



# Short Break Service Statement

Information on short breaks for children and young people with disabilities or additional needs in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead



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## Introduction

The Children and Young People Disability Service (CYPDS) is part of Achieving for Children and is the name of the specialist team in Windsor and Maidenhead that works with young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged 0-25. The team consists of social workers, family workers, specialist Preparing for Adulthood workers and assessment coordinators.

Since 1 April 2011 every local authority has a duty to provide a range of short break services for children and young people with disabilities. Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 requires local authorities to provide short breaks for families with young people with disabilities.

An adult aged 18 - 25 years who has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), will be open to the Children and Young People Disability Service and will be assessed as to whether they require social care support. If an adult does not have an EHCP, they will be referred to [Adult Services](#).

Short breaks are designed to improve and promote better outcomes for children and young people with disabilities and their families.

Consultation and feedback with children and young people, parents and carers helps to guide the development and commissioning of short break activities.

We provide a range of short break services for children and young people with disabilities, between the ages 0 and 18 years, who live in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

### **What is a short break?**

The purpose of short breaks is to give children and young people with disabilities the same opportunity as others to take part in various activities. They provide opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to access mainstream and specialist activities such as after school clubs, a few hours at a leisure or sports activity group, holiday groups or an overnight stay. Short breaks may also include specialist sessions for children and young people with more complex needs and can include both day and overnight provision.

Short breaks give children and young people the chance to develop new friendships, take part in new experiences, learn new skills and have fun whilst achieving positive outcomes. They also enable parents and carers to have a short break from caring.

Short breaks are not designed to replace childcare arrangements.

## 2. Eligibility

Our guiding principles for eligibility criteria are:

- transparency and openness
- fairness - different pathways targeting different groups
- equality - balancing the needs of those most in need with those who are not, giving special consideration to those eligible for free school meals or Pupil Premium Grant
- ensuring quality and diverse provision, reaching more children than previously
- equitable access for children and young people, - we will take into account access to other support or overnight care and prioritise children and young people who have less access to support and services

### Eligibility criteria for the Children and Young People Disability Service (CYPDS)

Children and young people ages 0 to 18 years (living in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead) who have a permanent and substantial, severe or profound disability may meet the eligibility criteria for the Children and Young People Disability Service. This is referred to as having an 'assessed need'.

To be able to access a short break, families will need to meet the eligibility criteria detailed below.

One or more of the following statements must apply:

- complex health needs and/or life limiting conditions
- complex learning needs
- occupational therapy needs within the home setting
- severe communication difficulties or behavioural difficulties relating to the child's disabilities
- legal duty to investigate child protection concerns

In order to establish whether a child or young person has an assessed need, a social worker or family worker will carry out an assessment. An assessment can be requested via a referral from the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), by a parent or carer, or by a professional.

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub

T: 01628 683106

Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.15pm

Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm

## Referrals to the Children and Young People Disability Service Short Breaks and Short Breaks Funding Panel

Referrals to any of the short breaks provided by the Children and Young People Disability Service are only accepted via the Multi-agency Service Hub.

Once the referral is made, CYPDS will establish that the eligibility criteria is met and an assessment will be carried out. A referral is then made to the Short Break Panel. Professionals from the service meet weekly at the Short Break Panel to discuss referrals and review children and young people's current allocation of short breaks.

### 3. Our Local Offer

Achieving for Children understands how important it is to have a variety of short break services that meet the different needs of children and young people with disabilities and their families.

It is our aim that children and young people with disabilities are provided with the widest opportunity to access any suitable short break activity they choose in either specialist or mainstream settings within the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Priority is given to short break activities that take place in this borough, but out-of-borough short break activities are considered.

Our Local Offer is made up of a variety of short break activities for children and young people with disabilities. Information on specialist services and advice on how to access mainstream activities, support and funding can be found on the Local Offer website:

[Local Offer.](#)

Our local offer consists of:

- specialist short breaks: providing activities for children and young people who require specialist support (see below)
- mainstream short break activities: activities that take place in a universal setting

## 4. Programme of short breaks 0 - 18 years

There are a range of short breaks available to support children and young people with disabilities and their families. Where possible we aim to offer short breaks in both mainstream and specialist settings, however some short breaks are particularly suitable for children with specific needs, eg, autism. Children and young people who have an assessed need are eligible for short breaks. All short breaks are publicised widely through the Local Offer website above.

### Assessed need short breaks

Scheme	Description	When it runs	Age group (between the ages of)	Referral process
Childminder Plus	Day and overnight short break in childminders home for children and young people who are eligible for services from CYPDS	Annual	0 - 18 years	Assessment and referral by social worker or family worker. Panel decision
Home and Community Support, Direct Payments and Personal Budgets	One-to-one support in the home and in the community for children and young people who are eligible for services from CYPDS	Annual	0 - 18 years	Assessment and referral by social worker or family worker. Panel decision
Flying High Play scheme	A holiday provision with fun activities for children and young people who are eligible for services from CYPDS	Holidays only	0 - 18 years	Assessment and referral by social worker or family worker. Panel decision
Thames Valley Adventure Playground	Fun activities for children and young people who are eligible for services from CYPDS	Annual	0 - 17 years	Assessment and referral by social worker or family worker. Panel decision
Larchwood, Bridgehouse and Chilterns	Day, overnight and weekend short breaks for children and young people who are eligible for services from CYPDS	Annual	0 - 18 years	Assessment and referral by social worker or family worker. Panel decision

CYPDS - Children and Young People Disability Service

## 5. Direct payments and personal budgets

Children and young people who meet the eligibility criteria for services from the Children and Young People Disability Service and have an assessed need can receive direct payments or personal budget to directly fund a short break.

### Direct payments

Direct payments offer parents and carers an alternative to receiving services from the local authority for a child or young person with a disability. Parents and carers of disabled children and young people can receive money to buy a service for their child instead. This can include a worker to support the child or young person on a one-to-one basis in the home or in the community. (For example, the direct payments can be used for an after school or holiday club if that has been assessed as the child or young person's need by a social worker or family worker).

### Personal budget

A personal budget is an amount of money identified by the local authority and, or the Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver some or all of the provision set out in the education, health and care plan (EHCP). The amount received is based on the child or young person's assessed need. A personal budget gives a level of flexibility and room for innovation and creativity in the way the money is used for such as a short break.

Achieving for Children is committed to develop personalisation via personal budgets or direct payments. Further information on direct payments and personal budgets can be found on the Achieving for Children Local Offer website [Local Offer](#).

There are a number of questions and answers regarding direct payments in Appendix A.

## 6. How we listen to the views of children and young people with disabilities

Achieving for Children values the views and opinions of parents and carers to help shape services for children and young people with disabilities. The local authority and commissioned providers are required to consult regularly with children and young people with disabilities to ensure that the services they provide meet their needs and are of the very highest of standards.

The Short Break Manager for the Children and Young People Disability Team meets with children and young people on an ongoing basis and regularly consults with them about short breaks provision.

### What children and young people have told us

The Children and Young People Disability Service has asked children and young people about the activities they enjoy and activities they would like to do in the future. They have told us that short breaks they enjoy include dance, music therapy, swimming and activities in the community.

Suggestions for improvements to short breaks include going on more trips during the holiday play scheme, more swimming, trampoline and youth service opportunities across the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

## **7. How we listen to the views of parents and carers**

Achieving for Children values the views and opinions of parents and carers to help shape services for children and young people with disabilities. Parents and carers are consulted regularly about the types of short breaks their children and young people enjoy.

Parent panels and support groups across the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead have provided valuable feedback from parents and carers with varied experiences that help to inform how we can best meet their children and young people's needs.

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead will continue to request feedback in this way. In line with data protection and privacy laws, we are in the process of developing a contact list of our service users. Going forward, we will request feedback directly from our service users as well as from parent panels and support groups. We welcome feedback from all who would like to provide it.

Parents and carers have provided us with feedback on a range of short breaks including specialist groups, youth clubs and activities in mainstream settings.

## **8. How we ensure the short breaks are safe**

We take the safety of children and young people with disabilities very seriously and ensure that any short break activities provided are subject to robust checks.

- All staff have Disclosure and Barring Service checks and the safer recruitment protocols are applied.
- Feedback is obtained from short break providers biannually to evaluate the short breaks from the view of children and young people as well as parents and carers.
- All short breaks adhere to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Achieving for Children's safeguarding procedure.
- Home and Community Support is registered as a Domiciliary Care Agency with the Care Quality Commission and has to comply with the National Minimum Standards for Domiciliary Care published by the Secretary of State under the Care Standards Act 2000. The service is inspected regularly by the Care Quality Commission.
- Every organisation providing a short break also has its own published safeguarding guidelines which are adhered to.
- All data provided is treated confidentially in accordance with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Achieving for Children's Data Protection Policy.
- Training is offered and advised to all providers and there is an opportunity for more specialist training to meet the needs of the children and young people with varying disabilities.

## **9. How we review short breaks**

The Short Breaks statement is reviewed annually. However, we monitor the services during the course of the year which informs the review itself.



- The Short Break Manager will contact mainstream settings where the local authority is funding one-to-one support workers to ensure inclusion of children and young people with disabilities
- Consultation with parents, carers, children and young people
- Biannual feedback from families accessing the commissioned short break services
- Biannual feedback from the commissioned providers

# Appendix A: Questions and answers about direct payments

## What are direct payments (DPs)?

A direct payment is a payment given to a parent or carer by Achieving for Children (AfC) so that they can arrange and pay for support for a child or young person who is eligible for a service from the Children and Young People Disability Service.

## How can I apply for DPs?

The need, level of support and the number of hours support each week, will be assessed by a social worker or family support worker and presented to the Short Breaks Funding Panel. If agreed, the Children and Young People Disability Service will contact the parents or carers to set up the direct payments (DPs).

## What do I need to set up DPs?

- Sign a direct payment agreement between Achieving for Children and yourself.
- Set up a designated bank account for the money to go into.
- Employ a personal assistant (PA) to support your child or young person.
- Comply with current employment, health and safety and equal opportunities legislation.
- Ensure the PA has a DBS check that contains no information that would prohibit them from working with children and young people.
- Record the hours worked by the PA each week.
- Facilitate the payment to the PA for hours worked. The parent or carer should discuss and agree with the PA whether payments will be made weekly or monthly.
- Regularly (monthly) complete the monitoring forms and submit them to AfC.

## Do AfC review my DPs?

The level of support will be reviewed annually to assess if the care package continues to meet your child or young person's needs. If your child or young person's needs alter before the review takes place, please contact your child or young person's social worker or family worker.

## Why do I need a separate bank account?

When monitoring the direct payment, AfC will need to see the transactions in and out of the account. If they are looking at a personal account, there will be other transactions not linked to the support of your child or young person.

## How do I find a PA for my child or young person?

Some people have a friend or family member in mind before they ask for DPs. AfC will inform you of who you can hire as a PA. You can contact your child's or young person's school or college, as many teaching assistants are happy to work with the children and young people out of school hours.

## Does the person I want to employ as my child's or young person's PA need previous experience with working with children and young people with a disability?

No, they don't. However, it is helpful for the PA to have had some experience.

### **I have known my PA for years. Why do they need a DBS?**

To safeguard yourself and your child or young person we ask that anyone working with children and young people have a DBS check carried out.

### **As an employer, do I need to pay for a pension for my child or young person's PA?**

If your child's or young person's PA will earn over £10,000 a year, you, as their employer, need to register on the Pensions Regulatory website: [www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk). If the PA does not want a pension, you are still required to register on the website to notify them that your employee does not want a pension.

### **Who cannot be employed to care and support my child or young person?**

The Care and Support Regulations 2014 states the direct payments cannot be used to employ any person living in the same household as the person, who is the child or young person's:

- parent
- brother or sister
- stepbrother or stepsister
- aunty or uncle
- grandparent

### **When will I get the money?**

The payments are made each month and will be in your bank account on or before the first of the month. The money is paid in advance for the coming month. Payments are calculated over a 12 month period. If additional funds are agreed for school holidays these will be averaged throughout the year.

### **What can I use the DP for?**

The DPs are for a short break for your child or young people.

They can be used to employ a PA to take your child or young person into the community, or for support within the home as assessed by the social worker or family worker.

### **What can't DPs be used to pay for?**

You cannot use DPs towards permanent residential care.

You cannot use DPs for health care services such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy.

### **What happens if I don't use some or all of the DP money?**

When monitoring your account, AfC will be aware of any excess money in the account. The short break manager will contact you to discuss this and a plan will be put in place which

may include putting your payments on hold for a set amount of time or for the excess money to be returned.

### **What happens if I forget to send the monitoring forms to AfC?**

If AfC have not received any completed forms from you at the end of the month, AfC will contact you to find out the reason why and to offer support if needed. If the forms continue not to be completed and returned, AfC may put your payments on hold until the monitoring forms have been received.