

Short Breaks Services Statement

For Parents and Carers of
Children and Young People
with Special Educational Needs
and Disabilities and their Families
In the London Borough of Bromley

This Statement has been produced by the Children's Disability Service
in co-production with Bromley Parent Carer Forum and Your Voice in Health and Social Care.
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<http://www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Caring for children and young people with complex needs and disabilities can be extremely challenging for parents and carers. The provision of Short Breaks can be a vital source of support. A Short Break gives parents and carers a valuable break from caring and it also gives children and young people with disabilities the chance to have fun, make friends, engage in rewarding leisure time and have positive lived experiences and better outcomes. With these services the council and its partners aim to provide an equity of access to social and recreational activities so that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are not disadvantaged in relation to their neurotypical peers. The success of this aim will be measured against Bromley's Outcome Framework.

As well as providing meaningful, fulfilling activities for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and respite for parents and carers, Short Breaks play a vital role in family cohesion and support. Short Breaks are important as a preventative service, without which there is a greater risk of family breakdown and an increased number of children and young people with SEND are more likely to be subject to care orders when families are unable to continue to fulfil their caring responsibilities due to the physical, mental and emotional strain of the role.

Children and young people with Disabilities 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 desired 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 1st 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

1.1 What is this Statement for?

This Statement sets out how the Council and our partners at South East London ICB (Integrated Care Board) provide Short Breaks for disabled children and young people in Bromley. It describes the range of Short Breaks we intend to provide and how they are arranged to meet the needs of families and the criteria for accessing these services.

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 Children, Young People and Parent SEND Lead, the Group Manager for the Children with Disabilities Service, the Head of Service: 0-25 Service for Children and Young People with Disabilities and the Integrated Strategic Commissioner for SEND, working in partnership with Your Voice in Health and Social Care.

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

2. SHORT BREAKS

2.1 What are Short Breaks?

Short Breaks can provide opportunities for children and young people with disabilities 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 children and young people with disabilities to access a break 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 information

Universal Services

Description:	Activities available to ALL CYP in Bromley whether they are disabled or not
Current examples:	After school and holiday clubs. Guiding and Scouting Organisations. Leisure Centres, Children and Family Centres
How to access:	All CYP with disabilities Services should have access to these services but may need reasonable adjustments to be made to facilitate their inclusion in some activities
Assessment needed?:	No - unless the CYP needs additional support to access services

Targeted Universal Services

Description:	Activities specifically suitable for disabled CYP
Current examples:	CASPA, Family Link. Maypole Project, Bromley Mencap, BCFF and SEND HAF Schemes
How to access:	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
Assessment needed?:	No - unless the CYP needs additional support to access services

Specialist Services

Description:	Activities for disabled CYP with the most complex needs who are unable to access Universal or Targeted Provision
Current examples:	Refer to section 2.3
How to access:	Due to their specialist nature, there is an assessment process managed by the Children's Disability Team to access these services
Assessment needed?:	Yes

2.3 Different Types of Specialist Short Breaks in Bromley

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

Direct Payments

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.

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.

Payments are made monthly as agreed with the family. Support is available to assist families to set up/arrange their service and to manage these payments.

For further information about Direct Payments in Bromley visit -

www.bromley.gov.uk/directpayments

Saturday and Holiday Schemes

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.

Current providers include [Riverside School](#), [Bromley Children and Families Forum](#), [Family Link](#) and [Sport Works](#).

Childminding Short Breaks

Bromley Mencap works with approved childminders in Bromley.

They offer trained and registered childminders for children and young people with learning disabilities and additional needs from birth up to 25 years of age.

Bromley Mencap Enhanced childminders can support children and young people with more severe and complex needs on a one-to-one basis.

Buddying (11 years +)

Bromley Mencap Buddying is a scheme available for young people aged 11 to 25 years old. Young people are matched with trained volunteers to provide Short Break opportunities in the community. This scheme is not appropriate for young people with complex needs or challenging behaviour.

Community Support Workers

Bromley Mencap provides a team of Community Support Workers who can be available throughout the week.

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.

Learn more at:

[Short Breaks Service Flyer \(bromleymencap.org.uk\)](http://bromleymencap.org.uk)

2.4 Overnight Short Breaks

Hollybank Short Break Residential Centre

Hollybank provides Short Breaks to children and young people, aged 5 to 18 with disabilities, complex health care needs, autism and/or challenging behaviour. Children and Young People must have a need for overnight care. On rare occasions in order to aid transition to adult services some young people aged over 18 may be accommodated on a time-limited basis.

Learn more at: [Hollybank - specialist short break service - Bromley Healthcare](#)

Family-based Overnight Short Breaks

Family Based Overnight Short Breaks are provided by an approved foster carer in the foster carer's home.

Overnight Support in the Home

We are able to provide overnight support from care agencies in children and young people's family home.

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 Integrated Strategic Commissioner 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 Children, Young People and Parent SEND Lead facilitates the tendering and evaluation of Short Break Services by identifying representatives from Your Voice in Health and Social Care and the Bromley Parent Carer Forum or other parent/carers to participate in Short Breaks commissioning activities.

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 children and young people with disabilities 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
 - Autism Spectrum Conditions (including behaviours that challenge)
 - Health Issues
 - Hearing and visual difficulties
 - Communication and interaction differences
- c) Your child or young person has tried to access universal (local/community) services without success as a result of barriers related to their disability.
- 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.

Additionally some of these families may be able to benefit from the [Holiday Activities and Food programme](#) which is expected to run until 2025.

3.2 Assessment Process

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

This 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 children and young people with disabilities into Social Services.

The Short Breaks Online Assessment considers the needs of the 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 individual needs in the areas of: learning disability; physical disability; autism spectrum conditions (including behaviours that challenge); health and medical needs; hearing and visual difficulty; and communication and interaction differences. There will be consideration how the child or young person's needs 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. The purpose of the online assessment is to give parents an indication of whether they would be eligible.

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. 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:

[Applying for a short break \(children and young people\) - Short breaks for children and young people with SEND \(0-18 years\) \(bromley.gov.uk\)](#)

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@bromleymencap.org or calling (020) 8466 0790.

5. SAFEGUARDING AND SHORT BREAKS

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

The Children with Disabilities Team 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 child or young person with a disability, please do not complete the online referral. Referrals should instead be made through the Bromley Children and Families Hub (C&F Hub) via 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
- **Group Manager, Children's Disability Team:**
Jacqueline Kazemian – jaqueline.kazemian@bromley.gov.uk
- **Specialist Information Officer:**
Pelin Ahmet - pelin.ahmet@bromley.gov.uk
- **Children, Young People and Parent SEND Lead:**
Kay Moore - kay.moore2@bromley.gov.uk
- www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer

6.2 Local Websites

For more on the Bromley Local Offer :-

www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer

www.bromley.gov.uk/ShortBreaks

www.bromley.gov.uk/mymaxcard

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

Bromley Parent Engagement SEND Service (BPESS)

This is the local authority commissioned [parent engagement service](#) run by [Your Voice in Health in Social Care](#) (YVHSC) which seeks to engage with all parents and carers of children and young people with SEND in Bromley. They hold engagement events and undertake surveys to ensure that key stakeholder voices are heard and that participation and coproduction is part of all service planning, service delivery and service review.

6.3 National Websites

- 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.cdc.org.uk
The Council for Disabled Children are the Government's Strategic Delivery Partner

7. 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.

7.1 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.

7.2 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

7.3 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.

8. APPENDIX 2 THE LOCAL OFFER

8.1 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

8.2 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

8.3 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

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

www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer

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