



# Short Break Services Statement

## Stoke-on-Trent

For families with children and young people who have disabilities

# Welcome to Stoke-on-Trent's Short Breaks Statement.

This statement has been designed with Parents and carers of children and young people with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities living in Stoke-on-Trent. The statement will provide clear information about the short breaks services available.

## Legislation

The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations came into effect on 1st April 2011. A copy of the regulation can be found via the following link:

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/707/pdfs/ukxi\\_20110707\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/707/pdfs/ukxi_20110707_en.pdf)

The Regulations established in law the duty for each local authority to provide a range of short breaks for disabled children and young people (under the age of 18 years) and their parents and carers.

As part of the duty each local authority must also produce a short breaks services statement in order to provide parents and carers clear information on the following:

- What short breaks are available
- How to access the short breaks
- How the short breaks have been designed to meet their needs

## What we mean by Disability

Section 17 (11) of the Children Act 1989 defines disability

“child is disabled if he is 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”, although this statute remains, the language is very out dated.

The current Equality Act 2010 definition of disability states

“a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities”. The Equality Act and explanatory notes can be found: [www.equalities.gov.uk](http://www.equalities.gov.uk)

## Publication and Review

Our short breaks service statement is published on the council's website, local offer website and can be found by following the links :

[stoke.gov.uk](http://stoke.gov.uk)

<http://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk/kb5/stoke/directory/home.page>

The statement will be reviewed and updated annually, the review will continue to reflect the views and choices of disabled children, young people and families.

## Children and Families Act 2014

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced some of the biggest changes in 30 years to Special Education Needs and Disability provision. The way that Education, Health and Social Care work together to support children and young people in order to achieve positive outcomes.

Some of the key changes are:

- Statements of Special Education Needs replaced with a joined up, holistic Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC), replacing the previous system of statutory assessment
- Publication a clear and transparent 'Local Offer' detailing what services, provision, and support is available in the local area. Stoke-on-Trent's Local Offer can be located at:  
<http://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk/kb5/stoke/directory/home.page>
- Young people with SEND who are in further education and training aged 16-25 have rights and protection comparable to those in school
- Joint Commissioning
- Ensuring the voice of the children, young people, parents and carers is at the heart of what we do, including shaping local services.

As part of our response to the changes we have developed a single centre for disabilities called Hazel Trees in Fenton, many of the services which will be directly involved in the EHC assessment and planning are located in this building. This will increase the effectiveness of the joint service planning and understanding of the needs of our children and young people across education, health and social care. It should also make it much easier and simpler for parents and carers to access advice, guidance and support for their child when they need it most.



## What are short breaks?

Short breaks are activities for children and young people, usually away from home, that enable them to relax, have fun and time with their peers, make new friends and have new experiences. At the same time giving a break to parents from their caring role. Short breaks enable children and young people to try out new things, gain new experiences and have more opportunities both with and without their families. Short breaks can include day, evening, overnight, weekend or holiday activities.



### Short Break Services should:

Enable children and young people with disabilities to:

- Enjoy the experience and try new things
- Share fun times and make friends
- Take part in activities which help their development
- Feel safe and know what to expect from their short break

### Enable parents and carers to:

- Have clear information on their entitlement and know what services are available to them
- Have a range of services from which they are able to make choices
- Have trust in the short break provider, and to know that the carers are trained, understand their child's needs and provide safe short breaks
- Access support from other parents and staff – both practical and emotional – and to experience reduced levels of stress due to caring



### Enable brothers and sisters to:

- Know that their brother or sister is enjoying their short break
- Be able to have time with their parents that is not taken up with caring responsibilities
- Be able to do their homework or just have some time for themselves
- Be able to join their brother or sister for some short break activities from time to time



## Who can access short breaks

Stoke-on-Trent's Aiming High short breaks is open to all children and young people who:

- have a disability (as defined by section 6 of the Equality Act 2010), or EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) or SEN (Special Education Need);
- require support to access play and leisure activities due to their care and support need; and
- need a targeted activity with a disability focus and upskilled staff team
- Are aged 0-18 (with aiming high short breaks up to 20th birthday)
- Live in Stoke-on-Trent

We recognised that the needs for each family vary, some families may need more support because of their individual circumstances. Children and young people with complex needs may require more support to have a short break, in these cases a social care assessment may be required, the criteria for social work assessment to access specialist level short break can be found by following this link a parents guide to social care.

[https://www.stoke.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1171/parents\\_guide\\_to\\_levels\\_of\\_need\\_for\\_disabled\\_children.pdf](https://www.stoke.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1171/parents_guide_to_levels_of_need_for_disabled_children.pdf)

[http://webapps.stoke.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/SOT\\_SCB\\_Threshold\\_Framework\\_Dec\\_2018\\_Final1.pdf](http://webapps.stoke.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/SOT_SCB_Threshold_Framework_Dec_2018_Final1.pdf)

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## How many children and young people who have a special education needs and or disability live in Stoke-on-Trent

DfE research suggests that a measure of 7-10% can be used to estimate the number of children with disabilities within the overall child population, and that 1.2% will have significant or complex needs.

### Population

Source JSNA (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) - The data for 2017 is the most up to date for estimated population numbers. In 2017 Stoke-on-Trent had an estimated population of 255,378 people. And a 0-19 population of 63,506 which accounts for 25% of the population

| Age Range | Total  | %    |
|-----------|--------|------|
| 0-4       | 17,640 | 6.9  |
| 5-9       | 16,980 | 6.6  |
| 10-14     | 14,637 | 5.7% |
| 15-19     | 14,249 | 5.6% |
| 0-19      | 63,506 |      |

Children and young people in Stoke-on-Trent by age range shown in the table above (2016 data from JSNA)

### Education Health and Care Plans

Local Profile Education Health Care Plan figures there are 2106 EHCP's in city September 2018

The top 3 primary needs for pupils who have an EHCP are:

- Moderate learning difficulty 36%
- Social, emotional & mental health 22%
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder 15%

Children with Disabilities Social Work Team hold 363 cases

- 249 Child in Need
- 29 Child Protection
- 45 Children in Care
- 22 Care Leavers



### Current Service Provision – Stoke-on-Trent

There is an Aiming High Short Breaks Service in Stoke-on-Trent which has been supporting vulnerable Disabled children/young people and their families since 2014.

Data from the current service in Stoke-on-Trent for 2017/18 financial year

- 6881 short break spaces in 997 activities were available
- 473 individual children accessed the service
- 37% of activities parents paid contributions in order to access additional spaces
- 756 children on the disability register

## Key messages from consultation with children and families:

Disabled children and their families have told us we should consider when planning and commissioning short breaks services:

- Activities where friendships can grow.
- Clearer criteria for access
- Confidence that disabled children's needs will be met by appropriately trained staff in all activities and settings
- Flexible services and timely support
- Family activities in quieter environments

## Short Break Services available

There are a broad range of short break services and activities available across the city.

### Universal services

These are services available to all children and young people within our local communities through local youth centres, sports and leisure centres, children centres, funded childcare and early education [www.stoke.gov.uk/beststart](http://www.stoke.gov.uk/beststart), [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk), after-school clubs, brownies, scouts or other community activities. Universal services are often the first point of contact for many families and we will work with these services to promote inclusion and training support to enable staff to meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities.

### Targeted services (our Aiming High Short Breaks Service)

We recognise that children and young people may have additional support needs to access a short break safely and need targeted activities with a disability focus and upskilled staff team. Our Aiming High Short Breaks service has been specifically designed to support these children and families. Accessing these services is not reliant on a formal social care assessment although a risk assessment will be undertaken to ensure each child is safe and their well-being is planned for. These services can be accessed through our lead provider Action for Children, who manage the co-ordination and booking of these activities.

Activities include weekend, after school and school holiday activities such as swimming, trampolining, bowling, day trips, sensory fun sessions, fishing and family activities.

The Aiming High Short Breaks Service features the following

#### A core offer

Core Offer is free of charge for all children and consists of:

- One activity a month,
- One additional activity during Half Term and Easter Holidays, and
- Two additional activities during the Summer Holidays

## Additional activities through parental contributions

Parents and carers can access additional activities on top of the free core offer, there is a contributions rate for additional activities, up to date contribution levels can be found by contacting Action for Children directly.

## An Aiming High enhanced offer

which includes group based support for those children and young people assessed as needing additional support and a more regular break above and beyond the Core Offer and additional contributions, referral routes via Lead Provider assessment or Social Work assessment at Multi Agency Short Breaks Forum. This is time bound support regularly reviewed with the view of step down to contributions or Core Offer.

## Specialist services

These are available to children and families who are formally assessed by children's social care as needing a specialist service where children have the most complex needs. Specialist Short Breaks include:

- Overnight short breaks at a local authority short breaks residential unit Woodview
- Overnight short breaks with specialist foster carers (family link carers)
- Direct Payments where parents wish to receive a direct payment in order to secure their own personal assistant.

For further information please see the parents' guide to social care

[https://www.stoke.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1171/parents\\_guide\\_to\\_levels\\_of\\_need\\_for\\_disabled\\_children.pdf](https://www.stoke.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1171/parents_guide_to_levels_of_need_for_disabled_children.pdf)

There is also a specialist NHS residential unit (Dragons Square, in Chesterton, Newcastle-under-Lyme) that offers planned short breaks for children up to 18 years ranging from a few hours to overnight stays. This is for children and young people with a severe learning disability who also have very high support needs because of their challenging behaviour and /or complex physical/ medical needs. These children also require 24 hour specialist nursing care. This service can be accessed via a health professional or social worker.



## Mix and match

Many children and young people access a mix of short break services in order to meet their assessed need, some specialist level short breaks (where a formal assessment has been made) as well as through our Aiming High Service. This is to ensure that short breaks reach a wide range of children and are distributed to as many as possible and particularly important as the numbers of children accessing Aiming High is increasing.

## Promoting transition to adulthood

Short Break services are available for children and young people with disabilities up to the age of 18, with a limited Aiming High offer up to the young person's 20th birthday. The Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) encourages greater co-ordination and planning between services, including short breaks, for young people aged up to 25yrs, as they move into adulthood, and access, where relevant, services designed for young adults aged 18yrs and over.

Managing transition into adulthood is a priority for parents and families of young people as they become teenagers. Adult Social Care services are closely involved in the discussions. Short Break services offered to adults with learning or physical disabilities are based within The Meadows, Waterside and the use of Direct Payments.



## How is eligibility decided?

The parents guide to social care

[https://www.stoke.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1171/parents\\_guide\\_to\\_levels\\_of\\_need\\_for\\_disabled\\_children.pdf](https://www.stoke.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1171/parents_guide_to_levels_of_need_for_disabled_children.pdf) describes the policy regarding eligibility for specialist services and also lists the eligibility to access our Aiming High programme.

[http://webapps.stoke.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/SOT\\_SCB\\_Threshold\\_Framework\\_Dec\\_2018\\_Final1.pdf](http://webapps.stoke.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/SOT_SCB_Threshold_Framework_Dec_2018_Final1.pdf)

## How will short breaks improve outcomes

- They aim to support children and young people with disabilities to develop and learn through fun and play activities, make new friends and to promote their social, communication and independence skills
- They should support children and young people to develop self-confidence and a sense of achievement where they can learn new interests and try out new activities in a safe environment
- When young people are preparing to leave school and make the transition into adulthood, age-appropriate short breaks should help to prepare them for making choices, new experiences and increasing independence
- Short breaks aim to support families in their caring role and reduce levels of stress due to the demands of caring
- Short breaks can also provide opportunities for families to spend some enjoyable time together and for parents to get to know other families with similar experiences, in order to reduce isolation and share fun time
- Children with very complex health needs and/or life limiting conditions will be offered opportunities for short breaks which are appropriate for their needs.

## How will these services be managed and reviewed?

Commissioners meet on a regular basis with parents to gather feedback and views of the Aiming High Short Break service, allowing for development of new ideas and exchanging views and experiences.

Commissioners also meet with the lead provider responsible for the Aiming High element of the Short Breaks Service and Direct Payments Support service. This allows for a regular dialogue and feedback on specific queries which are then implemented and followed up. Providers are also subject to detailed monitoring and review visits.

The overall short break provision is managed by Strategic Management within Children's Social Care reporting into the CYP Strategic Partnership Board and reports progress on a quarterly basis.

