

# Short Breaks Statement

**December 2021**

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# 1. Introduction

This Short Breaks Statement is about the offer of Short Breaks Statement available for children with disabilities and their families in Hammersmith and Fulham. It sets out how the services are organised, and routes to access them. This Short Breaks Statement is published as a requirement of the Children and Families act 2014.

## 2. How the H&F Short Breaks Offer, and statement was developed

In 2017 a detailed audit of local services was completed. This review engaged young people, parents and carers to get feedback about what about short breaks was working well and what needed improving and where there were gaps. The findings of that review led to arrangements for short breaks being co-produced with parents and carers. The offer and this Short Breaks Statement will continue to be reviewed and updated with parents, carers and young people.

## 3. What is a Short Break and why are they provided?

Short breaks might include attending group activities after school, at weekends or in the holidays, it might be individual support in the community with a carer or it could be funds to arrange your own support. The sort of break and the level of support depends on the needs of individuals. These breaks can offer parents/ carers and siblings time away from caring.

The council has to provide short breaks where an assessment identifies they are necessary for the child and family. The Children Act 1989 requires Local Authorities to assess Children's needs and the Chronically sick and disabled persons act 1970 requires that we provide short breaks to meet these needs. The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations came into force on 1 April 2011, requiring each Local Authority to provide 'so far as is reasonably practicable, a range of services designed to meet the needs of families with disabled children'.

The Children and Families Act 2014 also places a duty on the Council to produce a 'Local Offer' providing information relating to the provision of short breaks and to publish a Short Breaks Statement on the Local Offer. ([www.lbhf.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/localoffer))

## 4. Who are Short Breaks for?

These breaks are for children with disabilities. To be eligible for Short Breaks children need to:

- be under 18 years old
- be resident in H&F
- have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do everyday activities.

The most appropriate route to access support, including short breaks can be identified with reference to the Table of abilities and needs ([Pages 12-14](#)).

## 5. Assessment options

Children's services have a range of different ways to meet the needs of families. Children will be allocated a worker from the most appropriate team, based on their needs if a family wish or need an assessment to be completed.

## **6. Who completes the assessment?**

Other than a universal or core service offer ([see page 6](#)), all other support will be based on an individual assessment of the child's needs. This might be a statutory child-in-need assessment completed by a social worker, or a non-child-in-need assessment completed by another social care professional.

All assessments are holistic, which means they will include feedback from the family and any services involved with them. All assessments are individual, and person centred.

## **7. Assessment tools and process**

In completing the assessment, the allocated worker speaks with the child, family, and other professionals, as appropriate, to gather information. The assessment reflects all their views. The worker then discusses options for support with the family and shares with them the proposed package of support. The completed assessment and proposed planned support are submitted to the team manager and if agreed by the family and manager it is then submitted for ratifying to the funding panel. If the family and allocated worker do not agree, discussions will continue with involvement of the team manager. Some assessments may be submitted to panel reflecting both positions for the panel to consider. Terms of reference and procedures for panels are available on request.

## **8. Reviews**

The period for review of a child's assessment and support or care plans will be set by the team manager or panel. For complicated or new packages of support this review could be after a few weeks or months. For stable packages this could be 12 or 24 months. The proposed package and review period will be discussed with the family prior to seeking authorisation. Any review period must consider key transition points e.g., changing schools, preparation for adulthood or life events such as moving home.

## 9. The Short Breaks Offer

There are a range of services to meet the needs of disabled children and young people, and their families. These include stay and play sessions, youth clubs, holiday schemes, weekend activities as well as parental advice, information, support and sign posting. Some of the activities are universal others are specialist.

Some short breaks, such as holiday schemes and stay and play sessions at The Stephen Wiltshire Centre are delivered directly by the council and others are commissioned or purchased from trusted partners including Action on Disability, Learning Through Play, The Queensmill Trust and the Play Association Hammersmith and Fulham (PAHF). Let Me Play offer a wide range of universal options as do our local children's centres. We also work closely with local care agencies. Direct Payments are also available, these are where families are given money to organise their own support instead of a direct service.

The offer of support will vary subject to age, level of need of the child and their family. Any offer will be based on need and the offer will be subject to regular review which could lead to changes in the offer. This review would be through conversation between the family, children's lead professional (i.e., family support worker, short breaks worker or social worker), the short breaks provider/s and any other relevant people in the child's network.

## 10. The Local Offer

There are four levels of support available for children and families in H&F. The Universal, Core, Targeted and Bespoke offers. The Universal level is open to all children. Core, Targeted, and Bespoke levels are designed to meet the specific needs of children and young people with disabilities and their families.

## 11. Universal services, information and support

Not all children with disabilities are eligible, need or want specialist social care services or support. Information about local services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability Services (SEND) and their families can be found on the SEND Local Offer: [www.lbhf.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/localoffer).

Families can also access support through universal services or family centres directly.

Our early help service 'Family Support' can advise and provide information and support with a wide range of issues, including inclusive services locally and information about family centres. [Family support service](#)

There is a universal childcare offer of 15 hours per week for 3 and 4 year olds and up to 30 hours per week for some families. Depending on circumstances parents may incur top-up costs. There is also free learning for 2-year old for eligible groups.

[Help with childcare costs](#)

## 12. The core Short Breaks offer

As well as the universal support available, children and young people who have higher needs are likely to benefit from the core Short Breaks offer. Available breaks will depend on the age of the child. To access this support, contact The Stephen Wilshire Centre or Action on Disability (see contacts section).

We will discuss your needs with you to identify the best next steps. You will not need a detailed assessment of your child's needs, however if you want or require additional support, an assessment can be completed to consider options with you.

### The core offer is:

- Specialist advice and information support from The Stephen Wiltshire Centre (SWC)
- Drop-in stay and play sessions for the whole family at SWC (with parents)
- Drop-in stay and play sessions term-time for under 5's at SWC (with parents)

The Core offer for children aged 8 years and over;

- One after school club every other week and 6 sessions a year during school holidays at the Stephen Wiltshire Centre (without parents) or Youth clubs and holiday activities delivered by Action on Disability (over age 11 years).

## 13. Potential other levels of service

For children and young people whose needs are not met by the core offer, additional support may be available through the targeted or bespoke offers following an assessment of needs.

## 14. The targeted offer

Children and young people who have higher needs than those accessing the core offer are likely to benefit from the targeted short breaks offer. This offer can only be accessed following an assessment of needs.

### The targeted offer is:

Advice and support and/or a funded package enough to meet assessed needs. This could be 1:1 carer hours or funding to access groups, clubs, or other activities.

It could be Direct Payments, where the family are given funds to arrange their own support. The level will be based on the individual assessment. [Guide to direct payments for parents and carers](#)

- The level will be based on the individual assessment and may be equivalent to approximately 3-6 hours of support per week.

## **15. The bespoke offer**

This is for children and young people whose needs cannot be met with currently available services, these children will be allocated and assessed in a Social Work team, under the child in need framework. A bespoke package could include overnight provision where this is identified as needed, might include a joint package with health and is likely to have more frequent reviews than other packages of support.

## **16. Cost of Short breaks**

Activities delivered or commissioned by the council are free to attend but may ask for a contribution towards entry fees or travel for some activities if the child does not have an annual entry pass or freedom pass. However, no child is excluded from activities because of the families' financial situation and providers will consider each family individually.

Activities delivered by other providers may have some costs, however these will be clearly communicated to parents prior to booking.

## **17. Travel and transport**

Help with transport is available for families where the child's assessment of needs identifies they could not access their assessed need short breaks without it.

Travel assistance might take the form of a travel budget, where families are given some funds to organise transport, support from a worker to get to the activity or the council organising transport. If you would like to request travel assistance for short breaks, please speak to your Lead Professional.

## **18. Continuing to improve**

We are committed to continue to improve the Short Breaks offer, including work to develop inclusion in universal services and co-production of the local offer.

We would be interested to learn about your experience of short breaks in Hammersmith and Fulham. If you have had a positive experience, if you think things could be improved or you have identified any gaps, please contact The Stephen Wiltshire Centre or Parentsactive we would love to hear from you. All contact details are at the end of this document.

## 19. Appeals and complaints

If you are unhappy about any aspect of a short break activity, please speak with the provider of the short break in the first instance.

Following an assessment, if a young person or family is unhappy with the services or support recommended, they are advised to contact the social worker or lead professional who completed their assessment, to discuss their concerns.

If this does not resolve the issue, parents can direct their concerns to the team manager. If they conclude that the decision was based on incomplete or inaccurate information, or that proper account was not taken of the information available, the report author will be asked to review their recommendations and re-submit proposals to their manager.

If the young person or parent is not satisfied with the response from the team manager, they can contact the panel chair or Service Manager to discuss their concerns.

To take a complaint further please email C S complaints:

[CS.Complaints@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:CS.Complaints@lbhf.gov.uk)

<https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/children-and-family-care/childrens-services-complaints>

## 20. Further information and Contacts

### The Stephen Wiltshire centre

The centre operates as hub for the community where social care, health, education, and voluntary sector partners offer a programme of services, information, training and support for children, parents, carers and professionals.

Families can link with Parentsactive, Benefits Advice, Independent Advice and Support Service (IASS), Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) support and have access to their lead workers. The aim is for families to be well supported by the right person, at the right time in the most accessible way. For more information about the centre visit:

The Stephen Wiltshire Centre (SWC)  
Queensmill Road, Fulham SW6 6JR.

Phone: 020 8753 4443

Email: [StephenWiltshireCentre@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:StephenWiltshireCentre@lbhf.gov.uk)

Website: <http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/stephenwiltshirecentre>

### The Family Services and Disabled Children's Team

These are the contacts for the H&F social work teams for children

145 Kings Street Hammersmith W6 9JT

Phone: 0845 313 3935

Email: [familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk)

## **Parentsactive**

Phone: 020 8748 5168 option 4

Email: [info@parentsactive.org.uk](mailto:info@parentsactive.org.uk)

Website: [www.parentsactive.org.uk](http://www.parentsactive.org.uk)

## **SENDIASS SEND Information Advice and Support Service)**

Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC) deliver this service. It is a free, independent, impartial and confidential service providing information advice (formerly known as the Parent Partnership Service) supporting parent/carers of children and young people with special needs or disabilities and young people with special needs or disabilities.

Phone: 020 3886 1582

Email: [info@hfsendiass.org.uk](mailto:info@hfsendiass.org.uk)

Website: <http://www.hfsendiass.org.uk>

## **Special Educational Needs Service**

If you would like to contact the Special Educational Needs Service (SEN Service), you can do so by:

Phone: 020 7361 3311

Email: [SEND@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:SEND@lbhf.gov.uk)

## 21. Local short breaks providers details

Although this list has been created in good faith, please contact providers directly for the most up to date information, particularly as Covid restrictions can impact organisations without notice.

### Universal services

#### **SEND Local Offer**

This resource includes information about a wide range of activities, service and supports for children and families with additional needs; [www.lbhf.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/localoffer)

#### **Summer in The City**

A resource and activities guide for the summer about local activities:  
[www.lbhf.gov.uk/summerinthecity](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/summerinthecity)

#### **The Family Support service**

This service can advise and provide information about a range of topics and inclusive services locally, including information about Family Centres:

[Family support service](#)

#### **Universal childcare offers**

There is a universal childcare offer of 15 hours per week for 3 and 4 year olds and up to 30 hours per week for some families. Depending on circumstances parents may incur top-up costs. There is also free learning for 2 year olds for eligible groups.

[Help with childcare costs](#)

#### **Let Me Play Action**

This Community Interest Company is proud to support young people in Hammersmith & Fulham with holiday provision. Every year across holiday periods we provide a range of activities covering sport, art, education and fun! We have delivered in this way for many years and it forms an important part of what we do and what we are about. Please do email: [info@letmeplay.co.uk](mailto:info@letmeplay.co.uk) for more information.

#### **A note about Covid 19**

Covid 19, has had a significant impact on all our lives. Although many social care services and short breaks providers have continued to run throughout the outbreak, some have suspended or reduced their offer, others have adopted new ways of working and they may have new requirements or restrictions. It is recommended that families contact providers to check if there is anything they need to know before travelling.

# Specialist services

## Stephen Wiltshire Centre

The Stephen Wiltshire Centre is a specialist council run centre is working towards becoming a site of excellence for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities [SEND] and their families. The centre offers a range of activities which have included drop-in activities for the whole family (all ages), individual short breaks for children and young people with a disability (over 8's) and group short breaks for children and young people with a disability (over 8's).

## Personal budgets and Direct Payments

These enable families to organise services in a way that suits them instead of receiving them directly from the council or NHS. The size of your budget will depend on the needs, and complexity of your child's disability as identified in an assessment completed together with you your lead professional.

A personal budget can be used to employ care and support staff, to pay for short break activities and for some specialist equipment. A support plan will be agreed between the council and family about how the funds will be spent to meet agreed outcomes.

Direct Payments: these are a means to pay a personal budget to the family. The funds are paid by the council or NHS into a dedicated bank account or onto a pre-paid card. The family receive invoices or timesheets and pay the supplier or staff directly. If the family employs staff, they are responsible for making sure any employment requirements are met.

For more detailed information view the Direct Payments guidance;

[Guide to direct payments for parents and carers](#)

## Action on Disability

Group based activities for young people aged 11-25 years through youth clubs and during school holidays.

Included in the core offer

Email: [info@actionondisability.org.uk](mailto:info@actionondisability.org.uk)

Phone: 020 7385 2098, 020 7381 2042

Website: <https://www.aod.org.uk/youth-service>

## Play Association Hammersmith and Fulham

Group based activities for children aged 8-18+ years at weekends and during school holidays.

Available only through an assessment of needs.

Email: [info@playassociationhf.org.uk](mailto:info@playassociationhf.org.uk)

Phone: 020 7736 3699

Website: <https://www.playassociationhf.org.uk>

## **Learning Through Play**

Group based activities for children aged 8-18 years at weekends and during school holidays.

Available only through an assessment of needs.

Email: [learnthroughplay@cshf.co.uk](mailto:learnthroughplay@cshf.co.uk)

Phone: 07541 902 562

## **The Queensmill Trust**

Group based activities for children aged 5-18 years who attend the school.

Available only through an assessment of needs.

# Table 1: Table of abilities and needs to help identify likely appropriate routes for assessment and support

## Identifying your child's level of need

The following table lists levels of ability and needs to help parents/ carers and professionals to identify if universal, early help or specialist disabilities services are the most appropriate route for support. This is an initial guide. Particularly for children with multiple needs or developmental conditions we welcome a discussion to really understand the impact of their disability and identify the most appropriate route for support.

## How to use Table 1: Table of abilities and needs

- Read across each row and circle the box which best describes the child's abilities and presentation on an average day, not looking at good or bad days
- Remember that needs are not considered additional when a non-disabled child of a similar age would require the same level of assistance
- Remember to circle the 'Able' box if the child is functioning as expected for their age group
- Once complete you will have 10 circles
- Total the number of circles in columns 'Able' to 'Profound' and refer to the process flow chart on [page 16](#) to identify the likely route for support.

Skills area	Able	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Profound	Untested
Learning	Able for age	Usually functionally independent.  Identified Specific Learning Disability.	Moderate Learning Difficulty.	Severe Learning Difficulty.	Profound Learning Difficulty.	
Gross motor skills i.e.: Mobility	Able for age	Usually able to walk but has difficulty i.e.: long distance, may be slow, may have poor balance.  Mild motor impairment or difficulties.	Moderately delayed.  Walks with aids or may use a wheelchair.  May require help with changing position or postural management for function.	Requires assistance to move in and out of position.  Markedly abnormal movement.  High level postural management required.  Not independently mobile.	Unable to walk and uses wheelchair exclusively.  Unable to transfer without assistance.	
Fine motor skills i.e.: hand and eye coordination	Able for age	Possible tremor, awkward release, unsteadiness.  Delay in acquisition of skills.  Some difficulties in play, writing, drawing, or dressing.	Restricted movements of one or both hands when reading / stretching / feeding / writing / dressing  Poor manipulative skills.	Severely limited manipulative skills.  Requires aids / assistance for all fine motor function.	Cannot grasp and release with either hand.  Physically unable to feed self or write.	
Speech, language and communication	Able for age	Some speech or language difficulties or a mild delay in	Moderate delay of language skills which may be related with a	Communications difficulties present as the primary delay in development of	Presentation of complex communication needs. - Alternative	

Skills area	Able	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Profound	Untested
		language skills which may be in related with a general development delay.	general development delay. Uneven development of verbal and non-verbal skills.	social skills and learning. Absence of language and communication development. May use augmented communication methods.	communication methods used.	
Self help	Able for age	Some delay in daily living skills i.e.: eating, washing. Organisational difficulties requiring supervision	Requires facilitation with daily living skills e.g.: eating, washing, dressing, toileting	Requires constant assistance with daily living skills e.g.: eating, washing, dressing, toileting.	Totally dependent on others for daily living skills e.g.: eating, washing, dressing. toileting.	
Vision	Able for age	Minor visual field loss. Visual activity < 6/18 in better eye or problem in one eye.	Problem in at least half visual field Visual activity 6/24 - 6/36 in better eye Reads print with aids	Visual activity 6/36-6/60 in better eye.	Registered blind.	
Hearing	Able for age	One ear normal hearing and other has profound loss > 70 dB or bilateral loss 30-40 dB.	Bilateral loss 41-70 dB in better ear and/ or failed free-field testing 2 or more occasions in 6 months	Hearing loss 71-90 dB in better ear.	Profound bilateral hearing loss >90 dB in better ear.	
Behaviour	Able for age	Infrequent aggressive or difficult to manage behaviours. Sometimes tearful / depressed / anxious (unrelated to immediate circumstances). Restless / distractible – often does not settle to age appropriate activity.	Frequent aggressive or difficult to manage behaviours. Frequent tearful / depressed / anxious (once a day). Rarely settles to age appropriate activity. Problems causing considerable difficulties to family or group.	Persistently aggressive or difficult to manage behaviours. Depressed / anxious enough to be considered at risk of self-harm or to be disrupting daily routines i.e. attendance at school. Never settles to age appropriate activity. Unable to function in a group.	Severe persistent self-harm behaviours (head banging, overdose) or assessed as suicide risk by child mental health professional. Aggressive behaviour causing significant injury to others requiring constant adult supervision.	
Physical health	Able for age	Well controlled symptoms.	Partially controlled symptoms.	Has a serious illness. Poor control of symptoms.	Care for a Life limited condition required or requires mechanical ventilation or suction.	

Skills area	Able	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Profound	Untested
Eating and swallowing	Able for age	Copes well with textures but occasional problems in chewing or controlling food and drink in the mouth.  Infrequent episodes of choking: minimal risk of aspiration.  Rejection or intolerance of some textures e.g. spits out or gags on lumps.	Can cope with limited textures e.g. soft foods and thickened drink.  Periodic episodes of choking: some risk of aspiration.  Wary and intolerant of the introduction of new textures.  Needs intermittent Nasal Gastric or gastrostomy feeding.	Inability to cope with any texture; extremely limited oral movement with poor control of food and drink in the mouth.  Adverse reaction often observed when food or drink presented e.g. cries, extends.  Needs long term NG or gastrostomy feeding.	Inability to cope with any texture; extremely limited oral movement with no control of food and drink in the mouth.  Frequent choking on all intake; significant risk of aspiration.  No oral feeding ability.	

## **Table 2: Other factors influencing which team might complete the assessment (mainstream or specialist/ qualified Social Worker or other worker)**

### **How to use Table 2: Other factors**

- Read across each row and circle the box which best describes your families current situation
- Once complete you will have 2 circles
- Total the number of circles in columns 'Mild' to 'Severe' and refer to the process flow chart on page 14 to identify the likely route for support
- The support options are identified in section 7.

	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Parental capacity	None or some factors / other responsibilities that make parenting difficult.	Carers have health problems/ addictions, learning difficulties affecting their capacity and skills as carers.  Parental unit is strained.	Carers have significant health problems/ addictions, learning disabilities affecting their skills as carers.  Parental unit unsafe.
Other	Environmental factors not of concern or issues are already being addressed	Environmental factors are of moderate concern  i.e.: affected by inadequate or insecure housing	Environmental factors are of severe concern  i.e: severely inadequate housing or imminent homelessness.

# Process for allocation for assessment and identification of support for children with disabilities in Hammersmith and Fulham

Parental request for a social care assessment and support for a child with a disability					
Likely route for assessment and support for children with Less than 5 circles across Moderate, Severe, Profound (*Table of abilities and needs)		Likely route for assessment and support for children with 5 or more circles across Moderate, Severe, Profound (*Table of abilities and needs)		Likely route for assessment and support for children with 5 or more circles across Severe, Profound (*Table of abilities and needs)	
If other factors are Mild or Moderate	If other factors are Severe	If other factors are Mild or Moderate	If other factors are Severe	If other factors are Mild or Moderate	If other factors are severe
Family Support Team Early Help)	Mainstream Social Work Team	Most appropriate Non-Social Work team	Most appropriate Social Work team	Short Break Review Team and Integrated Keyworking Team	Disabled Children's Social Work Team
Complete assessment, check accuracy and outcomes sought with the family and appropriate others. Develop a draft plan to meet the identified needs. Discuss proposal with the family, request manager agreement to the draft package, and discuss with proposed providers, amend plan as required. Present to funding panel for ratification.					
Put in place package agreed and review according to agreed timetable					

\*The table of abilities and needs helps parents/ carers/ professionals to identify if universal, early help or specialist disabilities services are the most appropriate route for support. The table is an initial guide. Particularly for children with multiple needs or developmental conditions we welcome a discussion to really understand the impact of their disability and identify the most appropriate route for support. \*\*Identified from discussions between services on case-by-case basis.

# Glossary

**Aspiration** – when something you eat or drink goes down the wrong way

**Nasal Gastric tube (NG)** – a tube that goes from the mouth to stomach

**Gastronomy feeding** – feeding directly into the stomach not through the mouth

**Postural** – is about the way someone sits or stands

**Manipulative** – means how a person can move things about with their hands

**Bilateral** – means in both sides

**Mechanical ventilation** – has a machine that to help the child breath

**Suction** – has to have a machine to suction away blockages to keep airway open

**Intolerant/ intolerance** – unable or unwilling to accept