their wider family and friendship network. Children and families will use different types of short breaks depending on the age of the child and the child's interests. Some families may need more support because of their family circumstances, this may be for a short period of time or it may be for longer.

4. Access and eligibility for Leicestershire Short Breaks

A child or young person must have a disability that has been formerly diagnosed, permanent or long term.

The Children Act 1989 Section 17 (11) the definition of children who are disabled:

- 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.

The Local Authority decision to provide a short break service under The Children Act 1989 Section 17 (6) or under Section 20 (4) should be informed by an assessment of the child's needs and should take account of parenting capacity and wider family and environmental factors, the wishes and feelings of the child and their parents and the nature of the service to be provided. Most service users are disabled children and their families but non-disabled children in need may receive short breaks.

Siblings of disabled children can access services and support for 'Young Carers.' Referrals for support are made to: Childrensduty@leics.gov.uk

Young people who need an assessment of their needs can be referred to Barnardo's Carefree using the link <http://www.barnardos.org.uk/carefree.htm> and clicking on the referral form link.

Universal Services and Inclusion

Universal services, for example breakfast and after-school clubs, are important in ensuring disabled children and young people have fun and enjoy themselves with friends, just the same as other children and young people. These services are available to all young people in Leicestershire regardless of whether they have a disability or not and can include organisations such as Brownies, Scouts and Cadets. Genuine inclusion means services which are designed and equipped to enable disabled children and young people to enjoy the same activities and opportunities as non-disabled peers. More information can be found on the Local Offer.

We want to ensure that staff and volunteers in community-based organisations have the skills to support disabled children and young people to attend any club or activity of their choice, such as drama, dance, sport or any other activity. We will organise training to develop capacity and confidence in the skills and abilities of staff and volunteers to meet the additional needs of disabled children and young people ensuring that all our partners also meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Many young people will have a mixture of specialist and inclusive short breaks. For example, a disabled young person may be supported by a befriender to attend a local club or activity.

Family Wellbeing Services

When a child's needs cannot be met in a universal scheme an assessment is made to look at the needs of the whole family to help to identify the best way to provide any support that might be needed, for example applying for welfare benefits such as Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP); applying for grants or supporting families with strategies to manage child behaviour, household routines. We will ask questions about a family's own support networks, how they use any Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments and the outcomes desired for the child.

Where our assessment suggests a short break may be needed, we will consider either a commissioned break or direct payment, for a time-limited period. A review will then take place within 3-6 months to reassess the situation. An example of a short break could be for a child to attend a club for a set number of hours after school or during school holidays, and at the same time providing support to the parents/carers to address some of the difficulties which may be making home life, and access to universal provision, more challenging. This might include workshops on sleep or behaviour, as well as looking holistically at family life and needs such as housing, education, etc.

Accessing Specialised Short Breaks

Specialised short breaks are designed for children and young people with the most complex and specialist needs. Often this can be through children and young people attending specialist groups, clubs and activities which are enjoyable for the children and also give parents, carers and siblings a 'short break' from caring responsibilities.

Decision-making

We aim to ensure equity and transparency in the allocation of resources to children, young people and their families with services that are needs led, fit assessed needs, and with provision that is routinely monitored and reviewed. Therefore, we have established the Short Breaks, Occupational

Therapy and Family Support Panel which takes place on the first and third Wednesday of every month. It is specifically tasked to consider the needs of children and young people who require early help, targeted and specialist short breaks and family support, occupational therapy equipment and adaptations.

The Short Breaks, Occupational Therapy and Family Support Panel considers the following areas when making decisions about the level of support for children and families:

- Which universal, voluntary and community sector services are the child and family are using/can use?
- The disabled child's care, social and emotional development needs.
- The social and emotional development needs of the disabled child's siblings.
- The needs and capacity of parents/ carers.
- Family and environmental factors including:
 - More than one disabled child in the family
 - Social isolation
 - Availability of family and friends' networks

5. Travel Assistance

Travel to and from short breaks is not automatically provided, however we know that some children and families require assistance to access short breaks. When travel assistance is requested an assessment of need will be made.

6. Transition to Adulthood

We want transition from childhood to adulthood to be an exciting and optimistic time for young people. We want to support them as they become young adults and take their place in the world. Developing positive activities for young people, allowing them to take part in local community activities is linked to our transition programme.

We want to ensure that short breaks address the 'transition' needs of young people moving from childhood to adulthood. Short Breaks should be developed to reflect the needs of teenagers, ensuring friendship and activity groups are supported to continue beyond the school years and extend independence and life skills, supporting the Preparing for Adulthood outcomes of:

- Employment
- Independent Living
- Friends, Relationships & Community

- Good Health

We will help to achieve these outcomes by supporting young people to:

- manage risk, whilst keeping themselves safe in the community
- develop decision making skills
- manage money
- travel independently
- improve their social interaction skills through modelling by their peers
- lead ordinary lives, enjoying and contributing to everyday activities

When Short Breaks are requested for a young person aged 17 and a half years or over, it is expected that consultation would take place between Children and Adult Social Care and, it may be agreed that a joint assessment would be appropriate.

7. Consultation with parents and carers, children and young people

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers, children and young people.. We aim to co-produce with the Parent Carer Forum to ensure our approach is the best fit to family needs and available resources. We will ensure that our short break services focus on improving the life chances of disabled children and their families through continuing to co-produce our Short Breaks with parents, carers, children and young people. We will therefore ensure our parent forums and children's consultation forums are supported and developed.

8. Measuring Impact

Our aim is that all the short breaks we provide make a positive difference to our children and young people. We will ask ourselves the questions about the outcomes that the services are designed to meet. We will continue to measure children's satisfaction, parental satisfaction and staff confidence and skill in meeting the needs of disabled children in a variety of short break settings. We will continue to monitor and record the views of children, parents and staff so everybody feels involved and supported and to ensure we develop a cycle of continuous improvement. Any changes we make in response to co-production with parents, carers and young people, will be publicised on the Local Offer web pages.



We will provide progress reports to the Leicestershire SEND & Inclusion Board, which has parent/carer representation, embedding the concept of 'disabled children are everybody's business', developing ownership and accountability at the highest level.

We welcome feedback from children and families using the services. It can be in any form including photographs, emails, pictures, video's, letters.

The Leicestershire Local Offer aims to provide information about available services for children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities and their families in one place. It includes leisure and activity providers, health and care services, education providers and support groups. The Local Offer is web- based as well as being available in other formats upon request. It contains information across Education, Health and Social Care together with activities and events for children/young people aged 0-25yrs that have SEND. The Local Offer will continue to be reviewed and up-dated based on feedback received. We want to encourage everyone to use the feedback form on the website, to help inform the Local Authority of any gaps in services and to help shape and inform future decisions about service provision.

When issues arise we always try to resolve these immediately by talking with the people involved.

9. Final comments

Our aim remains to provide families with the best possible support at the right time, and to use expert knowledge of parents and carers, children and young people to help us develop and improve all our services.

In order to develop the Short Break offer for Leicestershire families during 2020-21, we will:

- Work with the Parent Carer Forum and an external partner (Newton Europe) to undertake a full review of short breaks, the range of support available and the extent to which parents/carers and young people feel able to access support.

- Continue to collect information about providers of short break services and share this information through future short break statements, in commissioning arrangements and the local offer website.

- Ensure commissioned services are delivered to a good quality and standard which meets needs through regular feedback and monitoring.



Thanks to all the children, young people and parents/carers who continue to help improve and develop the Leicestershire Short Break services.

This Short Breaks Statement will remain valid for a period of 12 months until 31 August 2021.

Short Break Play and Leisure Providers include:

- FTM Dance
- Glebe House
- Goldhill
- Melton Mencap
- Prestige
- New Leaf Triangle
- SCRAMB Care
- **Take a Break**

Further information about the range of Short Breaks available in Leicestershire can be found on our Local Offer, here: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs-and-disability/information-and-support/activities-and-groups/short-breaks-for-disabled-children>

Useful Contacts

Local Authority

- Leicestershire County Council, general enquiries, Tel: 0116 232 3232
- First Response Children's Duty, Tel: 0116 305 0005
- The Local Offer, <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs-and-disability/where-to-start-with-send/what-is-the-local-offer>
- SENDIASS, Tel: 0116 305 5614 <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/popular-now/directories/information-and-support-directory/send-information-advice-and-support-service-sendiass>

Health

- NHS Direct, Tel: 111



- Leicester Royal Infirmary, Tel: 0300 303 1573

Other Organisations

- Leicestershire Parent Carer Forum, <https://www.leicestershirepcf.org.uk/>