

Short Breaks Statement

“In Wakefield, the child and their family are at the centre of everything we do and we take an individual approach to make a difference for every child and young person with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.”

January 2023



Foreword

Welcome to Wakefield and District Short Breaks Statement.

Wakefield is ambitious for our young people; we want to make sure that all our children are happy, healthy, safe, supported and achieving their potential.

Parents, carers, children, and young people (CYP) in Wakefield have told us that the information about short breaks (and how to access them) needs to be clear and easy to understand. We are grateful to them for telling us their views and the time they have given to help us create and design this document.

Wakefield's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) strategy clearly identifies our vision for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, putting the child and their family at the centre of everything we do and taking an individual approach to make a difference for every child and young person with SEND. This Short Breaks Statement has been developed with this in mind.

Wakefield's Early Help Strategy makes it clear that the Wakefield Together Partnership is committed to delivering services for all children and families that need help, at the earliest opportunity and in the right places. Short Breaks are an important part of the early intervention strategy. Together we will make sure that everyone who needs a short break is able to access one through an improved Short Breaks Offer.

Cllr Margaret Isherwood

Portfolio Holder CYP Services

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Section 1: Introduction

What is a Short Break?

Short Breaks are services provided to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to support them to experience things that other children do, at home and in their community. Short Breaks services also enable families and carers to continue to provide care and supports children with disabilities to be fully part of their family. For most children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities these are provided by services that are available to everybody.

A short break can be:

- Accessible fun activities in the community
- Services to help carers in the evenings, weekends or school holidays
- Day time or overnight care in the home or else where
- Support to accessing fun activities in the community.



What is a Short Breaks Statement?

The Children's Act 1989 places a duty on Local Authorities to offer short breaks.

The statement provides information about what a short breaks is, who can access a short break, the range of short break services available, information about how to access suitable short breaks services and how we listen and respond to children and young people and parent carer views.

How can Short Breaks help children, young people and their families?

Short breaks help children and young people to:

- Enjoy fun activities like other children do
- Develop independence
- Spend time with their friends and make new ones

Short breaks help families to:

- Spend time together
- Meet and get to know other families and share experiences
- Have a break from their caring responsibilities



Section 2:

Who can access Short Breaks?

Children and Young People with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can access short breaks. There are different types of short breaks available to meet different needs.

Universal Services

Page 9

Activities and fun things to do for everyone including children and young people with SEND

Targeted Services

Page 11

Activities and services designed specifically to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.

Specialist Services

Page 13

Activities and services for children and young people with SEND who need extra help as they may have very complex needs that cannot be met by any of the services above.

Section 3:

Find out more

This Short Breaks Statement has a lot of the information you may need. More is available on the **Local Offer** website at <https://wakefield.mylocaloffer.org/>

[Wakefield Early Support Advice Information Liaison \(WESAIL\)](#) is available to parent carers of a child/young person who has or may have SEND aged 0-25 who are living within the Wakefield District. This service is available to young people themselves and those working with families.



Join the Register of Disabled Children

The Council has a statutory duty to keep and update a register of disabled children called Wakefield Information Network (IN) - it is voluntary for people to join. This helps the Council and partners with planning what services and support may be needed in the area for children and young people and informing future Adult Services.

The IN is a register of families with children and young people with SEND aged 0-25 and practitioners who work with them. The IN is used to send out information about support and services including short breaks, engagement events, consultations and termly newsletters.

Parent carers can register on their child's behalf, or if you are a young person aged 16-25 you can register yourself.

You can join via the Local Offer website or by calling the Wakefield Inclusion Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Support Service (WISENDSS) on **01924 302471**.

Section 4:

Short Breaks Services

Universal Services

These are activities and services for everyone including Children and Young people with SEND and this includes children's centres, youth centres, libraries, parks, leisure centres and social activities.

There are lots of activities and services in the community which all children and young people can access e.g. brownies, sports clubs, bowling, parks and open spaces.

The people who run these universal services have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to make sure children and young people with SEND can access them.

Some of the activities may be free but some have costs for all people who access. Children and young people with SEND should not have to pay more than other children and young people.



How can you access these activities and find more information?

Activities and services can be booked directly with the activity provider. You can find out more about these in your local area by contacting your local community centre, looking at the [Experience Wakefield website](#) or looking at the [WF Youth website](#).

Often services and activities allow entrance for a carer to the activity for free or at a discount - e.g. with a Max Card. This is a discount initiative which has been designed to make days out more affordable for children and young people. For more information visit [Max Card website](#).

The council offers free Max Cards to families with children and young people aged 0-25 years old with SEND. To receive a free Max Card you need to sign up to the Information Network (more information in section 3).



Targeted Services

These are activities and services designed specifically to meet the needs of **children and young people with SEND**.

There are lots of activities and services in the community that are able to meet specific needs, e.g. autism-friendly cinema screenings, disability sports groups, a youth group for children with learning difficulties.

How can you access these activities and find out more?

Activities and services can be booked directly with the activity provider. You can find more details of all the targeted short breaks activities, clubs and play schemes via the [Wakefield Local Offer website](#).

Simply go online, click on Things to Do and filter using the categories to shortlist what you are looking for. If you can't find what you are looking for, use the feedback button to send an email or contact **WESAIL** on **01924 965588**.

"I find the group very helpful as it covers topic areas and have noticed a difference in my daughter keeping herself safe whilst using the internet and social media which was a big worry to us, and the Youth workers are always approachable and supportive" (Mum)



Families are expected to pay the standard cost for the child or young person to attend the activity or service. Often services and activities allow entrance for a carer to the activity for free, but sometimes you have to apply for this e.g. at the cinema.



Did you know...? Cineworld offer Autism friendly screenings and you can apply for a [CEA card](#) so that carers get in free.

You Said:

You said we needed to make it easier for you to find activities and things to do.



We Did:

We have made it so much easier to search for activities and things to do on the [Local Offer Website](#) - you can filter by days, times, disability, and postcode. You can also contact WESAIL or follow them on [Facebook](#).



Specialist Services

These are activities and services for **children and young people with SEND** who need extra help as they may have very complex needs that cannot be met by any of the universal or targeted services.

The extra help includes specialist medical equipment, personal care, or support from specialist trained workers.

Specialist short breaks are designed to enable children with complex needs to enjoy fun activities in a safe environment and/or give families a break from caring.

We have enhanced our specialist short breaks offer with support from the Department of Education (DfE) Short Breaks Innovation Fund and also the Happy Healthy Holidays programme.

Who are these services for?

For families with the most complex needs who require more support than is offered by other services. This may be because of changes in the family's ability to support their child or because the child or young person's needs are, or have become, greater.

Some families will have a wider network of support, however, if you find you don't, or your family would benefit from extra support from Wakefield Council you can request a social care needs assessment.

How can you access these activities and find more information?

To see what you and your child might need from a specialist short break you will need to have your family's needs assessed. You and/or your child will be at the heart of the assessment, and it will consider your family needs as well as your child's needs. These can be requested anytime and it's a discussion with either a social worker or assessment officer.

They will look at:

- Child's needs and development
- Parent Carer's needs (Parent Carer Assessment)
- Family and environment

Once complete you and your worker will look at what support is required and how your needs can be met. If your needs cannot be met, your worker will discuss your options.

Who checks the assessments?

All assessments are checked by your workers manager during supervision and regular quality assurance meetings. This may mean they have to come back to you for more information to make sure you receive the right support for your family.

What is a Parent Carer's Assessment?

The council has a duty to assess the needs of any carer who requests an assessment, or who appears to need to support. The Council works on the principal that parent carer's needs are looked at as part of a holistic assessment and this gives a clearer picture of any support required. However, parent carers can ask to just have their own needs assessed.

What factors are discussed?

- Own physical health and mental health
- Family factors (such as single parent/any relationship difficulties)
- Amount of support available from wider family or friends
- Caring for others
- Being employed, in education/training
- Housing situation
- Quality of sleep
- Support during school holidays

You Said:

That not everyone is finding it easy to have an assessment when they ask for one.



We Did:

We now have a specialist team to complete assessments of needs for families who want to access Short Breaks but do not have a social worker. This team will provide a dedicated and co-ordinated short breaks service.

Pathway for Specialist Short Breaks Service

Referral

- Parent/Carer and Professionals can submit a referral to Social Care Direct - 03458 503503

Pre-Assessment Checks

- Practitioner to check if family's self identified needs can be met by universal or targeted services
- If needs cannot be met, continue the pathway for specialist short breaks service

Assessment of Need

- Practitioner completes a holistic assessment with the family (including parent/carers assessment) and determine eligibility to access the specialist short breaks service (personal budget)

Support Planning

- Practitioner advise parent/carers of all specialist short breaks support options
- Practitioner work with family to draft a care and support plan as part of Short Breaks Panel application

Short Breaks Panel Referral

- Practitioner will submit panel referral to Short Breaks Panel with proposed care and support plan and copy of assessment for decision

Short Breaks Panel

- Multi-agency panel, meets fortnightly to agree eligibility of specialist short breaks and award specialist support packages

Brokerage and Implementation of Support

- Parent/carers will be notified by practitioner and Specialist Short Breaks Team of panel decision
- Specialist Short Breaks Team will begin brokerage and identify suitable support as agreed by Short Breaks Panel

Is there an eligibility criteria?

Not for an assessment but there is to access a specialist short break and an assessment is completed to see if you meet this.

To decide eligibility both the child and the parent carer's needs as well as family/ environmental factors are looked at together to see what overall support is needed.

For further information you can view the [eligibility grid](#) on the Local Offer website.

You Said:

Parent carer assessments are not being completed.

We Did:

We've tried to make it clear that the need of the parent carer is always looked at as part of the assessment. But if any parents want an assessment solely for them this can be requested through Social Care Direct.



Section 5:

Care and Support Plans

After an assessment, you and your worker will create a Care and Support Plan for your child and family. This will include:

1. Outcomes (what the short break needs to improve for you and your family) e.g.:
 - I will access social and leisure opportunities in the community every week so that I can have fun and be able to spend time with my friends without my parent/carer being there.
 - I will travel with support on public transport in the school holidays to access fun activities in my community. This will develop my independence and help me work towards travelling more independently.
2. How your child's needs will be met (what type of specialist short break will support your child to meet the outcomes)
3. The frequency of support (your personal budget allocation for your short break).



Who agrees the plan?

You and your worker agree the plan first. Your worker then submits a Short Breaks referral including your proposed Care and Support Plan to be checked by a manager to ensure all your options have been identified, your eligibility checked and to help explore what services and support is available for you.

The application then goes to Short Breaks Panel to agree the budget for the support - this is called a personal budget (more info on page 13).

What Specialist Services are available?

The Wakefield Local Offer website contains all the most up to date information on activities and services available. If you can't find what you're looking for speak to your worker, give feedback or contact WESAIL (01924 965588).

Information can be categorized by type of support, days/time, and if there's minimum/maximum hours to be used which is deducted from your personal budget.

How will I know the Short Breaks I chose are right for my child?

Knowing what you want to get from your Short Break will help decide which is right for you as every child and family is different.

If you start with one type of support, then change your mind your worker can help support you to find a new one.

Is there Transport for Short Breaks?


Those with parental responsibility are responsible for transporting their children and young people to access Short Break support.

Your family's transport needs will be looked at as part of your assessment, any transport needs will be discussed at Short Breaks Panel.

You Said:

You wanted to have a much better understanding about what each provider can/can't do in order to help you choose the best for fit your family.

We Did:




We've updated the Short Breaks section on the Local Offer website, so it better outlines the support available, including who they are, the support they offer, to who and what days and times.

You Said:

You wanted to be able to change your package of support more easily for example - changing the support in school holidays to meet your needs.

We Did:



You will receive a post panel letter which outlines the support agreed and next step information. It also has contact information for the Short Breaks Team who can help explore and change provisions.

Section 6:

Personal Budgets

What is a personal budget?

A Personal Budget gives family control and flexibility to choose and pay for the services they need. It is an allocation of funding following the agreement at Short Breaks Panel which should meet the total cost of provision indicated in the Care and Support Plan.

The Personal Budget can be provided as a direct payment, managed account or you may wish to have a combination of the two.



Section 7:

Managed Accounts and Direct Payments

Managed Account

When the council finds support and pays it on your behalf out of your personal budget.

Direct Payments

When you find the support yourself and you pay for it directly from your personal budget.

Managed Account

The Council manages your personal budget, finds the provider for you and pays them directly. The council only pays Short Break Providers who they have contracts with and who they commission. To become a commissioned Short Break provider, they must go through an application process and meet minimum quality standards (CQC) and have the right policies and procedures in place.

If your support is provided through a service that the Council runs itself, then this is also a managed account.

If the service, you require is not a commissioned Short Break provider it doesn't mean they are not good quality - just means that we cannot pay them directly so you could take a direct payment to manage this yourself (more information on the next page).

You Said:

You would like a better range of activities that can support children and young people with SEND, particularly during the school holidays.

We Did:

We now commission more Short Break providers and have more range and choice. We have multi-sports, drama and music, arts and crafts, sensory rooms, computer games, indoor/outdoor games, baking etc. Now we run specialist holiday clubs every school holiday (except Christmas and two weeks in the summer holidays).



Direct Payments

You manage all or part of your personal budget yourself - this could be either through finding your own provider and paying them directly or employing a personal assistant (PA). This can be quite daunting, but the Council has a lot of support available.

You will receive support through Penderels Trust to set up direct payments. They provide employment and legal advice, and assist you in recruiting and selecting a PA.

If you want to manage your own personal budget but don't think you can manage the invoice and bank accounts, then a Third Party Supported Account (TPSA) can be requested - your worker can discuss this with you.

Key Responsibilities if you find your own provider and pay directly are:

Ensure the service provider is registered with the appropriate body (Ofsted/CQC)

Check that the service providers invoices are correct

Pay the service providers invoices

Ensure the service provider is a registered business or if they are self-employed that they are registered with HMRC and have an up to date liability insurance

Key responsibilities if you employ your own personal assistant are:

Interviewing PAs, gathering references and applying for DBS through the Council (they will pay and do this for you)

Provide the PA with a job description, employment contract and manage staff including covering holidays and sickness

Pay wages including holiday, sick pay, tax, national insurance and employer's liability insurance

Section 8:

Preparing for Adulthood

All children need to be prepared for adult life and Short Breaks play an essential and important role in developing young people’s independence, confidence, and social awareness. Support for transition arrangements start at an early stage and some of the Short Break activities are specifically designed to give disabled young people the opportunity to develop skills for future independence and improve overall family functioning and wellbeing.

Children and young people can experience new activities and interests through social interaction opportunities designed to develop skills and ultimately prepare them for adult life. These activities contribute and link to “preparing for adulthood” outcomes of independent living in the community and maintaining health in the four key life outcomes:

Employment and further education	Living independently	Having friends and relationships and being able to participate in local community	The best health possible
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Section 9:

How can you get involved?

As a local area we need to make sure we ask parent carers and children and young people, what you all think of the Local Offer to help us improve it and make sure it meets your needs.

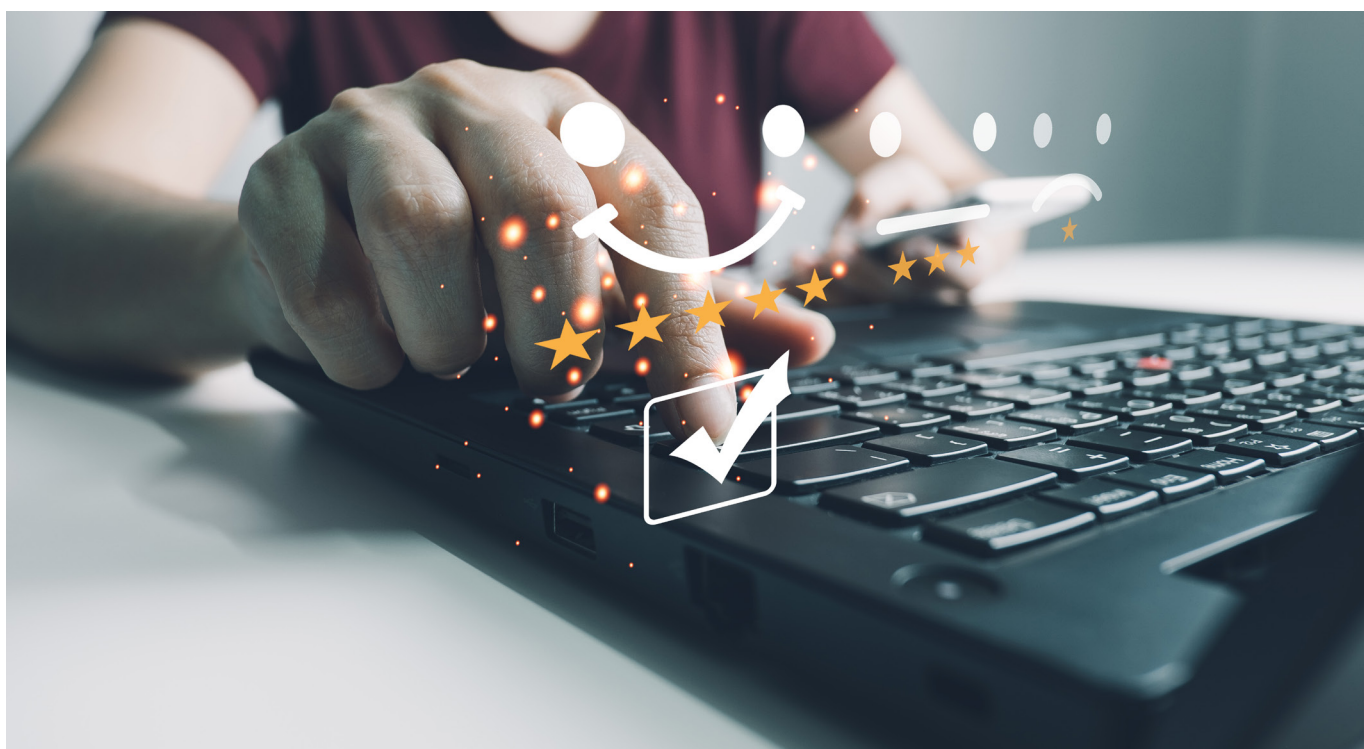
We need to review the short breaks support annually with some more often and families are required to engage with these processes so we can ensure the provision remains appropriate.

We welcome input from parents, carers and children and young people to feed into the reviews

We do this in a number of ways...

- Feedback via the Local Offer website.
- Feedback at Local Offer Live, Parent Carer Conference and other events.
- Feedback from Wakefield Parent Carer Forum, who link in with lots of other parent carer groups.
- Feedback from services who work directly with children and families, such as WFYouth, WESAIL, Barnardo's, Schools etc.
- Feedback from the listening events.
- Feedback from engagement events.
- Feedback from consultations.

You can access the latest 'You said, We did' link [here](#).



Section 10:

Contact Information

The Short Breaks Statement is reviewed regularly. You can let us know what you think about the **Local Offer** and **Short Breaks Statement** at any time during the year by:

- Contacting us on **Facebook @ Wakefield SEND information**
- Contacting Wakefield Parent Carer Forum via email at **info@wakefieldparentcarers.co.uk**
- Contacting **WESAIL** on **01924 965588** or email: **WESAIL@family-action.org.uk**

What to do if you have a worry about Short Breaks?

If you are worried about a short break or activity that you or your child have accessed, or you are not happy with the support provided to you during the assessment process - we recommend you talk to your worker or the Specialist Short Breaks Support Team:

Telephone: **01924 306065** email: **sendshortbreaks@wakefield.gov.uk**

If you are still not satisfied with the support, you can make a formal complaint to the Complaints and Representations Team.

Telephone: **01924 302840**

Email: **socialcarecomplaints@wakefield.gov.uk**

Post: **Wakefield One, PO Box 700, Burton Street, Wakefield, WF1 2EB**

