Parent's Guide to the Short Break Scheme

Here you will find some answers to key questions about the Scheme.

How are Carers recruited?

If someone is interested in becoming a Carer, the Scheme will arrange to meet them to discuss their suitability. Various checks are then undertaken. This includes police, health and probation checks as well as personal references.

The Scheme will spend time getting to know a Carer and their immediate family, and will compile a report that is then presented to the Foster Panel. If the Panel approve a Carer, they will be linked to a disabled child. It can take some time to find a suitable match.

How are Carers and families matched?

The Scheme will discuss a child's needs with the child, their family and their Social Worker. This will take into account accommodation requirements, locality, the ages of a Carer's own children, interests, and transport.

This information enables the Scheme to link the Carer to a child who will most benefit from the support that they can offer.

How much time will a child be offered?

The amount of time offered is agreed with a child, their family and their Social Worker, whilst taking into account how much time the Carer can provide.

Initially, introductory visits will be arranged between a child and their family, and a Carer. If they are all happy for things to continue, a short visit is then arranged to see how the child settles in. These visits are gradually extended in time.

How are the sessions organised?

Once a child is linked to a Carer, the two families will arrange the sessions between them. A placement agreement is written so that everyone knows the amount of hours and sessions decided on for each month.

Are Carers paid?

Carers are paid an allowance each time they provide care for a child. This payment is to cover their expenses.

How much support does a Carer receive?

Carers receive regular support from the Scheme, particularly when a link to a child is first arranged. The Carer will also have an annual review with the Scheme, where they will look at the care they provide and make sure that everything is going well - the child and their family are also consulted before this review.

Carers are also entitled to supervisions, four times a year, where they have an opportunity to voice their views and get feedback from the Scheme. Carer's training and development is also discussed and planned.

Who arranges transport?

Families usually provide transport to and from a Carer's home. If this is not possible, the Carer may provide transport and claim expenses back from the Scheme.

What happens if I feel the Carer is not suitable?

Information about the Carer and their family is shared with the disabled child and their family. In turn, information about the child and their family is shared with the Carer. It is important that as much relevant information is shared as possible so that everyone has the opportunity to get to know each other.
Visits are arranged at the child's pace to ensure that they are happy and comfortable with the arrangements. If anyone feels that the match is not suitable, then they are able to discuss this with either the child's Social Worker, or the Scheme Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will try to find a suitable solution, which may involve an alternative Carer.

**Is there a charge for the Scheme?**

Currently there is no charge for using it.

**How can I apply to use the Scheme?**

Contact your child's Social Worker, or the Disabled Children's Team on 0118 974 6881.