

Support for the whole family

For carers of disabled children and young people

Bridgend Short Breaks Statement



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Why is a statement required?

There is now a duty for local authorities to provide a range of short breaks for disabled children under the 'Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children (Wales) Regulations 2012', which came into force on 28 June 2012. These regulations require each local authority to produce a short breaks service statement which sets out details of:

- the range of services the local authority provides;
- any eligibility criteria for the assessment of services; and
- how the services are designed to meet the needs of carers in its area.

This short breaks statement is for families living in Bridgend who have a disabled child aged 0-18.

It sets out our vision for short break services for families living in Bridgend and simply states who can access short break services and how. We may need to assess your child and family to ensure that we provide the right level of support and short break services.

In Bridgend we aim to:

- ensure that families of disabled children have the support they need to live 'ordinary lives' as a matter of course;
- recognise that all children and young people are unique and may require different levels of support/different types of short breaks depending on their needs and circumstances;
- acknowledge that needs may change and services need to be reviewed to reflect this;
- work in partnership with disabled children, their families and key stakeholders to develop short break services.

What do we mean by disabled?

Within Section 17 (11) of The Children Act, 1989 'disabled' is defined as:

'a child is disabled, if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially or permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed.'

This language is now seen as outdated and the more recent Equality Act 2010 says:

'a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities.'

What do we mean by 'carer'?

A 'carer' means a parent who is providing care for a disabled child, or a person who is not the child's parent but has parental responsibility for the child.

What is a short break?

'Short breaks' were previously referred to as 'respite care' but it now covers a wider definition of care and should be available on a planned and regular basis, as well as on an emergency basis.

The regulations define a short break as:

- daytime care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere;
- overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere;
- educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes; or
- services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.

Short breaks provide support for carers of disabled children so that families can spend time together with or without their disabled child doing ordinary family things. The breaks are also about disabled children and young people spending time away from their families to have fun, try new activities and develop friendships.

Short breaks can:

- include day, evening, overnight, weekend or holiday activities;
- be from a few hours to a few days;
- take place in a child or young person's own home, the home of an approved carer, or a residential or community setting i.e. after school club or specialist holiday playscheme.

The level of short breaks support required will be different from child to child. An assessment is required to determine both eligibility and the type of support most appropriate.

Current service delivery

In Bridgend we currently provide a range of short breaks to disabled children and young people. These have been developed as a result of what disabled young people and their families have told us. We understand that each family is unique and that the needs of families change.

Meeting the needs of carers

In Bridgend we recognise that the views and feedback we receive from disabled children, young people and their parents/carers are critical when planning and developing our services. The themes which continue to emerge from consultation and participation work - on a national and local level - are as follows:

- fun and positive opportunities for disabled children;
- a choice of short break activities;
- know that disabled children's needs will be met by appropriately trained staff;
- provide opportunities for disabled children to develop friendships and socialise;
- provide flexible services to meet changing family needs;
- fun time as a family together;
- opportunities to take part in inclusive activities with non-disabled children;
- prevent family crisis through the provision of timely support to meet individual family needs; and
- to be clear and transparent with regard to the decision making process.

We monitor and review all our short breaks services through a variety of mechanisms, and ensure that the feedback we receive from disabled children, young people and their carers, as well as service providers and commissioners of the services, influences how we continue to provide and develop our services. Some examples of these mechanisms are as follows:

- reviews of children's individual care plans;
- annual inspections of our regulated services by CSSIW (The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales);
- annual reviews of short break foster carers;
- council internal inspection, auditing and scrutiny processes;
- monitoring and reviewing of contracts and service level agreements.

In Bridgend we have a multi agency Disabled Children and Young People Strategy group which oversees the provision and development of services for disabled children, young people and their families, including short break services. Parents also actively participate in this group.

Who can access short breaks?

Children and young people are eligible for short breaks if they 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 may include:

- physical or mental impairment;
- sensory impairment;
- autistic spectrum disorder;
- children who may have challenging behaviour as a result of their learning disability;
- children who have complex healthcare needs and who may have palliative, life limiting or a life-threatening condition (ref. Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Equality Act 2010).

The range of short breaks available covers: universal, targeted, and specialist provision. Whilst most targeted/specialist provisions will require an assessment and referral from a professional, some services e.g. Y Bont, Ty Hafan and complex needs playscheme will accept self-referrals from families. The service will then decide whether it's appropriate to provide a short break service.

Access to targeted/specialist provisions will require an assessment via the Disabled Children's team; the needs of the child/young person must meet the eligibility criteria of the team.

Some services will be able to offer a range of short breaks provision appropriate to the level of need e.g. Y Bont.

Eligibility criteria

Why do we need one?

We want all carers of disabled children to have the support and services they need to lead fulfilling lives, and we know that in order to achieve this we have to be clear about how services are provided and accessed.

The basic needs of disabled children are no different to those of any other child.

Universal services e.g. schools, nurseries, playgroups, leisure centres and healthcare, all have a role in meeting the needs of disabled children; children who have additional needs or face additional barriers which inhibit and prevent their inclusion in society.

However, some disabled children and their carers require support which is more specialist than that which can be provided by universal services. Therefore, eligibility criteria is necessary to ensure that these services are prioritised for those children with the highest levels of need.

Criteria for an assessment by the Disabled Children's team

The Disabled Children's team works in partnership with families, education and other agencies such as health and the voluntary sector to ensure that the best use is made of all local and available resources. [Click here for more information.](#)

The Disabled Children's team will assess a child/young person to check whether they are eligible to access the short breaks service.

Children/young people will be eligible for an assessment if they have:

- substantial/severe learning disabilities;
- significant physical disability;
- substantial sensory impairment;
- moderate learning disabilities with additional impairments;
- diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder, where functioning in daily life is substantially affected;
- long term or life limiting illness.

Children and young people **NOT** eligible for an assessment by the Disabled Children's team are those who have:

- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in the absence of any additional impairments;
- Behavioural difficulties including psychiatric disorders in the absence of other disabilities.

If a child or young person doesn't meet the eligibility criteria for an assessment, information and advice will be provided to help them access universal and community based support.

Examples of short break services in Bridgend

Disabled Children's team leaflet

Table 1 – Universal, targeted and specialist provision

Level of support	Assessment type/ access to services	Examples of services
Universal / preventative / community based	No assessment required Self-referral: services can be contacted directly	Cubs Brownies Cadets After school clubs Leisure clubs Y Bont

Targeted	Initial assessment required Referral to services made by a professional	Specialist holiday playschemes Group based day care Individual day care e.g. Y Bont
Specialist/complex	Initial or core assessment via the Disabled Children's team and/or specialist assessments from health may be required Referral to services made by a professional	Direct Payments Family based short breaks - Family Link Scheme Overnight stays in residential units - Bakers Way Short break provision for disabled children with complex health care needs – Bakers Way, complex needs playscheme, community nursing team respite care, Ty Hafan.

Table 2 - Examples of short break services in Bridgend

Universal	Targeted	Specialist/Complex
Sport and leisure facilities	Discovery Days	Y Bont Day care Saturday club Playscheme After school club
Child minders	Y Bont Saturday club Playscheme After school club	Family Link Short Break Scheme
Youth clubs	Trinity Care and Support	Bakers Way Residential Short Breaks Home
Holiday playschemes	Héronsbridge after school club	Direct Payments
After school clubs	Specialist youth clubs	Complex needs playscheme
Nurseries		Trinity Care and Support
Cubs/Brownies		Community nursing team
Cadets		Ty Hafan (voluntary hospice provision) for children with complex/palliative needs
Y Bont (early intervention)		

More detailed examples of short break services in Bridgend

<p>Family Link</p>	<p>Provides a range of short break stays (including overnight) in the homes of approved short break foster carers. An assessment is required via the Disabled Children's team.</p> <p>Service is for children aged 0-18 years.</p>
<p>Bakers Way Residential Short Breaks Home</p> <p>Bakers Way leaflet - parents</p> <p>Bakers Way leaflet - disabled children and young people</p>	<p>A five bedded home which has been especially adapted to provide short break stays (including overnight) for children with a range of disabilities including those with more complex medical needs.</p> <p>An assessment is required via the Disabled Children's team.</p> <p>Service is for children aged 0-18 years.</p>
<p>Complex needs playscheme</p>	<p>Specialist therapeutic playscheme for children aged 8-18 with complex health needs and disabilities.</p> <p>Operates during Easter and Summer holidays and is based within Heronsbridge School.</p> <p>Referrals can be made by Disabled Children's team or education. However, referrals from other professionals and self-referrals by parents/carers are also considered.</p>
<p>Direct Payments</p>	<p>Parents of disabled children can use Direct Payments to employ a personal assistant in order to provide a short break.</p> <p>This is a very flexible arrangement that parents manage directly.</p> <p>An assessment is required via the Disabled Children's team.</p>
<p>Discovery Days</p>	<p>Discovery Days and Discovery Teens runs during Easter and Summer holidays for disabled children and young people aged 8-19 years (inclusive).</p> <p>Provides social, play and leisure activities.</p> <p>Supported by a team of trained and experienced staff.</p> <p>Provides opportunities for children and young people to spend time with their friends and peers outside of a structured school environment.</p>

How shorts breaks can improve outcomes

Child	Carer (parent/guardian)
Be with friends or make new ones	Reduce the stress carers often experience in their caring role
Develop and learn through play and fun activities	Allow parents to spend quality time with non disabled siblings, knowing their disabled child is safely cared for and having fun
Develop their social communication and independence skills	A short break from caring – allowing ‘you’ time
Develop self-confidence and sense of achievement through extra curricular activities offered	Feel confident that your child is having a positive experience
Learn new interests and try out new creative activities	You are helped to prepare your child for the transition to adulthood
Support them to make a successful transition to adulthood	Form positive relationships with short break carers and providers
Children with very complex health needs and/or life limiting conditions will be offered opportunities for short breaks which are appropriate for their individual needs	Spend time together as a family
Feel included – and part of a group, team or the local community	You have the opportunity to request an extended short break should a family emergency arise
Have more choices – so they can take part in the activities they want to	Help you to encourage your child’s independence and confidence

Measuring the impact of short break services

We will ensure that our short break services focus on improving life opportunities and outcomes for disabled children and their families through continuing to develop our consultation and participation processes with disabled children, young people and their families. We know that the views of families and disabled children are essential to support positive outcomes.

Not all disabled children and their families will need the same level of support; some will need more than others because of the nature of their child’s disability and their individual circumstances.

We are committed to working with short break providers to ensure short break services make a positive difference to disabled young people in Bridgend. All short break providers are required to meet safeguarding and quality standards and will continue to be monitored on their performance.

We will continue to monitor and review the views of disabled children, parents, commissioners and providers so that everybody feels involved and included. This will assist us with developing a cycle of continual improvement.

Parents and carers – their views



“He used to be so shy and would not leave his parents; he now goes out with confidence once a fortnight with his PA. This has also allowed the family to spend time with their other child.”

Carer talking about a young person whose life has changed through the provision of Direct Payments

“This provision prevented a family breakup and enabled the parents to spend time with the other siblings.”

Carer talking about Bakers Way

“The Family Link Scheme is brilliant and has benefited my daughter enormously. I have a very good relationship with the Family Link carer, who is very helpful and supportive. I know my daughter is happy and safe in her care and so I’m able to have a break and completely relax.”

Parent talking about the Family Link Scheme

“Direct payments has allowed her to access activities which she thoroughly enjoys - her mother thought she would never be able to cope due to change of environment.”

Carer talking about the benefits of Direct Payments for a young person and her mother



Children – their views



“This has allowed mum and dad to spend valuable time with my younger brother. They didn’t realise how much he was missing out before.”

Young person talking about Direct Payments

“The Family Link Scheme is good because my carer takes me out shopping and to activity centres which I really enjoy. We go for dinner and visit her family. I have a nice relationship with my carer, I really like her. She’s my friend.”

Young person talking about her Family Link carer



How and when will this statement be reviewed?

A task group will be established which involves all key stakeholders in order to develop the next statement. We would like to improve the participation of parents and carers in discussions on whether we have got the right services, support and information for them.

This Short Breaks Service Statement will be reviewed on an annual basis.



Contacts

If you have any questions or wish to discuss the statement further then contact:

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Service Development, Disability and Early
Intervention

Tel: 01656 642459
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If you wish to request an assessment or need a specialist service please contact the Disabled Children's team

Tel: 01656 815442
Email: disabledchildrensteamduty@bridgend.gov.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language please contact the marketing team on (01656) 643499 or email jenny.owen@bridgend.gov.uk.