Buckinghamshire Short Breaks Services Statement

Introduction

Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 requires that every local authority shall provide services designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children to continue to do so, or to do so more effectively by providing them with breaks from caring.

The duty to provide short breaks, which came into force on 1 April 2011 requires each local authority to produce a short breaks services statement so that families 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.

Following a consultation, the first Buckinghamshire Short Breaks Services Statement (2011/2012) was published on the Council website by 01/10/11 as required under the Duty.

This initial statement has been subject to review.

The Children and Families Act 2014 has transformed the system for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities so that services consistently support the best outcomes for them.

The act has extended the SEN system from birth to 25, through the introduction of Education, Health and Care Plans, giving children, young people and their parents greater ‘choice and control’ in decisions and by ensuring their needs are properly met. Work is being done to explore how Personal Budgets can be made available for Short Breaks.
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Section 1:
Short Breaks Services Statement

Buckinghamshire County Council’s Short Break Programme provides a range of services to meet the needs of both parents and disabled children and young people. These services are provided fairly and, where appropriate, have clear, transparent and easy to understand eligibility criteria. Services have been designed to enable families, and their children, to make choices about the services that they access and the times they access them in order to increase flexibility.

It is expected that choice and flexibility will improve in line with increasing personalisation (Children and Families Act 2014).

Buckinghamshire County Council (the Council) continues to work in partnership with partner organisations, and in particular health (through Buckinghamshire’s two Clinical Commissioning Groups) to deliver its short breaks programme.

The Short Breaks Services Statement is set out below under the following headings and principles contained herein:

• Definition of Short Breaks
• Vision for Short Breaks in Buckinghamshire
• Range of Services Available & Eligibility Criteria
  - Universal Services
  - Targeted/Supported Services and Local Offer
  - Specialist Services
  - Transport
  - Supporting Services
  - Transition
  - Summary of Eligibility and Access Across all Short Breaks
• Ensuring these Services Meet the Needs of Children and Young
• People and their Parents and Carers
  - Participation
  - Monitoring Eligibility and Assessment Criteria
Definition of Short Break Services

Short breaks provide opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to spend time away from their primary caregivers, and provide opportunities for their parents and carers to have a break from caring responsibilities.

Short breaks can include day, evening, overnight, weekend or holiday activities that take place in the child or young person’s own home, the home of an approved carer, a residential or community setting.

Short breaks range from supporting children and young people with disabilities to access universal services, through to providing specialist services at a local and regional level, where appropriate.

A local definition has been adopted across Buckinghamshire as follows:

- Time away from the family for the disabled child or young person, giving them the opportunity for independence, to have fun with their peers, make new friends and have new experiences.

- A break from caring for their parents and siblings – locally we have agreed that a short break would usually be a minimum of 2 hours when family members do not have to be present to provide care or support for the disabled young person.

N.B. Some short breaks in Buckinghamshire support families to participate in activities/trips together.

Vision for Short Breaks in Buckinghamshire

- To ensure that families of disabled children have support to access the best possible range of short breaks within the available resources.

- To recognise that all children and young people are unique and may require different levels of support and different types of short breaks depending on their needs and circumstances and those of the family.

- To work in partnership with disabled children and their families and key stakeholders to develop short breaks services that meet their needs.
Outcomes Short Breaks Support

Supporting families to have a break from their caring responsibilities and for disabled children and young people to access enjoyable and appropriate activities, including adventurous and challenging activities:

- Reducing the risk of family breakdown
- Increasing family resilience
- Reducing the number of disabled children and young people going into long term care
- Increasing disabled children and young people’s confidence, self-esteem, skills and increased self-resilience for both disabled children and young people and their families
- Disabled children and young people achieving individual outcomes’ such as making friends, having fun, trying new opportunities and improving communication and self-help skills
- Increasing community inclusion and community cohesion.
- Increasing children and young people’s involvement in decision making
- Increasing parent participation

A young person went swimming. Mum said that he has had hydrotherapy at school and has become much more confident around water.

A young person who usually engages only in solitary repetitive play engaged in a group activity for the first time. Unprompted, he joined in song time and asked adults for ‘more’ he began singing and prompting for help from his other peers.

A young person was encouraged to use their laptop productively; staff supporting with formation of full sentences.

A young person delegated tasks to others and lead the planning, preparation and designing of an activity was given a spontaneous round of applause by the rest of the group.

Parent feeds back that their child "has an opportunity to play with a new set of toys, mixes well with other children, and receives one-to-one attention from staff, which they really benefits from." Parent also states "We get a chance to spend quality time with our youngest which is lovely and rare!"

“My child has developed all manner of skills since attending the short break. It also gives me a much needed few hours break. My child is also far more confident in them self since we started.”
Range of Services Available & Eligibility Criteria

This section details the 3 levels of short breaks and their access and eligibility criteria:

- Level 1 – Universal (pages 6 – 7)
- Level 2 – Targeted (pages 8 – 12)
- Level 3 – Specialist (pages 13 – 16)

The Buckinghamshire Short Break Local Offer is set out under Level 2 Targeted Services

Level 1: Universal Services

The Council, and its partner organisations, will continue to focus on ensuring that as many disabled children and young people as is possible should be able to access and enjoy universal short break services. It will do so through:

**Information**

- Promoting and publicising the full range of universal services available to families in Buckinghamshire through the Buckinghamshire Family Information Service (BFIS) website, newsletters, targeted emails and letters drawing on the Council’s Disability Planning (Pinpoint) Database and the Council’s Local Offer website: [http://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/lsd/family.page?familychannel=5](http://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/lsd/family.page?familychannel=5)
- Working with service providers to ensure that they publish good quality information about their services which includes information about accessibility and their commitment to supporting disabled children’s access.

**Training**

- Continuing to provide Parent led disability awareness/inclusion training, which can be accessed by any universal service provider
- Ensuring that staff at universal services have information and access to more specialist training opportunities as appropriate.

**Support**

- Working with service providers to ensure that they understand and meet their obligations to provide services under the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and can access advice and training as needed.
- Making sure that families have the right support available to them to enable access to universal services, this may be through the provision of information or
may be to access additional support where a Children and Families Assessment indicates this is required.

**Access**

- Continuing to encourage disabled children, young people and their families to make use of services provided in their local communities.

- Seeking the views from families of how successful these services are in meeting need and undertake work to improve access where needed.

Examples of such provision in Buckinghamshire:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation/Activities</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thomley Hall Recreational Facility</td>
<td><a href="mailto:enquiries@thomleyhall.org">enquiries@thomleyhall.org</a></td>
<td>01844 338380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thames Valley Adventure Playground</td>
<td><a href="mailto:theplayground@tvap.co.uk">theplayground@tvap.co.uk</a></td>
<td>01628 628599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longridge Outdoor Activity Centre</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@alfcharity.org">info@alfcharity.org</a></td>
<td>0330 303 0101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Park Activity Centre</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@alfcharity.org">info@alfcharity.org</a></td>
<td>0330 303 0101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre Shed</td>
<td><a href="mailto:admin@thetheatreshed.co.uk">admin@thetheatreshed.co.uk</a></td>
<td>07952 461344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucks Community Childminder Network (BCCN)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eydcp@buckscc.gov.uk">eydcp@buckscc.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>01296 387111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Universal Services – “Open to All”**

Universal services are open to all and the Council has taken the view that as many children and young people as possible should be able to use these services.

Universal services – access will depend on the capacity of the short breaks service and needs of child / young person. They usually operate on ‘a first come first served’ basis and can be accessed by paying any fee applied by that service.

*Assessment refers to the Child and Family Assessment carried out by CYP social care teams*
Level 2: Targeted/Supported Services and the Short Breaks Local Offer

Open Access to Families

Short Breaks that children, young people and their families can contact directly and where Child and Family assessments are not required. These are services that are not necessarily funded by the Council and therefore not contracted to the Council.

Examples of such short breaks in Buckinghamshire:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted/Supported Services – “Open access services especially designed to meet the needs of disabled children and young people”</th>
<th>Email/Website</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clearly speaking – providing a range of short break services for children and young people mainly on the autistic spectrum, some of which are county wide.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:office@clearlyspeaking.org.uk">office@clearlyspeaking.org.uk</a></td>
<td>01280 824871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bucks branch of the National Autistic Society (NAS) – a range of social activities/trips for families with children and young people with ASD (subject to available funding)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:southbucks@nas.org.uk">southbucks@nas.org.uk</a></td>
<td>07786 125876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aylesbury branch of the National Autistic Society (NAS) – a range of social activities/trips for families with children and young people with ASD (subject to available funding)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:AylesburyVale@nas.org.uk">AylesburyVale@nas.org.uk</a></td>
<td>07920 150424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Deaf Activities – a range of social activities/trips for children and young people with hearing impairments (subject to available funding)</td>
<td>Contact details via <a href="http://www.yda.org.uk">www.yda.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talkback – a range of school holiday arts based activity short breaks (subject to available funding)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:talkback@talkback-uk.com">talkback@talkback-uk.com</a></td>
<td>01494 434448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A range of county wide disability sports clubs across special schools</td>
<td>Contact details via BFIS: <a href="mailto:familyinfo@bucksc.gov.uk">familyinfo@bucksc.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>BFIS: 01296 383065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A range of targeted youth groups across youth centres in Buckinghamshire</td>
<td><a href="mailto:youthspacebucks@bucksc.gov.uk">youthspacebucks@bucksc.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>01296 382583</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Buckinghamshire Short Breaks Local Offer

The Short Breaks Local Offer comprises Short Breaks that can be used by all children and young people with disabilities\(^1\) and their families, regardless of the child’s support needs over and above that provided by universal and open access targeted services, offered without the need for a Child and Family Assessment.

The services will work with families to ensure they know about the individual needs of their child and that they can meet their needs.

Families can:

- Make direct contact with the Short Breaks listed under the **Short Breaks Local Offer**, which they think their child would like and would best meet their need
- Talk to the practitioners who know them well who can support them by making direct contact
- Make the most of any existing meetings/assessment processes such as their Child’s Special Education Needs Annual Review, or their Team around the Family meeting, Social Care Assessment/Review to discuss Short Breaks and how to go about using them.

The Council is continuing to support the provision of the following targeted/supported services as their Short Breaks Local Offer:

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\(^1\)Children who meet the following definition of ‘disability’ under the Equality Act 2010

In the Act, a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping
### Targeted / Supported Services – ‘Open Access’ Services especially designed to meet the needs of disabled children and young people (Short Breaks Local Offer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation/Activities</th>
<th>Email/Website</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action for Children: Bucks Activity Project (age 5 – 19)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Bucks.activity@actionforchildren.org.uk">Bucks.activity@actionforchildren.org.uk</a></td>
<td>01296 438230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://services.actionforchildren.org.uk/bucks-activity-project">http://services.actionforchildren.org.uk/bucks-activity-project</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action for Children: Bucks Early Years Short Breaks Service (age 0 – 6)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:BucksShortBreaks@actionforchildren.org.uk">BucksShortBreaks@actionforchildren.org.uk</a></td>
<td>07799 664067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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A young person who usually engages only in solitary repetitive play engaged in a group activity for the first time. Unprompted, he joined in song time and asked adults for ‘more’ he began singing and prompting for help from his other peers.

A young person was encouraged to participate in a broader range of group activities and accessing the local community. YP now enjoys accessing the community with other peers; enjoyed a trip to the local cinema, London eye.

A young person has started short breaks, has made new friends, tried new activities and this has increased his confidence.

Gives my child an opportunity to play and learn which is very important for him it is essential support to assist him with his development. It keeps them focused and the support is critical at this early stage.

My child has developed all manner of skills since attending the service. It also gives me a much needed few hours break. They are also far more confident in them-self since we started.
Eligibility Criteria:

Targeted/Supported services are open access services especially designed to meet the needs of disabled children and young people. All of these services can currently be accessed directly without Child and Family Assessment.

The short breaks local offer are non-assessed short break services for disabled children and young people aged 5 – 19 years, and as such the available resources will be shared equitable amongst the children and young people eligible to access them. These short break services are now being formally managed by the provider to ensure equity of these services. There may still be issues of capacity to access such services and this will be kept under regular review.

These short breaks are subject to an activity fee which will be collected by the provider. Activity fees continue to be subject to review.

There is the possibility that the availability of short breaks may diminish due to financial restraints moving forward.

Short Breaks Local Offer for Disabled Children aged 5 – 19 years 17/18

28 sessions (equivalent to 84 hours) will be made available to all those children and young people registered with the Action for Children: Bucks Activity Project.

The activity fee for 2017/18 continues to be £2.50/hour.

It is currently under review if some specific activities should have a higher activity fee, but this is only in regards to a few very specific activities that are high cost to attend.

The Council does not wish to see children and young people disadvantaged by low income, so for families in receipt of the following welfare benefits there would be a concessionary rate:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- Working tax credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit

We recognise that although some families are not in receipt of benefits, there are some whose combined income is still less than the benefit cap, we would not want to see these children and young people disadvantaged either, so the concessionary rate is offered in this situation.
Short Breaks Local Offer for Disabled Children aged 0 – 5 years

A new contract has been awarded to Action for Children for this service from 01/09/15.

The short breaks offer for this service will generally be 1 x 3 hour short break session per fortnight, however priority will be given to children on Child Protection Plans and then Child in Need Plans for weekly sessions where possible.

Work is progressing on how Personal Budgets for short breaks could be introduced at this targeted level.
Level 3: Specialist Services

Specialist services enable those families and children and young people who require more support than is available through universal and targeted/supported services to access short breaks.

Access to these services is through the Children’s Social Care Teams, who have clearly defined threshold and allocation criteria for assessing need.

Information on how to contact Children’s social care for children and families can be accessed via the following link:

Safeguarding

Disabled children and young people

Disabled Children and Young People

Disabled children are children first, and as such should be able to access all the services available to all children. These should include nurseries, playgroups, playgrounds, leisure services, children’s centres and mainstream schools. There are duties on service-providers to make mainstream and universal services accessible to disabled children.

If your child is sick or disabled, he or she may already be receiving treatment and/or support from your GP, health visitor, hospital doctors and nurses, and therapists.

Social Care for Children and Families can help you by:

• Listening to your problems and trying to find ways of helping
• Giving information about services available to help you cope with the extra problems illness and disability can bring
• Working together with parents honestly and in collaboration with the people who know their child best
• Assessing the needs of the child, siblings and carer/s, also taking account of any diversity needs

Kinds of help available:

• Practical Help – There are services to provide help in caring for your child/ren. These are provided by carers from private and voluntary agencies. For any services provided through Social Care, a social worker will assess your needs and let you know what services are available for your child.

There are three possible routes to receiving services.

1. Financing them through the benefits you receive from the Benefits Agency.
2. Children’s Social Care may offer you a direct payment so you can organise the services you need for yourself.
3. Financing them yourself.

Short Breaks – are provided to give you a rest (usually placing the child away from the home) and give your child some positive new experiences.

Listening to your views:

Social workers from Children Social Care Teams are experienced at dealing with the challenges children and families have to face, because of sickness or disability. They are concerned and will listen to you to identify how they can help.

Getting Help:

If you already have an allocated Children and Families Team Social Worker you can contact them directly.

Otherwise, how quickly you get help depends on the urgency of the problem. If a child is at risk of serious harm, we will start to make enquiries straight away and may need to take immediate action to make sure that the child is safe.

In all other cases, we undertake to complete an assessment of what services, if any are needed. This assessment can take up to 45 working days to determine the level of need and determine what will happen next.

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For any concern about a child protection issue/s or to make a new referral to Children’s Social Care:

**During Office Hours** (9am-5.30pm Monday to Thursday and 9am-5pm on Friday)

Please contact the First Response Team on 01296 383962

Email – cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gov.uk
or if you have access to a secure email system - cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gcsx.gov.uk

**Out of Office Hours** (in the evening, at weekends or on public holidays)

There is an emergency number for calls outside of office hours.

Please call 0800 999 7677
The Council intends to:

- Maintain its current level and range of provision (see below).
- Continue to seek the views of parents and carers and children and young people who use specialist services to ensure that these services are best meeting the range of needs.
- Respond to these views in its commissioning plans.
- Continue to work with colleagues in Adult Services to improve and develop the transition process between children and adulthood.

The Council intends to continue supporting the provision of the following specialist services:

### Specialist Services – “Through Social Care Assessment”

#### The Residential Overnight Short Break Service

This service is a jointly funded contract by The Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (health).

This specialist service is only accessed through a joint needs assessment led by Children’s Social Care disability social workers, and is available to children who have severe or moderate to severe learning disabilities. Some children will have related complex health conditions, and there are nurses on staff to manage and advise on their health care needs. The service is provided by Action for Children.

The services is operated from two residential units:
- Merryfields in High Wycombe - disabled children and young people aged 5 – 18 years
- The Grove in Aylesbury - disabled children and young people aged 8 – 18 years

#### Direct Payments for Short Breaks

Instead of the Council arranging care services for your child the Council can offer you money to pay for your child’s care. This is called a Direct Payment. This is a specified amount of money paid to parents to buy their own support services to meet the assessed need. Often this is used by parents to employ a carer/personal assistant who can look after their child, either at home or out and about.

It can offer you greater independence and control. You can also choose to receive some care from the Council and have a Direct Payment for other care.

Direct Payments can be made to carers/parents of children under 18 (in some circumstances the Direct Payment may be made directly to the young person 16 years or over).

For more information on Direct Payments go to the [Care Advice Bucks website](#).

#### Funded Community Childminding

There is a network of childminders across the county of Buckinghamshire, which provides quality, flexible childcare for children and young people aged from birth to 19 years who have been referred to their network. This is provided by Bucks Community Childminder Network (BCCN).

#### Domiciliary Care

Provides care in the child’s home or to support access to in their community by a registered carer. The Council has a framework of approved providers that are used to supply this care. This is for children and young people aged 0 – 18 years.
### Befriending Service

This is a service for disabled children where young people aged 16 – 25 years are recruited as volunteers by The Council to give some additional support when it’s needed. They are not able to take responsibility for the children but work alongside parents/guardians and group leaders. For example, in the holidays they can be an extra pair of hands when the family go out for the day, or assist a child to take part in a group activity such as Scouts.

### Fostering Service

Provides family based short breaks through its Fostering Service. Carers provide support after school, at weekends and in school holidays, from a few hours in a day to regular overnight stays in their home. Carers can take your child out to access community resources, can look after your child in your home for a short period, or can look after your child in their home in the day or night. Carers are recruited from the local community through a robust selection and training process and are registered as carers for The Council under Fostering Regulations.

### Eligibility Criteria:

Access to specialist services is through the Children with Social Care Teams. For information on thresholds for social care and early help, please see:


The Council can apply a charge for some services (under the provisions of the Children Act 1989). This would not be applied to families who are in receipt of certain welfare benefits. The Council continues to keep under review if and how it would apply charges for its Children’s Services, which will include short breaks services for disabled children and young people.
Transport

For information on SEND transport please see:

https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/advice.page?id=NxXkBZP5G3s

Supporting Services

In order to continue with the range of short break services highlighted above (universal, supported/targeted and specialist), the Council intends to continue to support and facilitate access to services by:

- Supporting the provision of the Child Specific Training Service (nursing and occupational therapist service to provide training to short break providers to enable disabled children and young people with complex health and/or complex moving and handling needs to access a short break.

  Eligibility for this service: open to any provider across the range of universal, targeted/supported and specialist services. N.B. this service is funded by Buckinghamshire's Clinical Commissioning Groups.

- Continuing to work with the NHS to ensure we are working together and making the best use of available funding and resources for short breaks.

- Continuing to provide the Childcare & Early Education Broker Service to ensure that all families who wish to use childcare as a Short Breaks Service are provided with high quality, up-to-date information and support to access suitable provision.

  Eligibility to access information: open to anyone with complex requirements.

- Continuing to support the Workforce Development programme to ensure that appropriate disability focus training is included in all training plans. That a modular short breaks training programme is provided for short break service providers to access.

  Eligibility for this service: open to any provider across the range of universal, targeted/supported and specialist services.

- Continuing to develop and promote the Buckinghamshire Family Information Service web-site to ensure that all families have access to good quality, up-to-date information, which includes the Buckinghamshire Local Offer for SEN & Disability.

  Eligibility to access information: open to anyone.

“I feel more confident in dealing with negative behaviour”
Transition

Transition planning, leaving school and moving into adulthood can be a challenging time for parents and young people. Families may need advice from a range of people to ensure that the ‘transition’ is as smooth as possible.

Transitions Review and Plan

Every young person with an Education, Health and Care Plan should, in year 9, have a transition review. These reviews should be person-centred and ensure that the young people are given opportunities to reach their full potential and fulfil their ambitions.

It is recommended that there should be a Transition Plan at this review. This plan should state, what everyone involved in the young person’s life is hoping will happen in the future and how this will be achieved.

Transition planning should address questions concerning a young person, their family, the school and the professionals supporting your young person.

The following questions will need to be discussed as part of this review and on an ongoing basis:

• Will the young person attend school or college?
• How can the curriculum help young people play their role in the community?
• What will happen after school or college?
• Can the young person get a job or do some training to get one?
• Where will the young person live?
• What will the young person do in their spare time?
• What are the young person’s hopes and aspirations for the future and how can these be met?

The most important person in this whole process is the young person. Parents/carers and/or an advocate also play a key role along with professionals. The young person and their parent/s are able to invite the people they feel need to contribute to the transition process.

Depending on the young person’s needs and situation, some or all of the following people or agencies may be involved and invited to the Year 9 planning review:

• Connexions Personal Advisor
• Education – Specialist Teachers, SEN Officers
• School staff – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators, Teachers, Learning Support Assistants and Head Teachers
• Social Care – Children’s Social Worker, Short Break Staff/ Adults and Family Well Being services including Adult Social Care
• Health – Occupational/Speech and Language/Physio Therapists, Nurses, Paediatricians
• Advocates
Update

The Transitions Protocol has now been widely distributed and will be refreshed in the coming year to reflect the changes both nationally and locally which are being put in place to ensure that the young person’s preparation for adulthood starts early.

As part of making sure that the move from children’s and adult services is as smooth as possible, Adult and Family Well Being services in Buckinghamshire are now assessing young people before they are 18 ready for adult services. This preparation also includes if the young person wants a referral to the Brokerage service. The broker will then help young people and their families to have a plan in place, ready for when the young person becomes an adult at 18, which includes what services the young person will receive.

Summary of Eligibility and Access Criteria across all Short Breaks:

1. All families can access universal services without the need for any assessment.

2. All families can currently access targeted/supported short break services without the need for any Child and Families Social Care Team assessment.


The purpose of this document is to set out the policies followed by the Children and Families Service.

One of its key values is: **Early help is better for children.**

Early Help

Our policy is to enable early intervention and prevention through linking children and families with a range of early help services. These services are run by a wide range of agencies in Buckinghamshire including Health, Education and the Voluntary Sector. Some are specifically commissioned by the County Council e.g. Children Centre’s. A small number are run directly by Children and Family Services (i.e. the Family Resilience Service).

The [Buckinghamshire Family Information Service](http://www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals/thresholds-document/) can advise on how to find and use these services.
The vast majority of these children and families will not meet the threshold for Children and Family Services and will not require a social work assessment or service. They may require an early help assessment by a lead professional. These early help assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
Ensuring these Services Meet the Needs of Children and Young People and their Parents and Carers

Participation

The Council will continue to ensure that the views of parents and carers are represented at all stages of the commissioning and service monitoring cycle by:

- Continuing to fund and work in partnership with the Parent Forum, Families and Carers Together (FACT Bucks), to ensure that
- Its representatives’ are fully involved and co-producing all relevant strategy and working groups and are able to influence the development of existing and new services.
- It is able to collect and represent the views of parents and carers about short break services and is able to independently report its findings.

- Ensuring that parents and carers are integral in any commissioning/procurement processes for short breaks services.
- Ensuring that all short break service providers, funded by the Council, must regularly seek out and report on the views of parents and carers as to the quality of the service and must make this information available to service commissioners at regular contract monitoring meetings.
- Planning how we will more directly involve parents and carers in regular contract monitoring meetings so that they may put their views directly to service providers and service commissioners.
- Responding to all parent and carer surveys, or views expressed at contract meetings, setting out what action will be taken to address any concerns or issues raised.
- Regularly reviewing any complaints received at the Council to ensure that, where necessary and appropriate, lessons are learnt and remedial actions taken.
The Council’s Children’s and Young People’s Service will continue to ensure that the views of children and young people are represented at all stages of the commissioning and service monitoring cycle by continuing to fund and work in partnership with the Children and Young People's Participation Service, to ensure that:

- Children and young people are supported to be involved in all relevant strategy and working groups and are able to influence the development of existing and new short breaks services.
- It is able to collect and represent the views of children and young people about short break services and is able to independently report its findings.

The Council will continue to ensure that the voice of children and young people is heard by:

- Ensuring that all short break service providers, funded by the Council, regularly seek out the views of children and young people regarding the quality of the service and report this information to service commissioners at regular contract monitoring meetings.
- Responding to all surveys of children and young people’s views setting out what action will be taken to address any concerns or issues raised.
- Regularly reviewing any complaints received at the Council to ensure that, where necessary and appropriate, lessons are learnt and remedial actions taken.

**Working with the Voluntary Sector**

Contract monitoring is in place across all contracted short break services provided for the Council. Feedback from children, young people and their families supports this process and is used to improve service delivery. Contract monitoring is used to evidence that outcomes are improving for children and young people and their families.

**Monitoring Eligibility and Assessment Criteria**

Some of the short break services (see Short Breaks Local Offer) provided by the Council do not require a formal Child and Family Assessment to be undertaken to access. This remains open to review.

Our eligibility for all short breaks services is based on the following principles:

- Promoting the health, safety and well being of disabled children and young people, ensuring that they can fully participate in family and community life, enjoying themselves with friends and making decisions about their lives.
- Early Help is better for children.
- Preventing family crises through the provision of the right level of support at the right time.
- The need to be fair, clear and equitable.

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 its severity. Some families may need more support because of their individual family circumstances. This is why we may need to assess your child and family to ensure we provide the right
level of support and short breaks at the right time and may include access to specialist short breaks.

The Council believes that it has in place clear, transparent and easy to understand access to both targeted services/supported and eligibility criteria to specialist services assessment.

The Council will continue to ensure that our approach to offering some of the short break services without the need for a Child and Family Assessment, or needing to provide evidence of disability is meeting the needs of families by:

- Regularly monitoring the Short Breaks Local Offer services to ensure that no group of children or young people have been unfairly excluded and that they have received equal access and equity of provision.
- Reviewing the access and eligibility criteria for short breaks, and parental satisfaction with these, through the Parent Forum - FACT Bucks.
Section 2: How the Short Breaks Services Statement has been revised for 2017/2018

The statement has been revised to take account of current provision, current website links and stakeholder views.

The lead officer responsible for reviewing and revising the Buckinghamshire Short Breaks Services Statement is Rona Hopwood, Commissioner. Any queries on the process for producing and agreeing the statement should be addressed to Rona Hopwood at rhopwood@buckscc.gov.uk
Section 3: The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011

Summary

This section of the statement summarizes paragraph 6(1)(c) of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989\(^2\) which requires local authorities to provide services designed to give breaks for carers of disabled children. A copy of The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 (for detailed reference) can be viewed at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/707/made .

In order to meet the requirements of the regulations, Local Authorities must have regard to the needs of carers\(^3\) in respect of their capacity to care for, or continue to care for, their disabled child\(^4\), and must provide a range of services designed to meet this need. A Short Breaks Services Statement must also be prepared and published.

Duty to make provision (summary)

Local authorities must take into account the needs of carers who would:

- Be unable to continue caring for their child unless breaks from caring were given; or
- Who would be able to give more effective care if breaks were given to allow them to, for example, attend educational classes, training or a leisure activity, meet the needs of other children in the family, or carry out necessary day-to-day tasks in the household.

Types of services which must be provided (summary)

Local Authorities must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide a range of services sufficient to meet the needs of carers to care, or care more effectively, including:

- Day care in the child’s own home and elsewhere
- Overnight care in the child’s own home and elsewhere
- Educational or leisure activities for children outside their own homes
- Services in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays

\(^2\) Paragraph 6(2) was inserted by section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (c. 23) ("the 2008 Act").

\(^3\) Carer’ means a person who cares for a disabled child and who is the child’s parent or a person who has parental responsibility for that child.

\(^4\) ‘Disabled’ has the meaning given in section 17(11) of the 1989 Act.
Short breaks services statement (summary)

Local Authorities must prepare a statement for carers in their area setting out:

- The range of services available;
- Any eligibility criteria for these services; and
- How the range of services is designed to meet the needs of carers

This statement must:

- Be published by 1 October 2011 on the Local Authority website
- Be kept under review and, where appropriate, revised
- Be prepared and reviewed with regard to the views of carers in the area.

Due to be updated Summer 2018

Alternative formats of this publication can be made available if required.

For further information please email rhopwood@buckscc.gov.uk

Or telephone 01296 383506