



Family Link Scheme

Cynllun Cyswilt Teulu



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

How the Short Breaks Scheme works

You may have waited some time to be linked with a family or carer who can offer short term-breaks to your child. This is because we do not have enough family link carers to look after children and young people with disabilities and also because we try to link you up with carers who can meet your child's individual needs.

Some carers like to look after teenagers; others like to look after younger children. Some carers may have particular experience in caring for certain disabilities eg. Cerebral Palsy or Downs Syndrome. We therefore try to match you and your child as closely to what the carer can offer.

Introductions

When we think we have found a carer for your child we will notify your child's social worker. We then arrange a convenient date for you and your child to meet either at your or the carers home and have a chat over a cup of tea.

You can then ask each other questions and see whether you would like to progress the possible link further.

Your child's social worker or the family link scheme social worker will be able to help with introductions.

Progressing the Link Placement

After this initial meeting with the carer if you and the carer are happy to go ahead, we suggest that you and the carer arrange another time for your child to visit them. Several short visits (eg 2 hours or so) are a good way to start as it takes time for you all to get to know each other.

Formalising the Link Placement

Following several successful introduction visits and when agreement has been made to proceed with the link placement, the Family Link Scheme social worker will arrange for a Link Placement Agreement meeting to take place.

Within this meeting the arrangements for the link placement will be negotiated and agreed between you, the child's parents, your child if possible and the link carer.

This will be formalised and documented within a Link Placement Agreement between you and the carers.

Link Placement Reviews



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After 3 months, the link placement scheme social worker will arrange a meeting between yourselves and the carer(s) to review the family link plan to see how it is working out. The plan will be reviewed at 6 monthly intervals thereafter.

If you have any concerns at any time, please contact your child's social worker or family link scheme social worker.

Overnight Stays

When everybody (including your child) feels ready to try an overnight stay, we arrange a meeting with you, your child's social worker and/or the link scheme social worker and the carers.

We then try to work out with you how often the visit will take place and also to plan the first overnight stay.

After the first overnight stay, your child's social worker will contact you to discuss how the overnight stay went and to check all is well. If everyone is happy, further overnight stays can take place building up to a weekend or possibly longer in the school holidays.

These will need to be agreed and planned with your child's social worker, the Short Breaks Scheme and the Link Carers.

The Bridgend Family Link Scheme

The Bridgend Family Link Scheme is an active member of Shared Care Cymru which is part of Shared Care Network, the national organisation which promotes family-based short breaks for disabled children and young people in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The scheme can be contacted as follows:

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