



Short Breaks Service Statement

For families and professionals who support or care for a child or young person aged 0 to 18th birthday, who has a disability and lives in Shropshire.



Welcome to Shropshire's Short Breaks Service Statement!

This statement is for families and professionals who support or care for a disabled child, aged 0 to 18th birthday, living in the local authority area of Shropshire.

It explains

- What Short Breaks for disabled children and young people are,
- What kind of breaks are available,
- Who can have this type of Short Break and
- How to access a Short Break.

Shropshire Council has a duty to publish a statement like this.

The statement is part of our *SEND Local Offer*. The SEND Local Offer describes all the support available for Shropshire families who have a child with special educational needs and / or a disability. You can see more information about our SEND Local Offer on page 13.

This statement is an update. The original statement was produced in consultation with parents, Shropshire's Parent and Carer Council (PACC) and the voluntary sector.

Legal framework used in this statement:

Breaks For Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011

Care Act 2015

Children Act 1989

Children and Young Persons Act 2008

Children and Families Act 2014

Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970

Equality Act 2010

Let us know what you think of this update ...

You will find the link to a short survey on page 14.

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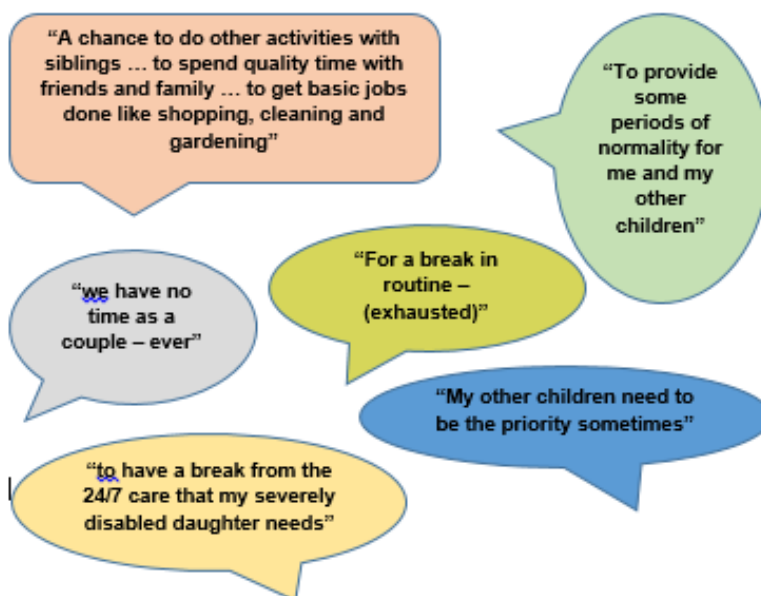
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Why might a family need support?

All families need support at some time in their life. Having a child with a disability can bring challenges and difficulties that other families do not face. This can be particularly at times of transition, such as when a child is starting or changing school, or when a young person is preparing for adult life.

We know that asking for help or advice can sometimes be difficult. Whatever you are feeling or experiencing, the chances are that someone else has been through it, too.

We want to offer the right service at the right time. This means that we want to offer parents early help to challenges. We are keen to understand the needs of a family and help them to get the right support or advice for the family as a whole. This could be through Short Breaks or a range of other services and support.



“For some parents the provision of short breaks simply means the difference between being able to cope with their disabled child, and not being able to cope.”

CONTACT

- Shropshire Local Offer shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/
- Short Breaks shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/social-care/short-breaks-activities/.
- **0345 6789021** to discuss Short Breaks or if you have any other concerns that you need advice on.

What are Short Breaks for disabled children?

Short breaks are a range of leisure activities, specifically designed to support disabled children and young people up to the age of 18.

The range of Shropshire Short Breaks is wide. We understand that all families are different and need different levels of support and different types of Short Breaks dependent on their child's disability, age and family circumstances.

Some Short Breaks might involve a child or young person joining a group activity.

Others might be supported individually such as by a personal assistant.

Short breaks can take place after school, at the weekend, during school holidays or overnight. They can provide activities such as after school clubs, weekend activities, sports, youth groups, drama groups, holiday clubs and overnight stays with a short break foster carer or in a residential home.

Some Short Breaks might also involve assistance in the home in the evening, at weekends or during the school holidays.



Short Breaks aim to give:

- Parents and carers a break from caring;
- Children and young people the chance to try new activities, socialise, make friends;
- A chance to take part in activities that help the child's development;
- A choice and a range of activities;
- Siblings, parents and carers quality time to spend together that they would not otherwise have;
- Opportunities for siblings to be able to join their brother or sister in some short break activities;
- A positive experience for every member of the family.

Providers of Short Break services

Most of the Short Breaks providers in Shropshire are charities or small businesses who are experienced and skilled in supporting disabled children. Others are voluntary organisations.

They are all required to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

Parents told us they want providers:

“with well trained staff”

“who are responsive to any new training needs”

“where staff build good quality relationships with both the child and the family”

Shropshire Council includes these requirements in their contracts with providers. The council ensures that providers meet these requirements through our procurement and contract monitoring process.

Types of Short Breaks, eligibility and access

Short Breaks are solely available for children and young people with a disability. Disabilities can vary widely in terms of their nature and severity. Our definition for disability is guided by legislation.

1) The Short Breaks Regulation 2011, refer to “A child who is disabled (defined as ‘blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed’).”

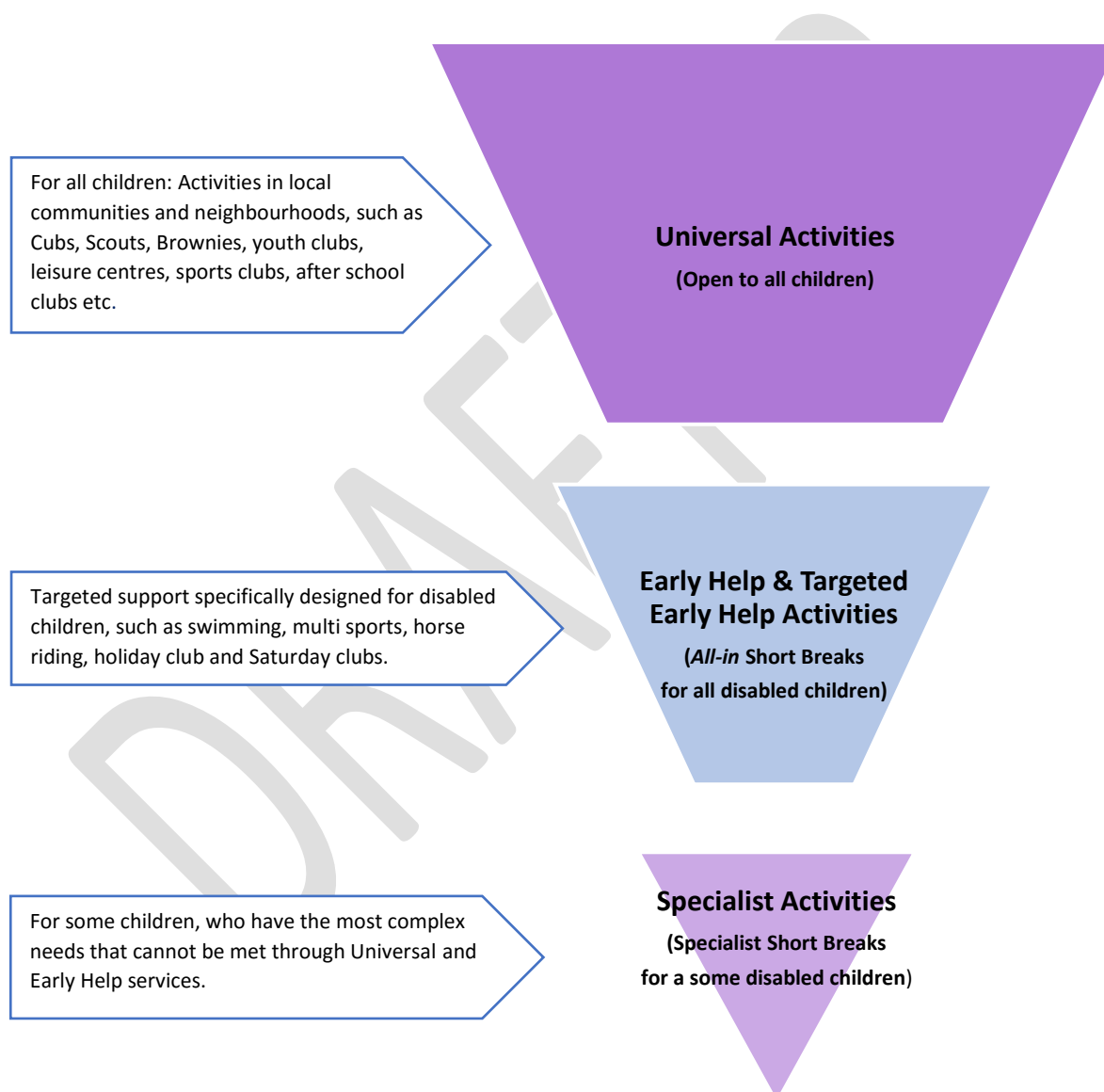
2) The Equality Act 2010, refers to disability as having a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.”

This may include a physical or learning disability, a hearing or visual impairment. It includes children who have moderately to severely challenging behaviour as a result of their learning disability or autism. It also includes children who have complex needs and who may have palliative, life-limiting or a life-threatening condition.

The council wants to offer the right service at the right time

Not all children and families will need the same level of short breaks: some will need more than others because of the impact of their child's disability; some families may need more support because of their individual family circumstances. As every child and their family is different, there are three different levels of Short Breaks, namely

Universal Activities, Targeted (All-in) Activities and Specialist Activities.



Universal Services

(Open to all children)

Universal activities (sometimes also called 'mainstream activities') are community based activities that are open to everyone and may be able to support children with disabilities. For example youth clubs, leisure centres, after school clubs, dance, drama, arts, brownies, cubs etc. Many families with disabled children access these type of activities successfully and the activity provider can meet the needs of their disabled child.

All universal services have a duty to respond to the Equality Act 2010 by ensuring their services are accessible to disabled children and young people.

Some universal services may offer concessions to disabled children and their carers. To find out whether the service you would like to access offers concessions you should ask the service directly.

Occasionally a child's needs are such that the service is not able to accommodate them. If your family is in this situation then you may be able to access our Early Help and Targeted Early Help 'All In' service described below.

For activities in your community: shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/social-care/short-breaks-activities/activities-in-your-community/

Support is also offered with equipment and adaptations at home. The Occupational Therapy Team assess children and their parents/carers. They can allocate suitable equipment or adaptations. The team's telephone number is 0345 6789 044.

Early Help and Targeted Early Help Services

(All-in Short Breaks – open to all disabled children)



All-in Short Breaks are part of our Early Help services. They are available to families when universal services are not able to meet the needs of their disabled children.

All-in Short Breaks are different from universal services because they are specifically designed for children and young people with disabilities. A range of activities are available such as youth clubs, holiday schemes, swimming, horse riding, cycling, forest school, drama, storytelling, football and also a log cabin for overnight stays. The most recent All-in Short Breaks can be viewed by following this link.

shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/social-care/short-breaks-activities/

To find out more about our Early Help services, click on shropshire.gov.uk/early-help/

Eligibility criteria for All-in Short Breaks

- Children and young people up to their 18th birthday,
- Living in the Shropshire Council area,

- With a disability that prevents them from accessing universal services without additional support.

Access to All-in Short Breaks

Accessing All-in Short Breaks **does not** require an Early Help or social worker assessment. However, it requires that

- A child meets the eligibility criteria defined above.
- A child becomes a member of All-in

By becoming a member of All-in, we can ensure that our Short Breaks reach the right families, children and young people. We can also ensure that each child is safe and their well-being is planned for.

Families can see the All-in programme on our Local Offer website shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/social-care/short-breaks-activities/. A parent / carer can apply for a child's membership on the same webpage, by clicking on 'register'.

Once the membership application is received, it will be checked to ensure that the child or young person is eligible. We will contact the family if we are unsure about anything in the application, need further information or we feel there may other services more suitable for the family.

Once registration for All-in has been agreed, we will send the family a membership card. Families can then book activities from the All-in programme, by contacting the activity provider directly.

We keep a register of all the families who join All-in. We use this register to get in touch with families, to monitor take up and to plan future Short breaks.

If a child is not eligible for Short Breaks, we will contact the family and advise them of our decision.

For advice on All-in Short Breaks call 0345 678 9021 or look at our Local Offer website for shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/social-care/short-breaks-activities/

Specialist Services

(Specialist Short Breaks for some disabled children)

Some children's needs cannot be met by universal activities or by targeted All-in Short Breaks. They may need more support. This could be because the child has:

- A severe learning disability
- A severe physical disability
- Profound multiple disabilities
- Severe sensory impairment
- Complex and severe health problems

We may sometimes support children with less severe disabilities if:

- A parent has a disability or chronic illness
- The impact on the family is severe
- A sibling also has moderate or severe disabilities

A range of Specialist Short Breaks are available such as specialist after school clubs, Family Based Shared Care, childminding, overnight care or Direct Payments*.

* Direct Payments are a type of personal budget, where a family purchase services themselves. For further information about Personal Budgets and Direct Payments, click on shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/education/education-health-and-care-plans/personal-budgets/ or telephone: 0345 678 9063.

Eligibility criteria and access to Specialist Short Breaks

Eligibility is determined through an assessment by a social worker. The assessment involves the family and takes into account

- The complexity and severity of the disability
- Family circumstances
- Other issues affecting the whole family

The assessment is based on a person centred approach. Each family's circumstances and needs are unique. Eligibility is based on the professional judgement of the social worker. If assessed as eligible, the assessment leads to an allocation of individually tailored support to meet the assessed needs. The support will be designed to improve specific outcomes for the child and family.

If a child is not eligible for Specialist Short Breaks, we will contact the family and advise them of our decision. Where appropriate, the family may be referred to universal activities or All-in Short Breaks.

For advice on Specialist Short Breaks call 0345 6789021 or look at our Local Offer website for shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/social-care/short-breaks-activities/

Accessing the Right Service at the Right Time is Shropshire's multi-agency guidance on social care threshold criteria. It is a tool for practitioners working with children to ensure that the needs of all children, young people and families are being recognised and met.

You can see the guidance via this link:

westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/assets/clients/6/Shropshire%20Downloads/Threshold%20document%20-%20Accessing%20the%20right%20service%20at%20the%20right%20time.pdf

Families who are eligible for Specialist Short Breaks are also eligible for All-in. We add their details to the All-in register. We use this register to get in touch with families, to monitor take up and to plan future Short breaks.

Participation fund

The participation fund is a small fund, which is part of our All-in offer. It is managed by the council's Disabled Children's Team. It is designed to enable a child or young person with a disability to attend another local activity that can be considered a 'Short Break'.

The Participation Fund can help to make local universal services more accessible to children with disabilities. For example, it may be used to

- Purchase of specialist equipment for local clubs and groups
- Pay for additional hours of existing support workers/teachers
- Training of staff or volunteers to gain appropriate skills or qualifications
- Fund attendance at an activity

You can get more information about the Participation Fund via this link shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/social-care/shortbreaks-activities/the-participation-fund/ or telephone: 0345 6789 044

Preparation for Adulthood

All children need to be prepared for adult life. Parents tell us that Short Breaks can play an essential role in developing young people's independence and confidence.

Support for transition arrangements starts at an early age. Some of the short break activities are specifically designed to give disabled young people the opportunity to develop skills for future independence. These may contribute to the 'preparing for adulthood' outcomes of independent living, inclusion in the community and maintaining health.

Parent carers in Shropshire are clear that short breaks should play an important role in supporting their children towards independence and adulthood. They want these service to provide opportunities for their children to spend time away from the family network, to develop new skills and confidence. (PACC, 2016)

Further information is available at shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/education/16-25-support/preparing-for-transition-into-adulthood/

Transport

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to Short Break activities, unless agreed as part of a child's Social Care plan.

Where transport is provided for 'All In' activities this will be made clear by the provider when opportunities are advertised.

Shropshire Council provide a concessionary travel scheme offering free or reduced travel.

For further information follow the link below:

shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/community/

Cost of Short Breaks

Shropshire Council and Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group fund Early Help and Specialist Short Break activities in Shropshire. This funding, along with the organisations own fundraising activities, enables providers to offer subsidised places for disabled children and young people, ensuring parents and carers do not pay more than a non-disabled child accessing a similar type of service.

Some Short Breaks require families to pay a place booking fee or make a small contribution to costs. If this applies, then providers will make families aware of this in advance.

How we plan and review Short Break services

Before we can plan Short Break services, we need to understand how many children in our area have a disability and the nature of their disability. We also need to know what types of activities are popular with families. We get this information from a number of sources. These include:

- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) or Statements of Educational Need
- Information about *SEND Support* in schools
- Our register for disabled children: this is made up of our All-in register and our voluntary 'Record of Children with Additional Needs'
- Social worker assessments
- Feedback from children, young people and their families
- Feedback from Short Breaks providers, service reviews and information events
- Regional and national research reports.
- Statistical information from Census data

We also consider the resources we have and the requirements of local and national government strategies.

We also work with parent representatives, such as Shropshire's Parent Carer Council (PACC) and other organisations during the commissioning, planning and delivery of Short Break services.

For example:

- ☐ Parents told us that some children prefer half day activities in holidays. We included this preference when we commissioned the holiday scheme.
- ☐ Parents told us that there should be some Short Breaks for older young people, so that they can develop specific independence skills. We included this preference when we re-commissioned overnight Short Breaks.

We review services throughout the year.

Short Break providers have to prove their suitability through a formal application process. We only appoint providers who meet our and families' requirements. Once we have appointed them, they have to send us regular information about how they are performing. When it is appropriate, we visit activities and observe how they are working.

The SEND Local Offer

Our SEND Local Offer is a website which provides information about support and services in Shropshire, relevant to parent carers of children/young people with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) and to young people with SEND.

It includes information about our Short Break activities and providers.

It also includes information about pre-school settings, health, education and social care services.

Knowing what services are available and how to access them gives parents and young people more choice and therefore more control over what support is right for them.

The SEND Local Offer also describes the processes and pathways families may come across to help inform them when making decisions about their child's future.

Further information can be found at: shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/



Getting involved

We welcome feedback from parents and young people about our Short Breaks offer.

When we plan Short Breaks, we value the involvement of parents, carers, children, young people and professionals. Our aim is to work together to find ways to better meet the needs and improve outcomes for children and young people with disabilities.

We have already used this approach in developing our Short Break programme and this will continue to be important to us.

If you would be interested in participating in any consultation groups or by offering to give specific feedback on our services as requested please contact us at shortbreaks@shropshire.gov.uk or 01743 250227.

Reviewing our Short Breaks Statement

This updated statement was published on 15 November 2017. It will be revised on an annual basis or in response to any new development.

We would like to know what you think of this update. To take part in a short survey please click on this link

shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/short-breaks-statement-2018/

This survey will close on 31 Dec 2017. If you spot any mistakes or have suggestions for improvements after this date, please contact us via our Local Offer website.

shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/

What parents and carers told us about Short Breaks



"Thank you for pushing the boundaries which means we try new things - if they can do it so can we!"



"It's brilliant to have a club like this where they can be themselves and make new friends."



"They really look forward to activities and feel that they belong. It is the only out of school activity they go to so is so important."



"It's great! The club can provide so many opportunities that we can't. "



"It's so good to find a club my son fits in to. he has tried many sports clubs but none of them were prepared for his severe learning disability."



"He LOVED it! he LOVED everything about it! We are truly grateful for this opportunity. "



"The sessions have really improved his concentration. i have seen him more engaged in the sessions and at home."