

## Short Breaks Services Statement

For Parents and Carers of  
Disabled Children and Young People  
In the London Borough of Bromley



This Statement has been produced by the Disabled Children's Team  
in co-production with Bromley Parent Voice.

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<http://www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer>

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Looking after children who have complex disabilities can be exhausting for parents and carers and the Council can be a vital source of support. A Short Break gives parents and carers a much needed break from caring and it also gives disabled children and young people the chance to have fun and to make friends, something that a typically developing child can take for granted.

Disabled children and young people in Bromley have been accessing Short Breaks for many years (Short Breaks used to be referred to as 'respite services'). This document is intended as a source of information for families to assist them in identifying the support that may be available to them in order to meet their needs and outcomes.

The Children Act 1989 requires Councils to provide services designed to give breaks for carers of disabled children and young people. The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, requiring each Council to provide :-

*'so far as is reasonably practicable, a range of services designed to meet the needs of families with disabled children in their area which is sufficient to assist carers to continue to provide care, or to do so more effectively'.*

The Children and Families Act 2014 also places a duty on the Council to produce a 'Local Offer', which should include information about the provision of Short Breaks.

To find out more about the Bromley Local Offer, visit: [www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer)

### 1.1 What is this Statement for?

This Statement sets out how the Council and our partners at the Bromley CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) propose to provide Short Breaks for disabled children and young people in Bromley. It describes the range of Short Breaks we intend to provide, how they are arranged to meet the needs of families and the criteria for accessing these services.

We have sought the views of families about Short Breaks and taken them into account in preparing this Statement. We will continue to work with children, young people, parents, carers, providers and others working with our families for their views and review and update the Statement accordingly.

### 1.2 Who is responsible for this Statement?

The Council is required to publish a Statement informing families about the Short Breaks services available to them.

This Statement has been produced in partnership with a multi-agency group that include representatives from Bromley Council, Bromley Parent Voice, Bromley Healthcare, local voluntary sector partners, Short Break providers and commissioners.

### **1.3 Review of the Statement**

This Statement will be subject to ongoing annual review, using existing mechanisms for co-production with parents and carers, disabled children and young people in Bromley.

This will be managed by the Council's Parent Participation Officer, Group Manager for the Children with Disabilities Service, the Strategic Commissioner for Children with a Disability, working in partnership with Bromley Parent Voice.

The review process will provide an opportunity for parents and carers and children and young people to express their views both directly and through media sources.

This Statement is publicised on the Local Offer Website and will be made available in a printed format as required.

For more information go to: [www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer)

## **2. SHORT BREAKS**

### **2.1 What are Short Breaks?**

Short Breaks can provide opportunities for disabled children and young people to have enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers, contributing to their social inclusion and personal and social development. They also provide the parents and carers of children and young people with a disability a necessary and valuable break from their caring responsibilities.

Short Breaks can include day, evening, overnight, weekend or holiday activities. They can take place in the child or young person's own home, in the home of an approved carer, and a residential or community setting. Short breaks range from supporting disabled children and young people to access a breaks ranging from those within a universal setting to specialist services at a local level.

Short Breaks.....

- are intended to give children and young people the chance to do something they enjoy

- should always meet the individual support needs of the child
- should be available for families before they reach a crisis
- can be anything from an hour-long activity at a youth club up to a few nights away from home
- can be used to allow parents and carers to attend training, to spend time with other family members or to enjoy leisure or social activities themselves
- should focus on achieving positive outcomes for the child or young person and their family

## 2.2 Different levels of Short Breaks

*Child or Young Person has been shortened to CYP for the purposes of this table*

	<b>Description</b>	<b>Current examples</b>	<b>How to access</b>	<b>Assessment needed?</b>
<b>Universal Services</b>	Activities available to ALL CYP in Bromley whether they are disabled or not	After school and holiday clubs Guiding and Scouting organisations Leisure Centres Children and Family Centres	All disabled CYP should have access to these services but may need reasonable adjustments to be made to facilitate their inclusion in some activities	No - unless the CYP needs additional support to access services
<b>Targeted Universal Services</b>	Activities specifically suitable for disabled CYP	CASPA Special K Family Link Maypole Project Kids and Crew Bromley Mencap	Typically parents/carers can contact the service directly and arrange for their CYP to attend Provider's information and application forms indicate appropriateness of the resource	No - unless the CYP needs additional support to access services
<b>Specialist Services</b>	Activities for disabled CYP with the most complex needs who are unable to access Universal or Targeted Provision	Refer to section 23	Due to their specialist nature, there is an assessment process managed by the Disabled Children's Team to access these services	Yes

## 2.3 Different Types of Specialist Short Breaks in Bromley

The Specialist Short Break Services that are currently available in Bromley include :-

<p>Direct Payments</p>	<p>A Direct Payment is an amount of money which is provided to families instead of the Council co-ordinating a Short Break Service on their behalf.</p> <p>Families can use this money to purchase activities or to employ a support worker, also known as a Personal Assistant (PA) to enable their children and young people to access activities. The specific use of this money must be agreed with the Children with Disabilities Service in advance and recipients will be required to evidence how it has been spent.</p> <p>Payments are made monthly or quarterly as agreed with the family. Support is available to assist families to set up/arrange their service and to manage these payments.</p> <p>For further information about Direct Payments in Bromley visit - <a href="http://www.bromley.gov.uk/directpayments">www.bromley.gov.uk/directpayments</a></p>
<p>Saturday and Holiday Schemes</p>	<p>Saturday and Holiday Schemes are based in venues where groups of children and young people can access a range of activities and facilities on one site.</p> <p>The current provider is Riverside School which is based in St Pauls Cray.</p>
<p>Childminding Short Breaks</p>	<p>Bromley Mencap works with approved childminders in Bromley</p> <p>They offer trained and registered childminders for children and young people with learning disabilities and additional needs from birth up to 18 years of age.</p> <p>Bromley Mencap Enhanced childminders can support children and young people with more severe and complex needs on a one to one basis.</p>
<p>Buddying (14 years +)</p>	<p>Bromley Mencap Buddying is a scheme available for young people aged 14 to 18 years old.</p>

	<p>Young people are matched with trained workers to provide Short Break opportunities in the community. This scheme is not appropriate for young people with complex needs or challenging behaviour.</p>
Sitting Service	<p>Bromley Mencap provides a team of sitters who are available after 6pm for a maximum of 6 hours. This service is designed to allow parents/carers to have an evening out whilst their child or young person is cared for in the family home. A sibling can also be cared for.</p> <p>Sitters are either fully trained Network Childminders or responsible adults who have undergone appropriate training and Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks.</p>
Community Support Workers	<p>Bromley Mencap provides a team of Community Support Workers who can be available throughout the week.</p> <p>This service is designed to enable families to receive short breaks within the family home or for the workers to support older children and young people to access their local community.</p> <p>Learn more at:  <a href="https://www.bromleymencap.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/BMC-Short_breaks_leaflet_v2.pdf">https://www.bromleymencap.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/BMC-Short_breaks_leaflet_v2.pdf</a></p>

## 2.4 Overnight Short Breaks

Hollybank Short Break Residential Centre	<p>Hollybank provides Short Breaks to children and young people, aged 5 to 17 with disabilities, complex health care needs, autism and/or challenging behaviour. Children and Young People must have a need for overnight care.</p>
Family-based Overnight Short Breaks	<p>Family Based Overnight Short Breaks are provided by an approved foster carer in the foster carer's home.</p>

All of the above Short Breaks may be provided on a time-limited basis and are also therefore subject to regular reviews.



It is possible that families may receive support from more than one service, dependent upon their assessed needs.

## **2.5 How Bromley will develop and support participation and active involvement**

Short Breaks are planned, commissioned and evaluated in joint partnership with parents and carers. The Joint Commissioner Disabled Children's Services also works closely with providers and potential providers to ensure that the Council commissions services of the highest possible quality that meet identified needs, but remain within a cost-effective framework.

## **2.6 Parent/Carers**

The Parent participation Officer facilitates the evaluation and tendering of Short Break Services through identifying representatives from Bromley Parent Voice or other parent/carers.

Parent Representatives also attend various strategic and operational groups within the Council.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY AND THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR SHORT BREAKS**

#### **3.1 Who is eligible to apply for a Short Break assessment?**

Parents of disabled children and young people who can answer yes to each of the following statements are usually eligible for a Short Breaks assessment :-

- a) Your child or young person has an Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan
- b) Your child or young person has at least one severe, profound or complex disability which has a substantial and long term effect on the child or young person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities from the following categories:
  - Learning Disability
  - Physical Disability
  - Behaviours that challenge (including ASD)
  - Health Issues
  - Hearing and visual difficulties
  - Communication and learning needs
- c) Your child or young person has tried to access universal (local/community) services without success
- d) Your child's or young person's disability has a big impact on your family's daily life
- e) Your child or young person's residential address is within the London Borough of Bromley and they are aged between 0-25

Support can also be provided to families where the need may be greater due to individual family circumstances and not necessarily due to the severity of the child or young person's disability. Examples of this include where there is more than one disabled child or young person in the family impacting on the parent's ability to cope, or where additional support is required to safeguard a child.

Families that do not meet the threshold for services from the Children with Disabilities Service may be provided with general information and contact details for universal and targeted services.

### **3.2 Assessment Process**

As of June 2017, families can access low-level Short Breaks (valued at up to approximately £2000 per annum) through an Online Assessment Process managed by the Disabled Children's Team. This replaces the initial social worker visit for those families requiring a low level of Short Break.

This new process is as a result of the Social Care Innovation Project (SCIF) which gained the views and experiences of over 120 families, young people, social workers, schools and voluntary sector experts in Bromley and co-produced solutions to improve access for families of disabled children and young people into Social Services.

The Short Breaks Online Assessment considers the needs of the disabled child or young person and their carers, as well as aspects of family life that may be impacting on the needs of other children or the carer's ability to care.

This includes consideration of:

- the severity of a child or young person's needs and how it impacts on family life
- whether there is more than one disabled child or young person in the family
- other caring responsibilities within the family, above and beyond that expected of any parent
- parental health/disability issues impacting on parenting capacity
- isolation and lack of extended social networks
- what the family have done to achieve a change in the difficulties they are experiencing such as accessing universal and targeted services.
- social care outcomes identified through the Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs assessment.

Families will be asked to nominate a 'verifier' - this would typically be the child or young person's current early years setting, school or a voluntary organisation that the family have been supported by within the last 12 months. This is a way of making sure that the information contained in the on line application is correct and accurate.

### **3.3 Assessment Pathway**

All parents with disabled children still do however have the right to request at any point a more detailed social work assessment of their child's needs at any point. There is also the possibility that the social work team might recommend a Social Work Assessment, which could be due to the complexity of the child's needs, and/or complex parenting/social issues or due to safeguarding issues. The purpose of the online assessment is to give parents an indication of whether they would be eligible. Please contact the Children with Disabilities Service for more information on (020) 8313 4511.

#### **4. HOW TO APPLY FOR A SHORT BREAK ASSESSMENT**

Families that would like to complete a Short Break Assessment should visit

[www.bromley.gov.uk/info/10122/disabled\\_children\\_and\\_young\\_people/1260/short\\_breaks\\_for\\_disabled\\_children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_and\\_their\\_carers](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/10122/disabled_children_and_young_people/1260/short_breaks_for_disabled_children_and_young_people_and_their_carers)

Schools and voluntary sector organisations can also make the online referral on a family's behalf but the family should be present during the application.

The assessment will take about 30 minutes to complete and there is the option to create an account on the site before completing the form so that it can be saved and returned to at a later date.

If you require help completing the form please contact the Children's Services Team at Bromley Mencap by e-mailing [enquiries@bromlymencap.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bromlymencap.org.uk) or calling (020) 8466 0790.

#### **5. SAFEGUARDING AND SHORT BREAKS**

Safeguarding disabled children and young people in Bromley is everybody's responsibility. It is recognised that disabled children and young people are more vulnerable to abuse than non-disabled children and young people.

The Children with Disabilities Service works to raise awareness amongst professionals and others working with our children and young people about safeguarding and what constitutes best practice for families.

If there are concerns of safeguarding for a disabled child or young person please do not complete the online referral. Referrals should instead be made through the Bromley Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via [mash@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:mash@bromley.gov.uk).

## 6. CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION

### 6.1 Local Authority Contacts:

- **Lead Officer for Short Breaks:** Mark Smith - [mark.smith@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:mark.smith@bromley.gov.uk)
- **Specialist Information Officer:** Pelin Ahmet - [pelin.ahmet@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:pelin.ahmet@bromley.gov.uk)
- **Parent participation Officer:** Kay Moore - [kay.moore@phoenixsch.org.uk](mailto:kay.moore@phoenixsch.org.uk)
- [www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer)

### 6.2 Local Websites

For more on the Bromley Local Offer :-

[www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer)

[www.bromley.gov.uk/ShortBreaks](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/ShortBreaks)

[www.bromley.gov.uk/mymaxcard](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/mymaxcard)

A national concession card for families with a disabled child or young person (aged 0 – 25) is available through the Disability Register.

**Bromley Parent Voice** is a forum that aims to inform service providers of the needs of children and young people with a disability or additional needs and their families by facilitating two-way communication between parents and carers and service providers in the London Borough of Bromley. The forum aims to provide feedback on services, identify unmet needs and shape decision-making and planning for future service provision. As well as their own membership, they are also able to reach out to the wider population of parents and carers in the borough via their strong links with local schools, voluntary sector organisations and service providers.

Bromley Parent Voice believes that by working co-operatively with local service providers parents can contribute to improvements in the services delivered for disabled children and young people and their families.

To find out more :-

Email [info@bromleyparentvoice.org.uk](mailto:info@bromleyparentvoice.org.uk)

Visit [www.bromleyparentvoice.org.uk](http://www.bromleyparentvoice.org.uk)

Telephone 07803 287838

### 6.3 National Websites

- [www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send)

Read about why the government want to make changes to support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs or learning difficulties

- [www.sendpathfinder.co.uk](http://www.sendpathfinder.co.uk)

Read information packs from the pathfinders which contain a wealth of updated information about the new reforms

- [www.cdc.org.uk](http://www.cdc.org.uk)

The Council for Disabled Children are the Strategic Delivery Partner for the reforms and produce regular updates on the reforms

## **APPENDIX 1 | SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS**

In order to meet the requirements of the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011, Councils must have regard to the needs of carers in respect of their capacity to care for, or continue to care for, their disabled child and must provide a range of services designed to meet this need. A Short Break Services Statement must be prepared and published, outlining how this is to be achieved.

### **Duty to make provision**

Councils must take into account the needs of carers who would :-

- be unable to continue caring for their disabled child unless breaks from caring were given;
- or
- be able to give more effective care if breaks were given to allow them to, for example, attend educational classes, undertake a regular leisure activity, meet the needs of other children in the family, or carry out necessary day to day tasks in the household.

### **Types of services which must be provided**

Councils must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide a range of services sufficient to meet the needs of carers to care or care more effectively, including :-

- Day care in the child's own home and elsewhere
- Overnight care
- Educational or leisure activities for children outside of their own homes
- Services in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays

### **Short Break Services Statement**

Councils must prepare a statement for carers in their area setting out :-

- The range of services available
- Any eligibility criteria for these services
- How the range of services is designed to meet the needs of carers in the London Borough of Bromley

This statement must be kept under review and, where appropriate, revised. It should be prepared and reviewed with regard to the views of carers in the area.

There is no individual right to Short Breaks for any particular disabled child or young person. Local Authorities must do what is 'reasonably practical' in terms of providing Short Breaks and have wider duties to safeguard and promote a child's wellbeing. Therefore, it is paramount that the Short Break should offer a positive and safe experience for the child.

## **APPENDIX 2 THE LOCAL OFFER**

### **What is the Local Offer?**

As part of the SEND reforms under the Children & Families Act 2014, the Council has to publish a Local Offer for children and young people with special educational needs or a disability, and their families/carers.

The purpose of the Local Offer is to provide information, in a single place, which will help you to understand what support and services are available in your area and how to access them.

The Local Offer:

- provides clear, comprehensive, accessible and up to date information about education, health and care services available and how to access them
- makes services more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children and young people, those with SEN and their parents and carers, and service providers in its development and review

### **Who is it for?**

The Local Offer is for :-

- children and young people who have SEN and/or disabilities from birth to 25 years
- their parents and carers
- practitioners and professionals

### **How will it help me or my child?**

The Local Offer and Short Breaks aims to:

- Provide high quality information on available Short Break provision and how it can be accessed
- Helps to ensure that Short Break provision is responsive to the needs and aspirations of disabled children, young people and their families in London Borough of Bromley

**To find out more information about the Local Offer go to:**

[www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer)



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