



Brighton & Hove

Brighton & Hove City Council Short Breaks Statement 2017-18





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1. **What is it for?**

This statement forms the basis of our commissioning plans for short break services in Brighton and Hove for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) together with their families or carers. In other words, it will ensure that we 'buy and provide' the range of short breaks that families value and need. Our current offer has been informed by the views of children, young people and families..

The changes underway to the delivery of special school provision and integrated support as part of the SEND Review across the City will provide a further opportunity for making changes to, and supplement, our short breaks offer to individuals and families and we will continue to involve families as these changes are developed. We will continue to monitor the quality and delivery of our short break services with parents, carers and young people now and in the future to help us decide what we change, what we keep and what types of support require additional support.

2. **Publication and Review**

We will ensure that our Short Breaks Service Statement is published on the Brighton & Hove City Council Local Offer website, which brings together clear and accessible information about support and services available across education, health and social care to children and young people with SEND, together with their parents or carers. This is at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/local-offer. It will also be published on the main Council website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk and we will also ensure that families have access to a copy through our partnerships with Amaze and the Parent and Carer Council (PaCC).

The statement will be reviewed annually to keep it up to date in partnership with our children and young people, their parents and carers. We will use ongoing consultation to make changes and improvements and to ensure that our short breaks continue to reflect the needs of families living in Brighton & Hove who have children with disabilities and make very best use of the available resources.

The Short Breaks statement is reviewed and overseen by the SEND Partnership Board, which meets quarterly and with representation from social care, health and education professionals, voluntary sector partners and the Parent and Carers Council (PaCC).

3. **What are Short Breaks - Introduction and Background /Legal Context**

This information is for families living in Brighton & Hove who have a disabled child aged 0 to 25 years.

Short Breaks provide disabled children and young people with opportunities to spend time away from their parents and carers, relaxing and having fun with their friends. They also provide families with a break from their caring responsibilities and give parent and carers a chance to unwind, rest or spend time with their other children. Examples of short breaks include holiday play schemes, home sitting services and overnight breaks. Further information is shown below in respect of our current range of short break activities.

The Children and Families Act 2014 outlined changes to the way that support must be offered to children and young people with SEND. These include:

- the implementation of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans to replacement Statements of SEN;
- the requirement for councils to publish the services available for children and young people with SEND through their Local Offer websites; and
- Personal budgets to be available for families of a child with an EHCP.

Section 25 of the Children and Young Person's Act requires local authorities to provide short breaks designed to assist individuals who provide care for children with disabilities. The Short Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations came into force on 1 April 2011. These Regulations require 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 needs of families with disabled children locally.

4. **Principles**

Our aim is to ensure that families who have children with disabilities have the support they need to live more ordinary lives as a matter of course. We recognise that all families are different, so they will need different levels of support and different types of short breaks depending on the age and specific needs of their child and their family circumstances.

Short breaks are intended to improve the quality of care a family can provide and are not just for families who are finding it difficult to cope. The Children's Disability Service is working with parents and carers and all our partners to ensure that all families with disabled children have timely and regular access to advice, guidance and information.

We are committed to ensuring that:

- We listen to children & young people with disabilities, act on their views and provide them with choices.
- All children & young people with disabilities and their families are supported to take part in and enjoy community life wherever possible, using local childcare facilities, leisure and recreational activities.
- Parents and carers are supported to become equal partners in making decisions about service development and priorities.

One of our key priorities from 2015-2020 is to provide children and young people aged 0-25 with complex education, health and care needs and their families with high quality integrated support. This includes:

- ensuring a strong multi-disciplinary approach to the assessment and production of Education, Health and Care plans for children with complex SEND from 0-25 years;
- developing integrated assessment and provision for children with the most complex SEND across education, health and care services;
- empowering parents through the use of personal budgets across education, health and care;
- maximising opportunities for young people in terms of further education, supported internships and vocational opportunities;
- providing quality, safe and sustainable models of care for children with acute short-term illnesses and long term conditions and mental health issues, delivered closer to home; and

- helping children, young people and families to understand where and how they can get the best care when they need it.

Our ability to deliver these objectives in a more effective, efficient and integrated way will be greatly improved as the conclusions of the 2014 SEND Review to provide special school provision in three hubs in the City are implemented.

We aim to provide a service that does not discriminate on any grounds. We recognise that there can be many forms of prejudice and that this creates additional stress for some families. We strive to achieve equal opportunities and fair access for all children and young people with disabilities.

5. Consultations with Parent and Carers and Young people

Our short breaks offer has been developed over a number of years taking into account the views and wishes of children, young people and their parents and carers. Parents have been consulted a number of times over the last 10 years as services and delivery have been altered to provide the most effective support within the funding available, as part of the Council's comprehensive Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Review.

What parents and carers told us they wanted

Parents have said that they would like greater availability and a wider variety of short breaks that are affordable; more holiday schemes, especially for older children with learning disabilities and those with very challenging behaviour; better support and clearer information, especially on eligibility and access to short breaks; and greater access to leisure facilities, especially for those children & young people with complex needs.

As part of the SEND Review, consultation responses strongly supported the proposal to streamline the provision across the City into three specialist hubs with many comments supporting extended school days, weekend and holiday programmes, together with improved and increased home and school links with earlier support to parents from staff that work with their children. Joined up support between education, health and social care services at the 3 special school hubs was also welcomed.

Some parents are in favour of the flexibility that direct payment Personal Budgets can offer whilst other parents report that they have enough to sort out without taking on additional responsibilities. Parents report that there can be difficulties in recruiting suitably experienced and trained Personal Assistants.

Parent carers also want opportunities for their children to socialise with others of their age; engage in age-appropriate activities and with children and young people who do not have SEND. Other important considerations for short breaks were location, timing and transport issues; and parent carers being able to relax knowing that their child was being well cared for by people with high levels of skill and professionalism.

The other very clear message from parents was their need to be reassured that the funding that is available is shared between families that need support in an equitable way.

Over the years, families have acknowledged that the Council has improved the way it works with parents and carers to involve them at a strategic level. They have felt there is now better access to mainstream leisure facilities, and that work in this area should be continued. There was also recognition of positive collaboration between mainstream youth service providers and specialist disability service providers, resulting in more opportunities for positive and age-appropriate holiday activities for young people with disabilities.

Services have received positive feedback from families and young people and Parent carers reported being satisfied with the standard of care their children were receiving, highlighting their children's eagerness to attend short breaks and the friendliness and professionalism of staff.

What Young People Said

Young people told us that they wanted, above all, to have opportunities to socialise and participate in all the usual activities enjoyed by their age-group. They also highlighted the need for help with gaining greater independence in order to achieve the above, e.g. being able to travel on the bus to a youth club to meet friends.

Young people were happy with the staff supporting them, describing them as young, fun, friendly, intelligent and caring. Overall feedback indicated they were happy with the services they attend, and would like to go more often.

Ongoing Consultation and Participation

We are proud of our partnership with parent carers via the PaCC and Amaze. Parents and carers will continue to be involved on an ongoing basis in the development of short break services in Brighton & Hove. Our Partnership Charter, developed with parent carers in 2011, outlines our commitment in this area. This can be found at www.paccbrighton.org.uk/what-we-do/partnership-charter/

We also continue to consult with young people, both within our short break services and via our Young People's Consultation Group, AHA!, facilitated by our Youth Participation Service.

Feedback from parent carers about short breaks:

'It allows us to do every day activities with siblings that are more difficult with (name omitted). Our breaks are priceless!'

'It (Outreach) has been absolutely great. Our girls look forward to every session + had good times, they got to know so many wonderful people and build up their confidence.'

'I feel extremely lucky that (name omitted) has the opportunity to access Tudor House. It feels like a second home for him. He is very settled there. I have peace of mind knowing he is happy and very well cared for.'

Feedback from young people about short breaks:

'I enjoy coming to Cherish and I don't want it to stop.'

'I love my time at Tudor House. I will become more independent as the time goes on as the lovely staff promote this. I am being prepared for my future.'

'The food at Drove Road is epic. I have looked through recipe books with Alison and made a list of meals I would like to have.'

We welcome your comments, ideas and feedback about anything relating to short breaks or other services you or your family uses. So if you have any questions or comments, either contact the service directly to give your feedback, or send an email to customerfeedback@brighton-hove.gov.uk

6. **Eligibility and Access to Short Breaks**

Children and young people in Brighton & Hove are eligible for short breaks if they have a severe learning and/or physical disability; or have moderate learning difficulties, where it is assessed that their needs in terms of challenging behaviour/mental health issues can be met only through the input of specialist services.

A disability is defined as a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on ability to perform normal day to day activities.

Our eligibility for services is based on the following principles:

- Promoting the health, safety and well-being of children & young people with disabilities, ensuring they can participate in family and community life, enjoy themselves with friends and make decisions about their lives.
- Preventing family crises through the provision of the right level of support at the right time.
- The need to be fair, clear and equitable.

Children and families will need different levels of support and short breaks depending on the nature and severity of a child's disability, the impact of the disability on the family, and individual family circumstances.

Some additional factors may be taken into account when looking at short break provision, including the health of a parent carer, having other children with disabilities in the family, or other stress factors such as inadequate housing or financial difficulties.

When assessing the need for a short break we will take into account the whole family situation, not just the disability of the child, so all families will be different in terms of their support needs. This is why we may need to assess your child and family to ensure we provide the right level of support and short breaks at the right time, and that available resources are allocated to best effect.

Those short break activities below which do not require a referral can be accessed by any family whose child is eligible. A contribution towards the cost of the service is required, but for families on low incomes or benefits this may be reduced or waived.

Where a referral is required, a social worker will undertake a single assessment and input the information into our resource allocation system (RAS). The purpose of the RAS is to assess and allocate resources more equitably to ensure that families with similar needs receive similar support packages. The information from the assessment will provide an indicative budget in the form of a direct payment. This will be in two parts made up of a monetary figure and an 'overnights' figure, if applicable.

The indicative budget is a starting point only and is an indication of the support needed for a young person and family which is equitable with others in similar circumstances. The information from the RAS assessment will be taken to our multi-agency resource panel where we allocate available resources as fairly and effectively as possible to those families in the city assessed as needing additional specialist short breaks, based on their individual circumstances. Where a service is full to capacity, this may mean a child's name going on to a waiting list. Where appropriate alternative support services will be made available.

7. Our Current Range of Short Break Activities

Taking all the feedback into account, in partnership with parent carers and with our voluntary sector colleagues we have been able to offer a range of high quality short breaks services to meet identified needs. This information is also available on the Council's Local Offer website, as mentioned in paragraph 2, as part of the full range of help and support available locally for children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND and their families, including short breaks and leisure opportunities.

8. Short Break Activities Not Requiring an Assessment

Cherish

This service is offered by Brighton & Hove City Council and provides 2 specialist term-time venue based youth clubs for young people aged 16-25 with a wide range of learning disabilities, as well as Easter & Summer holiday schemes based within

the community. Parents pay a contribution towards the costs of the service. 01273 295192

Sussex Central YMCA/Extratime Youth holiday Scheme

Provides holiday schemes for young people with disabilities aged 11-19 during Easter, summer and half-term holidays, based at youth centres in Hove and Whitehawk. A variety of activities is available, both at the youth centres and out and about in the community. Parents pay a contribution towards the costs of the service. <http://www.extratimebrighton.org.uk/brighton-hove-2018-february-youth-schemes>
01273 420580

Extratime

Provides inclusive after school and Easter & Summer holiday playschemes for children aged 5-16. Parents pay a contribution towards the costs of the service. <http://www.extratimebrighton.org.uk/after-school-clubs> 01273 420580

Amaze Compass Card

Amaze runs Brighton & Hove's register of children with disabilities, The Compass, which helps us to plan services. Registration is voluntary, and anyone registering will receive a Compass Card. This provides discounts and special offers for many leisure activities across the city, e.g. swimming, cinema, bowling, etc. Additionally those registering with the Compass will receive information about new developments and other news via Amaze. <http://amazebrighton.org.uk/> 01273 772289

9. Short Break Activities Requiring an Assessment

All of these services require a referral from a social worker. If you would like to be assessed for these services you should contact the social work team at Seaside view Child Development Centre on 01273 265825 or, if you are already involved with a health or social care professional, they can make a referral on your behalf.

Outreach

Experienced workers provide individual support to children with disabilities, enabling them to access social and leisure activities within the community.

Barnardos Link Plus

Offers family-based short breaks with a link family, ranging from a few hours' daycare to overnight or weekend breaks. <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/fosteringandadoption/fostering/brightonandhovelink.htm>

Barnardos Home Support Sitting Service

Provides care in the child's home or in the community. 01273 295 179

Barnardos Contract Carers

Provides overnight care to children and young people with autism and/or challenging behaviour. 01273 295 179

Crossroads

Provides a home sitting service for children and young people with disabilities. <http://www.esbhcrossroads.org.uk/services/>

Tudor House

This is a residential home offering short breaks for children and young people who have a severe learning disability and who may also have physical disabilities. This facility is best suited to young people aged 10-18.

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/All%20about%20Tudor%20House%20update%202016.pdf>

Drove Road

This is a residential home offering short breaks and full-time placements for children and young people who have a severe learning disability. Again, this facility is best suited to young people aged 10-18.

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/Drove%20Road%20Internet%20info%20update%2015.06.16.pdf>

The Carers' card

The Carers' Card offers discounts on a range of activities across the city to help carers look after their own health and wellbeing.

<http://www.compasscard.org.uk/about-the-compass/what-is-the-compass-card/>

All Terrain Beach wheelchairs

Two all-terrain wheelchairs are available for use on our beaches. They can be booked in advance and are free to use with a refundable deposit.

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/leisure-and-libraries/seafront/beach-accessibility-all>

Forest View Holiday Lodge

A fully accessible static caravan in the New Forest is available to use at a much discounted rate. The caravan provides an affordable, suitable holiday venue for families and children with special or additional needs.

https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/Forest_View.pdf

Personal Budgets and Direct Payments

With the current personalisation agenda and the right introduced under the Children and Families Act 2014 for families to request a personal budget, we have implemented the use of a RAS and the offer of Personal Budgets as mentioned in section 6. This will allow a move away from direct service provision and the allocation of an indicative budget for individual families in order for them to plan their own support needs, and give them more flexibility and control in meeting the needs of their child as set out in their EHC plan, for those families who would prefer this. Support is available to families to enable them to manage these budgets. A Direct Payment gives an alternative means of providing families with short breaks as it provides families with money 'in lieu' of direct services. This means a family can buy their own short breaks, for example by employing their own home sitter. Some families may have a mixture of Direct Payments and services, some will have just Direct Payments and some will access services only.

Examples of how Personal Budgets have been used to support service users include:

- The parents of an 18 year-old employ a small team of consistent Personal Assistants to support him to regularly go out in the community, and to provide regular overnight respite. He stays overnight in PA's home for one weekend a month and PAs also come and stay with him overnight in his home for 1 -2 weeks per year to enable his parents to go on holiday. The service user's behaviours are too complex for his needs to be met in the Council's residential settings due to regular changes in staff and peer group or a Shared Lives respite placement;
- A mother of an 18 year old employs Personal Assistants to support her daughter to go out in the community and in the home including overnight care. This enables the mother to work flexible hours. The Personal Budget funds regular overnight stays in the Personal Assistant's home, and to provide care in the service user's home on occasions the mother has to be away overnight for work; and
- The parent of a 32 year-old service user who does not cope well with changing environments and having other people around him, use his Personal Budget to employ carers who have already known him for several years as Personal Assistants. This allows consistency of care for him and his family, through the continuation of established respite arrangements and allows for respite to be provided to the service user in the home.

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/social-care/paying-care/personal-budgets>

10. Transition Planning

Transition planning is about how we work with disabled young people and their families to plan for their needs as they reach 18 years of age and become adults. Our aim is to put the needs of the young person at the centre of all planning and to have them directly involved and consulted. We have a transition team who oversees the process, providing information, options and support.

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/childrens-services/transition-support-young-people-complex-ongoing>

11. Future Developments

The future provision of short breaks has to be seen in the context of a significant reduction in funding from central government and the consequent financial challenges that this presents for local authorities in spending available resources as efficiently and effectively as possible. In order to manage the reduction in funding, it has been necessary to put a savings plan in place whilst, simultaneously, the demand for our short breaks services continues to outstrip supply.

In order to meet these objectives, the new special school hubs being created in the City will integrate provision for children with disabilities and complex, severe and profound special educational needs. These hubs will be able to provide coordinated support and services for pupils and their families in a more effective way than is currently possible. They will be to offer extended school days and make the best use of their buildings and facilities over weekends and during school holidays, so that short breaks services are maximised. This will further develop the offer of support and respite we are able to offer at the moment and builds on the continued development of our services over the past few years including the 2010 Commissioning Review in line with the views and feedback of service users and their families.

Brighton and Hove City Council remains committed to providing high quality short breaks services that are responsive to the needs of our SEND population locally and will continue to work with children, young people and their families to achieve this.

Our Short Breaks Statement will be revised and updated to reflect these changes as the detail of them is developed.

12. Universal Services and Inclusion

Universal services, for example after school activities, youth clubs and leisure activities are really important in ensuring that children and young people with disabilities have fun and enjoy themselves with friends in just the same way as everyone else.

We will continue to work with mainstream youth and leisure services to promote and improve inclusion, including training for staff to develop their capacity and confidence in meeting the additional needs of children & young people with disabilities.

Wherever possible we try to help disabled children access mainstream inclusive services, whilst acknowledging that some need specialist services.

13. Measuring Impact

We want to ensure that all the short breaks we offer make a positive difference to our young people. We will continue to measure the satisfaction of service users and their parents with our short break services; and the views of staff and their confidence in meeting the needs of children having a short break.

We will publicise our results and any changes we make via Amaze and the PaCC.

14. Choice

Families will be involved in decisions about short breaks support packages that are designed to meet their needs. They will also be offered the opportunity to have a Direct Payment or Personal Budget in place of a direct service and will be offered a package of support to ensure they can confidently use and benefit from this payment.

Whilst many families prefer the flexibility that a direct payments package provides, we are aware of the difficulties faced by many families in recruiting personal assistants. We are currently exploring ways of supporting families to find suitable PAs and will be producing a direct payments leaflet with further advice on this matter.

All families can request an assessment or re-assessment at any time.

Our aim remains to provide families with the best possible support at the right time and to use the expert knowledge of parent carers to help us develop and improve our services.

Further information on services for disabled children and young people in Brighton & Hove is available at the following websites:

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/local-offer

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/disabledchildren

www.amazebrighton.org.uk

15. **Final Comments**

We will continue to utilise the expert knowledge of children and young people, their parents and carers. We aim to provide you with the best possible support for your family and aspire to continuing to improve the lives of disabled children and their families in Brighton and Hove.