

Short Breaks Services Statement Kirklees Council

October 2011

Background & introduction

Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act requires Local Authorities to provide short breaks for families with disabled children age from 0 to 18. This came into force on 1 April 2011. The Act also requires the local authority to publish a short breaks statement so families know what services are available in their area, the eligibility criteria for these services and how the range of services is designed to meet family's needs.

Definition of short breaks

Short breaks are intended to give primary carers of children and young people with disabilities a break from their caring responsibilities. Short breaks should equally provide disabled children and young people with opportunities to have fun, make friends and develop skills.

Short breaks come in a variety of formats and each one can last from a couple of hours to a few days, depending on the type of provision and the needs of the child and their family. Short breaks can occur during the day, during the evening, overnight and at the weekend and can take place in the child's own home, the home of an approved carer, a residential or community setting.

Short breaks should be used routinely to help parents and carers to maintain and improve the quality of care they naturally wish to provide and should not just be used as a crisis intervention.

Consultation

Kirklees has undertaken consultative and participative work over the course of the Short Break Transformation Programme. In July 2010, Kirklees Council used funds secured from the Aiming High for Disabled

Children change programme to commission an independent organisation (Icarus) to develop effective parent participation structures in Kirklees.

PCAN (Parents of Children with Additional Needs) is a new independent parent forum within Kirklees and will be launched in October 2011. It will offer formal mechanisms for consultation and engagement of parents within service design.

PCAN has been working on:

- a new information guide for parents
- a trial of a new text based information system for parents
- a new participation guide to help providers work better with parents
- talking with the council about a single database for all families of children with additional needs

Kirklees Council believes that it is providing a good range of services that meet the needs of both parents and carers and disabled children and young people. The number of families benefiting from short breaks has been greatly extended as a result.

These services are provided fairly and have clear and easy to understand eligibility criteria. Services have been designed to enable families, and their children, to have choices about the services that they access and when they access them so they are person-centred and flexible.

This short breaks services statement is subject to change as a result of the consultation process, in particular in response to the views expressed by parents and carers and children and young people.

Range of services available & eligibility criteria

The range of services on offer fall into three broad categories:

- services available to all children and young people (universal services)
- services for children and young people who require some support (targeted services)
- services for children and young people who require lots of support (specialist services)

Universal or mainstream services available to all children and young people

Kirklees Council, and its partner organisations, will continue to focus on ensuring that as many disabled children and young people as possible should be able to access and enjoy services that are available to all children and young people.

These services include play and sporting activities, youth clubs, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award provided by Kirklees Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS), uniformed groups (e.g. scouts, girl guides), parks, leisure centres and groups, cinemas, bowling, local galleries and museums, and community and voluntary group activities. Kirklees 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. Information on these services is available on the Kirklees website through a search for local organisations.

Targeted services

These services are specific services for disabled children and young people and some can be directly accessed with no assessment necessary. Targeted services are provided by Kirklees Council and partner organisations such as the community and voluntary sector.

These services include youth clubs and youth accreditation award schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award provided by IYSS, support groups and commissioned services and activities.

Youth clubs provide social environments and activities for young people to be with their peers and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a scheme for young people aged 14 to 25 years where young people are given the opportunity to participate in a range of activities to achieve bronze, silver and gold awards along side their peers. Support groups provide information, assistance and activities for families. Through the Aiming High Initiative between 2007 and 2011 Kirklees Council has commissioned a range of targeted services and activities and a significant number of disabled children and young people have been able to access these services without the need for formal assessment. Kirklees Council intends to continue to support the provision of the following services:

Crossroads

Crossroads sitting service provide one to one support for children and young people with disabilities following an assessment of need for up to 7 hours per month.

Befriender service – Cool2Care

The peer-befriending programme was commissioned to provide support to young people with disabilities to do similar activities as their non-disabled peers. This has included shopping, going for lunch, going to the cinema, going for beauty treatments and just 'hanging out' etc.

Activities commissioned by Kirklees

During term time and school holidays (in partnership with IYSS) a range of activities have been commissioned to provide new opportunities for children and young people. These have included arts, dance, drama, music, sports, play, outdoor/adventurous activities, motor biking, karting and general activity schemes, for example the popular summer holiday scheme WACKY. These have been provided by Kirklees IYSS and a number of voluntary and community organisations including Full Body and the Voice, Suga Brown, Dare 2B Different, Shabang, Manasamitra, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Total Sport Foundation, Organised Chaos, Pit Stop, Bumpy, Kirklees Learning and Sport Foundation, Dewsbury and District Autism Support Group and

Huddersfield Autism Support Group. All providers go through a commissioning process and are therefore subject to variation.

Kirklees also employs two inclusion officers who work with organisations supporting them to be able to meet children's needs. The officers also work with the young people supporting them where necessary to access new services.

Specialist services

Specialist services enable those families, children and young people who require more support than is available through universal and targeted services, to access short breaks. Access to these services is provided by an assessment by a social care professional.

Children and young people in this category will have impairments and high levels of support needs related to their disabilities.

Whilst eligibility decisions are based on individual need and professional judgement, including to what extent their impairment affects their lives, it is likely that the disabled child or young person will fit into one or more of the following definitions:

- a significant, permanent and enduring physical disability
- a significant global learning disability
- a severe and enduring communication disorder
- autism with a significant global development delay
- a significant sensory impairment

Specialist services include direct payments, overnight or day care with a foster carer, and overnight care at Orchard View, a residential short break unit based in Mirfield. There is also the Young People Activity Service, which provides holiday clubs, summer play schemes, after school and weekend clubs and youth clubs. The Active Agency also provides support via their activity centres.

Short breaks are also provided by the health services, as agreed at the Continuing Care Panel following an assessment by a specialist nurse and include support from the continuing care nursing team.

The Child in Need Review Officer will review your short breaks at least once a year to ensure you are receiving the right level of support. Families can request a review or a further assessment of needs at any time. Each young person will be given the opportunity to attend their review and offer their thoughts about the services they receive.

Ensuring the services meet the needs of children, young people and their carers

Kirklees Council will ensure that the voice of children and young people is heard. We have already gathered information from the users of the short breaks that have been on offer and will continue to get feedback from children and young people and respond to their ideas.

We will ensure that all short breaks providers funded by the Council seek out and report on the views of children and young people with regard to the quality of the service.

Kirklees Council will continue to ensure that the views of parents, carers and children are represented by:

- 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

We will ensure that our Short Breaks Services Statement is published on the Local Authority website and is reviewed annually with families to make sure it is meeting the needs of parent, carers, children and young people throughout Kirklees.