

Appendix 1- Wirral Council Short Breaks Statement

October 2011

1.0 Purpose of Short Breaks Statement

1.1 Section 25 of the Children and Young Person's Act requires local authorities to provide short breaks for families with disabled children. This statement details the range of services available, the eligibility criteria and how families can access the services.

2.0 Definition of Short Breaks

2.1 Short breaks provide opportunities for disabled children and young people to spend time away from their primary carers. These include day, evening, overnight or weekend activities and take place in the child's own home, the home of an approved carer, a residential or community setting.

2.2 Short breaks can also be activities offering a fun based experience for the family as a whole. Parents/carers can be present at these activities but there will be qualified and experienced deliverers leading the session to offer a break to them as primary carer. These activities offer a positive leisure experience for the whole family to access.

3.0 Statement of Short Breaks Services

3.1 National evidence identified the needs for more Short Breaks for carers of Disabled Children. The implementation of Aiming High for Disabled Children (2009-2011) and then the 'Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children' regulations (1st April 2011) have provided local authorities with a framework to follow to ensure appropriate services were available.

3.2 The vision for Wirral is to ensure there is the appropriate volume, choice, range and quality of short breaks to meet the needs of families of disabled children and young people.

3.3 Consultation with families highlighted the need for easier access to short breaks and that often families do not require a social worker to access short breaks.

3.4 Based on this there are 2 mechanisms for accessing short break services:

- (i) **Direct Access** which you can access by
 - Contacting the provider directly. Each service has clear eligibility and access policy.
 - Contacting the Short Break Services team to request information on appropriate short breaks. Individual

searches can be provided.

(ii) Through a **Children's Social Care Assessment** requested via the Central Advice and Duty Team (CADT). According to your child's level of need the assessment would be completed by a locality social worker or a social worker from the Children with Disabilities Team. This assessment would then determine what short break services each child is eligible for.

Below is a table summarising examples of short breaks services to be accessed through the two different mechanisms:

<u>Direct Access</u>	<u>Children's Social Care Assessment</u>
Specialist Playschemes	Specialist Playschemes
Universal Playschemes	Direct payments
Sports and Leisure clubs	Residential provision
Creative Workshops	Autistic Spectrum Condition Family Support
Sitting Service	Personal Budget
Leisure Link Programme	

These 2 processes are not exclusive to each other. Families eligible for services through social care assessment can still access services through the Direct Access.

3.5 Wirral Council will produce a Short Breaks directory which will be reviewed annually. It will detail all short break services available for Children with Disabilities with relevant information such as:

- Days and Times
- Venue and accessibility details
- Who the service is most appropriate for
- How to access it
- Cost
- Contact details

3.6 To ensure the services improve outcomes for local disabled children, young people and their families, thorough monitoring and evaluation will be carried out. This will be completed by all providers of services and will include:

- a) Number of hours of delivery of short breaks
- b) Number of families accessing the service's short breaks including details of age, disability and ethnicity.
- c) Outcomes for families from having the short break services.

3.7 To ensure accessibility to universal services for disabled children continues to improve, the local authority will have a post of Inclusion Development officer, who will lead on programmes of work with providers aiming to remove barriers so more children with disabilities access the services.

3.8 A process is in place to request support for families where transport is not available and is a barrier to accessing short breaks.

3.9 Wirral will provide mechanisms to ensure stakeholders (children and young people and parents/ carers) are involved with service design and review. Short breaks services which are financially supported, will be required to submit feedback from families a minimum of twice a year.

3.10 The role of Wirral Family Forum will be:

- To understand this statement and to inform other parent/carers about it.
- Be involved with any consultation to review the statement.
- To provide panel members for any commissioning processes to develop short break services.
- To develop a kitemark process to recommend services to other families.

4.0 Charging Policy

Some activities and services will incur a cost, which you would expect to pay if the child was not disabled. Families will be expected to pay such a cost. The additional support a disabled child may need to be included should not be an extra cost to the family.

5.0 Consultation

This statement was prepared by, Project Manager for Short Break Services and Service Manager for Children with Disabilities Team.

It has been consulted with Wirral Family Forum.

It has been approved by the Executive Group consisting on Head of Branch for Social Care, representatives from NHS Wirral and parent/carers.

For more Information

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Short Breaks Services Information- 0151 606 6865 or janepower@wirral.gov.uk

Central Advise and Duty Team- 0151 606 2006 or email cadt@wirral.gov.uk

Websites:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/childrens-services/childrens-social-care/children-and-family-care/aiming-high-disabled-children>

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