



Short Breaks for Children with Disabilities

Short Breaks Statement 2017-18

Explained for Families in Wokingham Borough



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Our aim is to provide you with the best possible support at the right time, and to use your expert knowledge to help us develop and improve all our services. We feel confident that with your help, we can continue to improve the lives of children and their families, demonstrating that in Wokingham children with disabilities really are 'everybody's business'.

September, 2017

Councillor Introduction

Dear parents, carers, children and young people,

I am pleased to have the chance to write to you and introduce Wokingham Borough Council's Short Breaks Service Statement. It details how short breaks and support services for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs are organised, and how they can be accessed by you and your family.

We know that families can find it very confusing to try and understand the range of services available, how to access them, and who they are for. Parents and carers are busy juggling the demands of family life and the extra support that their children with disabilities need, so they really do need clear and timely information.

I believe that this statement reflects the fact that our services are continually striving to improve and are always responsive to what families are telling us. We may not always get it right, but we have set out in this document many ways for families to tell us how we are doing, which will, in turn, help us to improve.

Please continue to tell us and work with us to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people in Wokingham.

Yours faithfully

Lead member for Children's Services

Statement from Wokingham's independent parent carer forum – REACH Wokingham

In January 2017 Wokingham Borough Council proposed changes to the way that their Short Breaks programme was going to be funded and how parents would pay for the short breaks their children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) use.

REACH Wokingham, the independent Parent Carer Forum for Wokingham Borough, invited the council to come and talk to parent carers about the proposed changes at their AGM in March 2017. This has led to a collaborative partnership to produce a revised Short Breaks Statement during which REACH Wokingham was able to raise feedback from parents and influence the terminology used to make the statement more accessible. This is the document that lets parent carers find out about the range of services that are available to them, how they can access these services and who to contact if they need to find out more information.

The draft working document for Short Breaks was launched for public consultation at the Local Offer Live Day 2017 and available on Wokingham Borough's website for 12 weeks from 30th September 2017.

REACH Wokingham will continue to work with parents and Wokingham Borough Council to produce the final version which is planned to be published in January 2018. In addition REACH Wokingham will continue to work with parents, the council and the providers of short breaks to ensure that the introduction of personal budgets and pre-paid card goes smoothly.

REACH Wokingham will continue to talk to parents about the short breaks service, reviewing the Short Breaks statement and working with Wokingham Borough Council to improve services for children in Wokingham Borough with SEND.

For further details about what REACH Wokingham does and how you can get involved please visit:

Website: www.reachwokingham.com

Facebook: REACH-Wokingham

Email: reachwokingham@hotmail.co.uk

Contents

Introduction & Summary.....	5
Access and Eligibility to Short Breaks.....	6
Referral to Short Breaks Service	6
How can short breaks help me and my family?.....	7
Range of Short Break Provision.....	7
Universal Services: Mainstream playschemes/activities	7
Supported Services: play-schemes/activities.....	8
Specialist Services: meeting complex needs.....	8
What are the costs involved for accessing short breaks?.....	9
Direct payments / personalised budget.....	9
DISABLED CHILDREN - Needs Matrix.....	10
Useful information	12
Under 5s.....	12
Where can I find out about suitable childcare?.....	12
Children’s Centres.....	12
How do I find information about what short breaks are available?.....	12
Wokingham Borough Council CAN (Children with additional needs) card information.....	12
Transport for short breaks	12
Transition (moving from Children’s to Adult Services)	13
Where can I find out more about what other support is available for my family?	13
How do we know what we provide makes a difference (Measuring Impact)	13
How can I get involved in influencing services?.....	13
What if I have a problem with a short break activity?.....	14
What if I disagree with your decision about eligibility for specialist services following an assessment?	14
Public Sector Equality Duty	14
Contact Us:.....	14

SHORT BREAKS STATEMENT

Introduction & Summary

This information is for families living in the Borough of Wokingham who have a child with disabilities aged 0 to 17 years inclusive. It describes the process agreed by Wokingham's Disabled Children's Service to prepare and publish our statement of short break services.

Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act requires local authorities to provide short breaks for families with disabled children. This duty, which came into force on 1 April 2011, requires each local authority to produce a Short Breaks 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 a child or young person with a disability.

After a review of short break services within the Wokingham Borough, it emerged that there was some underuse of short break services that were commissioned by the Council under block contract arrangements. As a result of this and a desire to move towards personalisation (meaning that every person who receives support, whether provided by statutory services or funded by themselves will have choice and control over what that support looks like), the Council plans over the coming year to remove the current arrangements with providers and set up methods of giving children and young people with disabilities and their families a contribution towards the funding of their choice of short breaks.

There has been consultation with children, young people and parents to agree what a 'short break' is, as opposed to an intervention; eligibility criteria for accessing funding within different banding levels to ensure equity; and a suitable range of payment methods. In addition the Council has already started consultations on the range of short breaks, sufficiency, and quality of providers and the development of a preferred provider list.

Wokingham is committed to ensuring that this process is transparent and that children, families and existing providers are supported through this change.

This document has been produced as a result of talking with children and young people with disabilities and their parents and carers. We have also talked about the type and range of short breaks that should be available in Wokingham, *and we plan to keep talking with you so that we are co-producing and keeping this statement under review.* Our aim is to provide you with the best possible support and to use your expert knowledge to help us develop and improve all our services.

We will ensure services for children and young people with disabilities in the Borough are accessible irrespective of age, race, religion, gender or nature of impairment (non-discriminatory), and fully implement the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

If you have any questions about this statement, or would like information about services, you can contact:

The Wokingham Borough Council CAN (children with additional needs) Network

an information and support service

Contact: CAN.network@wokingham.gov.uk or post to: CAN Network, Highwood Annexe, Fairwater Drive, Woodley. RG5 3RU. Tel: 0118 974 6881

<https://directory.wokingham.gov.uk/kb5/wokingham/directory/service.page?id=9iAzOKTYuDA>





Find information and services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities, and their families

[The Local Offer](#)

www.wokingham.gov.uk/lo

Access and eligibility to short breaks

Children and young people aged 0 – 17 are eligible for short breaks if they live in the Wokingham Borough and have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. This could include physical disability, learning disability, hearing impairment, visual impairment, autism or children who may have challenging behaviour as a result of their disability. It could also include children who have complex needs and who may have life-limiting or life-threatening conditions.

Eligibility for short break services is based on an assessment which uses the following principles:

- The need to be fair, clear and equitable, according to need.
- Promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of children and young people with disabilities, ensuring they can fully participate in family and community life, enjoying themselves with friends and making decisions about their lives.
- Preventing family challenges and crisis through the provision of the right level of support at the right time.

Many families with disabled children will not require any extra help because they will be sufficiently supported using 'Universal Services'. Universal services are those which are used by and benefit all children and families – for example, health visitors, leisure activities provided at the child's school or through local community groups and organisations.

Wokingham is keen to make a distinction between a 'short break' and care / support interventions. Whilst children and families should have access to a range of short breaks these will differ from services provided as an intervention for care and support which would meet a statutory need following an assessment.

- **A *short break* is to enable a break from caring and / or a social opportunity for the child, young person with a disability. It is your choice to access short breaks.**
- **An *intervention* is ongoing work and/or service provided as a result of an assessment which you will need to enable your family to function and / or meet the basic needs of your child or young person.**

Referral to Short Breaks Service

There will be a self-referral/self-assessment process on the Wokingham Borough Council website (link to be included when ready).

In addition, practitioners can refer through an online process on behalf of the family - a short form will be completed for a short break, with a longer referral/assessment required if there is a need for Social Worker (intervention) input.

If your needs change at any time, you are able to re-refer for a short break.

If you need help to complete the online forms, or are unable to do so, please contact:

Children's Services 0118 908 8002 (Duty, Triage and Assessment team)

How can short breaks help me and my family?

Short breaks provide children and young people with disabilities an opportunity to spend time away from their parents joining in an activity they enjoy. They provide families with a 'break' from their caring responsibilities. Examples of short breaks include holiday play schemes, clubs, home sitting etc. You could mix and match activities to suit your family's needs and the things that your child or young person likes to do.

Short breaks can help your child or young person -

- To be able to take part in exciting activities that interest them
- To develop feelings of independence and build confidence
- To spend time with their friends – and also make new ones
- To achieve personal goals and learn new skills

and help parents & carers -

- To take a break from your caring role and allow 'you' time
- To spend time with your other children or partner
- To feel confident your child is having fun with carers / staff who understand their needs

Range of Short Break Provision

Short break provision can range from an hour a week in a universal club through to accessing community activities with a support worker or attending a holiday activity scheme, or having an allocated number of overnight breaks per year for those children and young people with more complex needs.

For ease of understanding, Wokingham has classed its short break provision into three levels:

- Universal Services - mainstream activities e.g. scouts, swimming lessons, sports clubs, play-schemes, classes & groups where no additional support is needed or support is provided by volunteers.
- Supported Services - activities, play schemes, clubs & groups for young people with disabilities where a safety assessment is needed and/or some support is provided.
- Specialist Services - specialist play schemes & activities that are run specifically for children & young people with moderate or complex needs following a social care or health assessment, where a lot of support is needed and provided.

Find information and services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities, and their families

[The Local Offer](#)

www.wokingham.gov.uk/lo

Universal Services: Mainstream play-schemes and activities

Not all children and young people need or want to attend specialist play-schemes or activities specifically designed for children and young people with disabilities. Many children and young people would prefer to attend activities with their friends from school or local area, or with their siblings.

As good practice, the organisation will work with you to cater for your child or young person's individual requirements so that they get to know them and the support they need to take part in the activity safely.

The organisation may require extra support to be able to include your child in the activity. In this instance you would then pay the cost for your child to attend the activity or play-scheme, and funding from the short breaks programme may pay for the additional support that is in place for your child.



There is training and support for mainstream activity providers so that they can be confident in including children with disabilities to take part in their activities – organisations and parents can contact the CAN network (see page 5) for information about available training and support in the local area.

Supported Services: play-schemes and activities

Wokingham currently subsidise a range of organisations and activity providers across Wokingham via a grant payment so that there are play-schemes and activities available that are suitable for children and young people who need some support - enabling them to take part in a range of interesting and exciting activities.

Some of these schemes are run by specialist activity providers, some are run at local special schools, and some of the schemes may be run for particular disability groups. These schemes may also have their own eligibility criteria. Some of the activities are available for siblings, providing the opportunity for siblings to enjoy activities together.

Children and young people with disabilities who have moderate, or complex needs often require higher levels of support and staff with specialist knowledge or training (such as behaviour management, use of feeding pumps, administering medication or lifting techniques) or specific resources or equipment (such as hoists or changing tables) to be able to join in certain activities. We try to ensure that the child or young person's disability or support requirements will not be a barrier to them accessing the activities they would like to take part in.

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www.wokingham.gov.uk/lo

Specialist Services: meeting complex / high needs

Families with the highest levels of need should have access to higher levels of service.

To receive additional specialist services you will need an assessment which will address your child's needs, as well as your needs as a carer plus those of your family.

There are many things we will discuss with you when assessing the support you need, but here are some of them:

- The severity of your child's disability, how it impacts on their life and your family life
- Whether you have more than one disabled child
- The number of other children or caring responsibilities you may have
- If you or a partner have a disability
- If you have limited support within your social/family network
- If a child is 'cared for' by the Local Authority or adopted
- If there are concerns about a child or young person's safety

There are some services which are targeted towards children and young people with the most complex needs and would be accessed via a social worker or health worker through a Child and Family assessment or health assessment. These include:

- Short breaks provided by Bridges Resource Centre, or other specialist residential settings including health settings.
- Short breaks with family based short break carers.
- A targeted bespoke package of care / support.

What are the costs involved for accessing short breaks?

Families are expected to pay the costs that would normally apply to a child or young person taking part in a particular activity. However, the short breaks programme may provide a financial contribution for any additional support that is required to enable your child to participate in that activity. The level of financial contribution will be decided and agreed by using the needs matrix (see page 10).

What are direct payments or a personalised budget?

From April 2018, families eligible for some or all costs of a short break will receive a payment via direct payments. To promote parental choice, a pre-payment card, much like a debit card will be issued and will be an accepted form of payment by short break providers. The card will also be able to pay individuals via online banking. If you are unable to use this system, we can look at different methods of paying providers for a service.

Wokingham Borough Council will establish a Preferred Provider List of short break providers which will be launched early in 2018. To be included on the list, providers will be expected to demonstrate that they have met a safety and quality threshold.

Until April 2018 organisations currently providing short breaks to Wokingham families will continue to receive a grant from the council and access to these services remains unchanged.

[DISABLED CHILDREN - Needs Matrix](#) is the assessment tool used in the decision making process for allocating a financial contribution towards a short break. Descriptors are clarified below and will identify through your self-assessment if your child has low support needs, medium support needs or high support needs.

PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT

Low Support Needs	Medium Support Needs	High Support Needs
Has a physical impairment – may have physical disability affecting some or all limbs, as identified by a paediatrician or physiotherapist.	Has significant physical impairment – may have physical disability affecting some or all limbs, as identified by a paediatrician or physiotherapist.	Has complex physical impairment – may have physical disability affecting some or all limbs, as identified by a paediatrician or physiotherapist.
Has a physical impairment that necessitates use of additional equipment at times to support standing, walking and feeding, and moving and handling generally.	Has a physical impairment that necessitates use of additional equipment regularly to support standing, walking and feeding, and moving and handling generally.	Has a physical impairment that necessitates use of additional equipment as their main means of support , i.e. standing, walking and feeding, and moving and handling generally.
Requires some adult intervention for their self-care needs, i.e. eating, drinking, dressing, toileting and positioning, for these needs to be safely met.	Requires more regular adult intervention for their self-care needs, i.e. eating, drinking, dressing, toileting and positioning, for these needs to be safely met.	Requires 1:1 adult intervention at all times for their self-care needs, i.e. eating, drinking, dressing, toileting and positioning, for these needs to be safely met.
Requires some involvement and interaction with multi-disciplinary services.	Requires more regular involvement and interaction with multi-disciplinary services.	Requires intensive involvement and intervention with multi-disciplinary services.
Has needs that can be met within universal services with some support in relation to self-care, mobility and engagement with peers.	Has severe needs that cannot be met within universal services without significantly more adult support in relation to self-care, mobility and engagement, than other children of a similar age.	Has severe and complex needs that cannot be met by universal services without 1:1 support .

LANGUAGE, SOCIAL COMMUNICATION, LEARNING ABILITY AND BEHAVIOUR

Low Support Needs	Medium Support Needs	High Support Needs
Because of their behaviour requires some adult intervention for their self-care needs, i.e. eating, drinking, dressing and toileting for these needs to be safely met.	Because of their behaviour requires more regular adult intervention for their self-care needs, i.e. eating, drinking, dressing and toileting for these needs to be safely met.	Because of their behaviour requires 1:1 adult intervention at all times for their self-care needs, i.e. eating, drinking, dressing, toileting and positioning, for these needs to be safely met.
Has a moderate learning disability or autism and difficulty with some aspects of communication and social interaction.	Has a severe learning disability or autism and significant difficulty with all aspects of communication, i.e. restricted and rigid behaviours, social communication and social interaction.	Has a severe learning disability or autism and a severe communication impairment diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist and they need augmented communication support.
Has a moderate learning disability or autism and may display distressed behaviour arising from a lack of comprehension and/or anxiety.	Has a severe learning disability or autism and may display highly distressed behaviour arising from a lack of comprehension and/or anxiety.	Has a severe learning disability or autism and challenging behaviour that presents significant risk of harm to self or others .
Requires moderate involvement and interaction with multi-disciplinary services.	Requires regular involvement and interaction with multi-disciplinary services.	Requires intensive involvement and interaction with multi-disciplinary services.
Has needs that can be met within universal services with some support in relation to self-care, independence, mobility and engagement with peers.	Has severe needs that cannot be met within universal services without significantly more adult support in relation to self-care, independence, mobility and engagement, than other children of a similar age.	Has severe and complex needs that cannot be met by universal services without 1:1 support.

HEALTH

Low Support Needs	Medium Support Needs	High Support Needs
Has controlled healthcare needs requiring specialist intervention. For example, your child takes regular medication for epilepsy which controls their condition.	Has significant healthcare needs requiring specialist intervention. For example, your child requires regular medication for epilepsy, but their condition remains unstable.	Has complex and chronic healthcare needs requiring specialist intervention. For example, your child has had a tracheostomy.
Requires some involvement and interaction with multi-disciplinary services (for example is seen by a medical team 3-6 monthly).	Requires regular involvement and interaction with multi-disciplinary services, which requires changes to their health care plan.	Requires intensive involvement and intervention with multi-disciplinary services (i.e. is seen by a medical team more often than once per month).
Has needs that can be met within universal services with some support in relation to self-care, mobility and engagement with peers. For example, support required for medication administration (including insulin injections and epilepsy rescue medication).	Has severe needs that cannot be met within universal services without significantly more adult support in relation to self-care, mobility and engagement, than other children of a similar age.	Has a diagnosed long-term medical condition which requires additional input to regulate and monitor their condition , e.g. breathing, feeding or uncontrolled epilepsy, and these needs can only be met in universal services with the addition of a 1:1 support worker .

Wokingham Borough Council is currently working on the banding levels which will be linked to the needs of the child.

For example, if the child's needs are low from the self-assessment, this would then link to a level of financial contribution which may be given as a direct payment or personalised budget.

If needs are identified as being medium or high, this will then lead to the more in-depth assessment carried out by a practitioner, (as explained on page 6), and would then link to a level of financial contribution, please see what are direct payments or personalised budget (page 9).

Useful information

Under 5s

Short break activities are sometimes held for this age group by short break activity providers - these might be occasional activity days or a more regular provision or support groups.

Where can I find out about suitable childcare?

The short breaks scheme is not designed to provide the childcare working parents might need. It is designed to give parents and carers a short break. Finding suitable childcare is important to working parents and you can find further information here -

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/search/?q=childcare%20wokingham>

Children's Centres

Children's centres aim to give every child the best possible start in life. They are places where any family with a child under the age of five can easily access a range of different services to support them, including information and advice, drop in sessions, access to early education and childcare services and more.

Children's centres also offer services specifically suited to children with disabilities and additional needs.

These services vary by area so please contact your local centre to see what would be available to you here

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/children-and-families/childrens-centres/>

How do I find information about short-break activities?



Find information and services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities, and their families

[The Local Offer](#)

www.wokingham.gov.uk/lo

The Wokingham Borough Council CAN (children with additional needs) card -



You can book places at universal, supported activities or play schemes directly with the activity provider. Using the CAN card will identify to the provider that your child or young person has a disability and/or additional need and requires support. The CAN Card is free and may also get you a concessionary rate for activities. The CAN card is also accepted for concessionary rates at a wide range of local and national activities. <https://directory.wokingham.gov.uk/kb5/wokingham/directory/service.page?id=9iAzOKTYuDA>

You can also register with the network to receive regular email contact about local activities and short breaks, or you can contact the network to ask for information on a specific activity.

Contact: CAN.network@wokingham.gov.uk or post to: CAN Network, Highwood Annexe, Fairwater Drive, Woodley RG5 3RU Tel: 0118 974 6881

Transport for short breaks

Parents and carers are routinely expected to transport their own children to and from short break activities. It may be the case that some providers offer transport as part of the activity, please check with them directly. We are unable to fund transport for short break activities except in exceptional circumstances which is entirely discretionary.

Moving from Children's to Adult Services (Transition)

The transition from Children's to Adult Services should be a positive experience and a time of opportunity. Young people are moving from childhood to adulthood, between 14 and 25 years of age - preparing to leave school and take the next steps in their adult life. Young people with disabilities and additional needs may need advice and additional help during this time to enable them to be ready to enter the adult world.

To contact Adult Services please call: 0118 974 6722

E-mail: adult.services@wokingham.gov.uk

Where can I find out more about what other support is available for my family?

Find information and services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities, and their families

[The Local Offer](#)

www.wokingham.gov.uk/lo

How do we know what we provide makes a difference?

We will continue to work so that short break services focus on improving the life chances of children with disabilities and their families by continuing to develop our strategy with parents and young people. We know that the views of families, both parents and children, are essential for future success. We will therefore continue to hold consultation forums.

We will ensure that short break providers on the preferred provider list maintain their safety and quality standards.

We will continue to measure children's satisfaction, parental satisfaction and staff confidence and skill in meeting the needs of children with disabilities 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 continual improvement.

You can give us feedback here – www.wokingham.gov.uk/lo-survey

How can I get involved in influencing services?

REACH Wokingham is the independent parent carer forum, set up to ensure that the families and carers of children and young people with disabilities and additional needs between 0-25 years of age in Wokingham, can participate fully in the development of services within Wokingham.

REACH Wokingham sends regular updates to its members detailing news, research updates, parental surveys, participation opportunities and training courses. This is supported by a website which provides signposts to useful organisations, factsheets and news articles.

<http://www.reachwokingham.com/>

E-mail: reachwokingham@hotmail.co.uk

REACH Wokingham extends an invitation to all parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities and additional needs between 0-25 years of age in Wokingham Borough to get involved with them to ensure that they are able to represent a wide range of families from across the Borough when working together with decision makers. They are keen to hear from you if you are having problems with any service provided for your child with additional needs.

Participation in future reviews of this statement

This statement will be subject to revisions as consultation continues. We will also check the statement at least annually with REACH Wokingham to ensure it remains a good reflection of current services.

What if I have a problem with a short break activity?

If you experience any problems in accessing a short break activity, or problems while your child is attending, please discuss this with the activity provider in the first instance and ask for a copy of their complaints policy if needed. You can also get help from REACH Wokingham on e-mail reachwokingham@hotmail.co.uk or Wokingham Borough Council's Duty, Triage and Assessment team **Children's Services 0118 908 8002**

What if I disagree with your decision about the support I am entitled to receive?

If you feel that the needs matrix has not been applied fairly, or that important factors have not been taken into account, please contact the Duty, Triage and Assessment team who will arrange for there to be a review of the decision. This may lead to the need for further assessment of your needs.

If you still remain dissatisfied, you can request a face to face meeting with a manager, or you can complain in writing to:

Wokingham Borough Council, Customer Service Team

Governance & Democratic Services

Shute End

Wokingham RG40 1WH Tel: 0118 979 0877 Email: customerservice@wokingham.gov.uk

Public Sector Equality Duty

This statement has been checked for its compliance with the Public Sector Equalities Duty under the Equalities Act 2010. If any individual or group should have reason to believe that it does not comply they are invited to write to the Service (address below) setting out why they feel the statement does not comply.

Contact Us:

For more information or if you would like this information in another language or format, such as Braille or large print:

Disabled Children's Service

Highwood Annexe

Fairwater Drive

Woodley

RG5 3RU

Tel: 0118 974 6881 email: Highwood.Annexe.Admin@wokingham.gov.uk