

Short Break Services Statement 2024-26



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1. What is a Short Break Services Statement?

The duty to provide a Short Break came into force on 1 April 2011 with the introduction of The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011. This followed the Children Act 1989 and the Children and Young Persons Act 2008. The legislation requires each local authority to produce a Short Break Services Statement so that families know what services are available, the eligibility criteria and how the range of Short Break Services is designed to meet local needs of families with disabled children.

In particular, the local authority must provide, as appropriate, a range of

- a. day-time care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere
- b. overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere
- c. educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes
- d. services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays

The Children and Families Act 2014 has transformed the system for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) so that services consistently support the best outcomes for them.

This Statement will continue to be reviewed regularly with families so that Hillingdon Council understands the demand for a Short Break Service as they change.

2. What is a Short Break?

A Short Break allows a disabled child or young person to have an enjoyable break away from their main carer whilst enabling their carer to take a break.

A Short Break gives children and young people the opportunity to develop new friendships, take part in new experiences, learn new skills and have fun whilst achieving positive outcomes. A Short Break could be for a few hours, a day, overnight or a weekend. The child or young person will be looked after in a supportive, safe environment.

There are different types of Short Break available, depending on the needs of the young person.

Wherever possible we try to enable children and young people with disabilities to access mainstream services, such as after school clubs, local play schemes, youth services and leisure facilities, with or without additional support.

A Short Break can facilitate a family to attend an activity together if this is what is required.

3. Benefits and expected outcomes of Short Break provision

The aim of providing a Short Break Service is to prevent family stress and breakdown, and to enable families to manage better. It is expected the provision will improve the relationships between siblings and enable quality time between different family members.

The benefit for children and young people is that they are able to access different activities with peers and make new friends; they have an opportunity to learn new skills and become more independent.

There is a wider range of activities to choose from in their local area. Expected outcomes of Short Break Provision might be:

- children and young people (CYP) achieving their outcomes
- reducing the number of CYP going into long term care
- reducing the risk of a breakdown in the family
- increasing CYP access to their local communities
- increasing CYP confidence and independence

4. Eligibility criteria

Children and young people who are Hillingdon residents are eligible for a Short Break if they have a physical, learning, sensory or mental impairment which has a substantial impact on their ability to perform day to day activities. This may include a physical or learning disability, a hearing or visual impairment. This also includes children who have complex health needs including those with palliative care needs, life limiting or life threatening conditions. Where the Child and Family assessment concludes that a Short Break is required, it is likely that the child or young person may be assessed for, or possess, an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and the Short Break assessment will form part of that Plan.

5. Short Break pathways

Pathway 1	Pathway 2	Pathway 3
Universal Services	Targeted Services	Specialist Services
Universal services can be accessed by all families and are for children and young people who have a mild learning disability. An example of a universal service may be activities based in the local community leisure facilities, children's centres or youth clubs.	Access to targeted services is via our Early Help service, which will carry out a light touch assessment of the child and family's circumstances. Families may be signposted to the Local Offer and other available services, including those provided by the voluntary sector.	Access to specialist services is via a formal statutory assessment undertaken by a social worker within the Children with Disabilities team. These services are designed for children, young people and their families who need a short break with additional and specialist care.

Universal Services are accessible for every child with a disability in the borough and will have a cost to access the services.

Targeted Services are part of our Early Help offer and will in most cases have a cost to access the services.

Specialist Services may be offered following a referral to the Hillingdon Access to Resource Panel (HARP) who meet weekly to decide on the support for the child. The case is presented to the panel for ratification and agreement by the social worker.

You can arrange for your child to take part in any mainstream services yourself but it is important to discuss your child's needs with the provider so that they are able to understand what additional support may be required to enable your child to fully participate in the activity.

If your child has a disability or additional needs, you can contact Community Solutions, our Short Break Service provider. Contact them via email [@ cyp@communityconnex.co.uk](mailto:cyp@communityconnex.co.uk) or call [📞 020 3948 0544](tel:02039480544).

6. How to access a Short Break Service

CYP who meet these eligibility criteria should also be registered on Hillingdon's Disabled Children's Register. To register please go to [📄 www.hillingdon.gov.uk/disability-register](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/disability-register).

Registration is voluntary and does not lead to services.

In itself the Register does not determine access to services but by doing this Hillingdon Council will always have a strategic view of the numbers of children and young people who may require these services.

To apply for Short Break Service support please email [@ strongerfamilieshub@hillington.gov.uk](mailto:strongerfamilieshub@hillington.gov.uk) or call [📞 01895 556006](tel:01895556006).

7. Personal Budgets and Direct Payments

Personal Budgets are about helping children/young people achieve good outcomes. If your child or young person meets the Children with Disability (CWD) criteria for a specialist service they may be allocated a Short Break and it could either be directly funded by the council or a Personal Budget may be allocated to the parent/carer through a Direct Payment. This is where the council gives you money to purchase the care and support to meet your child's needs. It is designed to be flexible and give you the choice and independence to make decisions about how your child's needs are met. The money is paid on to a prepaid card, which is like a debit card, and you can use it to pay for care. This can be through a care agency or you can employ people of your choice to support your child. It can also be used to pay for activities or clubs if agreed with your social worker.

As it is public money, there are some rules to follow and you will need to keep records and be accountable for how the money is used. It can sound a bit scary to start with but once you get the hang of it, it is quite straightforward. There are also providers who can help you to manage the direct payment if you need some assistance.

You can find out more about Personal Budgets and Direct Payments on [📄 www.gov.uk/apply-direct-payments](http://www.gov.uk/apply-direct-payments).

There are currently various ways to find out about a short break:

- we will continue to advertise Short Break Services as widely as possible
- we will ensure that the Hillingdon Local Offer holds the relevant information about the Short Break Service and childcare
- the Families' Information Service can provide information about a Short Break and can be contacted on [📞 01895 556489](tel:01895556489) or by emailing [@ fis@hillington.gov.uk](mailto:fis@hillington.gov.uk)
- ask another parent, perhaps through the Parent Carer Forum [📄 hillingtonpcf.com](http://hillingtonpcf.com), on [📞 07783 579678](tel:07783579678) or [@ hillingtonpcf@gmail.com](mailto:hillingtonpcf@gmail.com)
- ask a professional who is supporting you and your child and they will be able to find out for you

8. Reviewing the Short Break Services Statement

We will be reviewing our Short Break Services Statement annually, and throughout the year, in partnership with stakeholders, looking to develop the range of provision available. In line with the Children and Families Act 2014 we want to ensure more families decide to move towards a personal budget to purchase services (including a Short Break) they would prefer which will enable them to have more control over their care and support packages.

9. The future ambition for Short Break Services in Hillingdon

- To work in partnership with the local provider market to develop a range of short breaks for children and young people with disabilities and their families within available resources.
- To work with children and young people in a person-centred way, understanding that they will all have different needs and require different levels of support. Each family will have different circumstances.
- To work in partnership with children, young people, their parents and carers and key stakeholders to develop short break services in Hillingdon.

10. Short Break Services currently available in Hillingdon

Universal services

For a full list of organisations that offer Universal support services in Hillingdon please visit the Hillingdon SEND local offer website  www.hillingdon.gov.uk/send.

Activities for Children with Additional Needs

 careandsupport.hillingdon.gov.uk

Holiday Activities and Food Programme

 www.hillingdon.gov.uk/haf-parents

 hafprogramme@hillington.gov.uk

Hillingdon Council's Children's Centres

 www.hillingdon.gov.uk/childrenscentres

Hillingdon Council's Young People's Centres

 www.hillingdon.gov.uk/young-peoples-centres

 youthops@hillington.gov.uk

 01895 250497

Leisure Centres

 www.hillingdon.gov.uk/leisurelink

School Clubs

Targeted services

Adolescent Development Services Targeted Programmes offer a selection of interventions and programmes designed to engage, entertain and educate. There is a variety of positive online and in real life (IRL) sessions available to children and adolescents aged 8 to 25 who live, learn or earn in Hillingdon. For more details on the current offer and discuss the referral criteria please contact  targetedprogrammes@hillington.gov.uk or visit  www.hillingdon.gov.uk/targeted-programmes.

Community Solutions (Harrow Mencap)

 cyp@communityconnex.co.uk

 020 3948 0544

Disablement Association Hillingdon (DASH)

 www.dash.org.uk/activities

Hillingdon Autistic Care & Support (HACS)

 enquiries@hacs.org.uk

 www.hacs.org.uk

 020 8606 6780

Specialist services

Stronger Families Hub

The Stronger Families Hub offers a range of specialist services that might include:

- Bespoke Outreach and Personal Care packages
- Residential Short Breaks
- Shared Lives
- Personal Budgets and Direct Payments

 www.hillingdon.gov.uk/stronger-families

 strongerfamilieshub@hillington.gov.uk

 01895 556006

Community Connex

 cyp@communityconnex.co.uk

 020 8869 8484

Hillingdon Autistic Care & Support (HACS)

 enquiries@hacs.org.uk

 www.hacs.org.uk

 020 8606 6780

