



For Southampton Parents/Carers of Children
with disabilities/special needs

The Buzz Network

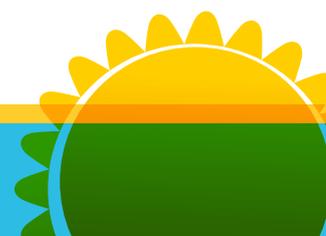
For Parents and Carers of Children
with a Disability or Additional Needs
in Southampton



SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL

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Introduction to the Short Break Statement

This document is for families living in Southampton who have a child with a disability or additional need aged between 0 and 19 years and includes:

- Information on the purpose of the Short Breaks Statement.
- The current and emerging range of Short Break Services available in Southampton.
- The criteria by which eligibility for services is assessed.
- Information on how parents/carers, children and young people have been consulted with to help develop a wide range of Short Break activities.

Southampton City Council listened to family views on current services and identified gaps where improvements could be made.

Who is responsible for the Statement?

The Short Breaks team in Southampton City Council are responsible for this statement. It will be kept under review and revised when new services become available or when there are changes to existing services.

The statement has been prepared and reviewed in consultation with parent/carers and the Southampton A-Buzz Parent Forum. The views of children with a disability/additional need and those attending Special Schools or through voluntary sector organisations have also been incorporated in this Short Breaks Statement.

How was the Statement prepared?

The first Short Breaks Statement published in October 2011 was largely based on information from previous Aiming High for Disabled Children consultations that took place with parents, carers and children with a disability or additional needs. Working closely with families, Southampton City Council listened to family views on current services and identified gaps where improvements could be made.

In 2013 further work was carried out with families and professionals (parent feedback, events, informal groups and surveys) to better understand changing needs and expectations. Through listening to views, it was possible to plan new and more appropriate services to more closely meet families' needs.

From April 2014, in direct response to families' requests, newly developed services started offering families a greater choice of age relevant and disability appropriate services.

All future changes to Short Breaks Service will be coproduced with parent, carers and young people.



How will the Statement be publicised and reviewed?

The Short Breaks statement will be circulated to parents and carers via the Buzz Network and A-Buzz Parent/Carer Forum and circulated to all teams/organisations supporting children and young people with a disability or additional need in Southampton.

It will also be published on the Southampton City Council website:
www.southampton.gov.uk/living/scchildren/ah/statement.aspx

This document will be formally reviewed annually and the next review will be in January 2018.

What are Short Breaks?

Short Breaks provide children and young people with disabilities or additional needs an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, engage in fun activities and enjoy time with their friends. These breaks can provide positive experiences for children and young people, by encouraging friendships, participation in social activities, new experiences and can nurture relationships with parents and carers.

They offer parent/carers a break from their caring responsibilities and time to spend with other family members and to catch-up on other daily tasks.

There are three categories of short break each of which is accessed in different ways:

UNIVERSAL SERVICES

Open to all with no eligibility criteria

TARGETED SERVICES

Access by joining the Buzz Network

SPECIALIST SERVICES

Access through a social care assessment

How will Short Breaks improve outcomes?

Short Breaks should have a clear focus on achieving the outcomes that a child, young person and their family want.

Identification and planning to achieve outcomes should be done collectively and involve:

- The child or young person
- The parents/carers and other family members as appropriate
- Any Lead Professional
- Short Break Providers

They should be specific and individual to the child/young person and their family regularly monitored and built upon when achieved. Examples of outcomes are given below.

“The Mencap FairPlay schemes ran throughout the summer holidays and we are proud to say that it was our most successful summer period ever. Members who attended enjoyed a wide range of specialised support and activities in our purpose-built premises in Portswood, with a range of interactive theme weeks including Olympics, A Night at the Movies, The Great Outdoors and Carnival! We were delighted to support Buzz Network members with a wide range of needs, and our talented and dedicated staff team were on hand to keep members safe and happy as well as ensuring that plenty of laughter, smiles and excitement were had by all.”

“A young person has really come out of themselves. He has high anxiety issues and through the BUZZ groups we have been running he has slowly become excited about coming out with us. He has very few friends, but has made friends with other young people on the trips. Mum has been so excited with how he has been and commented that ‘she has never seen him like this before’. He has taken part in group discussions around what activities he would like to do and listened to other people’s opinions. His confidence has really grown.”

KIDS Direct – One2one Service.

“Can I just say a huge Thankyou from us for giving our son such a wonderful memory making weekend. He had the best time ever. Everyone was amazing, lovely and helpful. They enjoyed the food and were al totally exhausted but very very happy. So please pass on our thanks to everyone involved but especially to you as I now it took a lot of organising but please know you made a big difference to our sons life and one that will probably give him confidence in the coming years.”

Parent

What are Universal Services?

Universal Services are services that are provided to, or are routinely available to, all children, young people and their families in their local community.

All children and young people should be able to access opportunities which are happening within their local communities. These opportunities can be found at children’s centres, libraries, swimming pools and sports centres, youth groups, parks, playgrounds, community centres and many more. Wherever possible these are the opportunities which should be used as a first point of call. These services have a duty under the Equalities Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments and not to treat a disabled person less favourably.

You can find out information about these opportunities through Southampton City Council Family Information Service:

Call FREE on **0800 169 8833** Or Local Rate **023 8083 3014**

Email fis@southampton.gov.uk

Visit www.youngsouthampton.org

How can I access them?

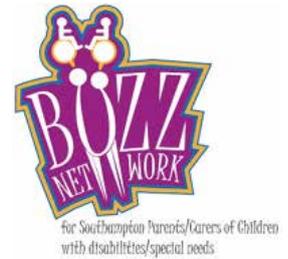
Universal Services are accessed by families directly. The Buzz Network has begun to collect together a list of accessible universal activities. This is included in the Short Breaks Activity List

What are Targeted Services?

Targeted services are aimed at children and young people with needs that require more support than available through universal services. They may need groups or services that are specifically designed to meet their needs.

How can I access these services?

Any parent or carer of children with disabilities or additional needs aged 0-19 and living within the Southampton City Council boundary can apply to join The Buzz Network.



What is The Buzz Network?

The Buzz Network is a service funded by Southampton City Council and offers:

- Personal Liaison coordinator for advice, information and regular newsletters
- Play and activity schemes
- One2One Service
- Community based activities.

The Network also holds the Southampton Children's Disability Register. The purpose of the register is to enable Southampton City Council and Health Services together with voluntary organisations, to work more closely together to identify and plan services for children and young people with a disability and their parents/carers. All data is held securely, registration is on a voluntary basis and data will not be shared with third parties without permission. Parents/Carers can request that their child's name is removed from the register at any time.

Parents /Carers will initially be asked to complete a short application form to assess their child's eligibility. This is shown below:

You are eligible if you are able to tick one box from '**CRITERIA A**' or two from '**CRITERIA B**'.

CRITERIA A

- In receipt of higher level Disability Living Allowance
- Has a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan

Receives a service from one of the following:

- Jigsaw
- Children's Community Nursing Team
- Occupational Therapy Service
- Physiotherapy Service
- Portage Service
- Wordsworth House



CRITERIA B

- Receives SENCO support (special educational needs co-ordinator)
- Normal activities are interrupted by frequent health needs, affecting progress in development or education
- Requires frequent use of specialist equipment including wheelchair/buggy or help from carer to get around
- Requires regular support with basic self care functions e.g. eating, going to the toilet, washing, dressing or needs more regular supervision through the day and sometimes at night than you would expect for a child of their age
- Does not hear spoken words or needs help to make up for complete loss of sound awareness and may have hearing aids or implants
- Needs special support and understanding from someone else to communicate
- Has very little or no sight or are registered blind or needs support to move around

The Buzz Network Coordinator can provide support to complete this form and advice on any other questions about eligibility.

Contact the Buzz Network Coordinator on **0800 169 8833**

You can also request an application form by emailing **fis@Southampton.gov.uk**

What are Specialist Services?

Specialist Services are for disabled children, young people and their parents and carers who require more support than is available through Universal or Targeted Services.

The specialist support available includes:

- Individual support in the home or community (e.g. outreach)
- Family based overnight and day care (e.g. short break fostering)
- Residential overnight short breaks
- Direct Payments

How can I access Specialist Services?

Specialist services are accessed by families following a statutory social care assessment of need through the multi-agency disability service: Jigsaw. These services are provided as part of an overall support package. This involves a more in depth and individual process to look at the specific needs of each child or young person and their family.



**Specialist Services
are accessed by families
following a statutory social care
assessment of need
through Jigsaw**

What are Direct Payments?

Direct payments are one way of arranging social care services for children and young people with a disability and their families. A person with parental responsibility for a child with a disability or young person aged 16 and over is given funds to pay for a short break instead of using the Southampton City Council contracted services.

Direct payments can be used in a variety of ways for example: to employ a person to support and care for your child overnight, in the home during the day or to support at a community activity. Or you can use Direct Payments to buy into a local service, for example a residential short breaks unit, a sitting service or after school club.

The Council has commissioned four local organisations to support parents to set up and manage their Direct Payments and to provide a peer support service through which parents/carers interested in Direct Payments can have a discussion with other parents/carers who already access Direct Payments to find out the advantages and responsibilities. This support can be accessed via a Lead Professional.

How much do Short Break Services cost?

Some short break services are free and others charge a fee. Parents and carers should not expect to pay more than a non-disabled child accessing a similar type of service.

If you have difficulties in accessing services because of the cost please discuss your situation with your provider as some services may be able to offer further discounts for families in receipt of certain benefits or on a low income.

Please see the Short Breaks Activity List for individual provider's service costs.

Do Short Break Services provide transport?

Parents are responsible for transporting their child to short break services unless agreed as part of a care plan. However, some organisations may provide their own transport – please contact the provider directly to find out if there is a cost for this service.

How will we measure impact?

Project Officers from the Short Breaks team routinely monitor, evaluate and review commissioned service by carrying out regular visits, observations and contract meetings at the schemes. As a result the team are confident that services are of good quality and safeguard disabled children. Providers of overnight short breaks and services that involve personal care are also required to be inspected by Ofsted or the Care Quality Commission (CQC); the outcome of these inspections is published online for anybody to access.

This information along with on-going feedback from parent/carers, children with a disability, from consultation events and data collection all contribute to decisions for the future and the planning of services.

Providers of targeted and specialist Short Break Services should be regularly reviewing the support they are providing to each child/young person including looking at whether outcomes (identified with the parent/carer and child/young person and documented) are being achieved and whether any aspects of the support need to be changed.



**Parents and carers
should not expect to pay more
than a non-disabled child
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of service.**

How do we consult with parents and carers?

The Short Breaks team work in partnership with parents and carers of children with a disability or additional need to ensure their views are considered throughout the planning, implementation and ongoing development of services in Southampton. In addition to regular visits to Short Breaks services allowing consultation with parents and carers, the Short Breaks team also works in partnership with The A-Buzz Parent Carer Forum.

The A-Buzz Parent Forum

The A-Buzz Parent Forum was established in November 2009 and is run by parent carers on a voluntary basis.

A-Buzz's mission is to inform, support and empower parents/carers of children with disabilities and special needs. A-Buzz Parent Forum want parents' voices to be heard and to build their confidence and resilience, so they can support their children to lead happy and integrated lives, fulfilling their potential.

Their vision is that all parents should be well informed and well supported not only to manage the added demands of caring for their children, but to raise their children with an expectation that they will be respected and included as equal members of society.

The aim of the Forum is to give a voice to parents and carers of children and young people (aged 0-25) with disabilities and/or additional needs in Southampton. It is currently working in partnership with Southampton City Council to develop the Local Offer.

The Forum works closely with Southampton City Council, the voluntary sector, the NHS and other organisations.



A-Buzz's mission is to inform, support and empower parents/carers of children with disabilities and special needs.

How do we consult with children and young people?

Southampton City Council has worked closely with children and young people with disabilities or additional needs to ensure their views are considered throughout the planning, development and ongoing consultation regarding Short Breaks in Southampton.

One consultation project was organised by the Jigsaw service and asked children and young people for their views on Short Breaks, in particular what activities they like to do and what activities should be developed. The feedback directly lead to the development of community based activities.

This is still an area that requires further development and over the next year Southampton City Council will work with families, voluntary sector and other organisations to improve how we consult with children and young people.

We have developed an accessible Short Breaks survey for children and young people. This will be sent to all schools as part of the upcoming Short Breaks Review.

The Local Offer

Southampton City Council has a duty to publish and update a 'Local Offer' that sets out in one place information about the services that are available locally for children and young people who have Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND).

The intention of the local offer is to improve choice and transparency for families. It is also an important resource for professionals in understanding the range of services and provision in the local area. A further key role for the local offer is to inform the joint commissioning for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities by setting out in one single place what is available locally.

The local authority must work together with children and young people, parent/carers and with local services, including the voluntary and community sector, to develop their offer and keep it under review.

The Local Offer can be found on the Southampton Information Directory - visit southampton.gov.uk/localoffer



**Southampton
City Council has worked
closely with children and
young people with disabilities
or additional needs**

How can families find out more about current Short Breaks?

The accompanying Short Breaks Activity List provides details of all Short Break Services, Provider, Activities and costs.

Contact the Buzz Network Coordinator on **0800 169 8833**
southampton.gov.uk/living/scchildren/ah/