

**Support for your family
for children and young people with
disabilities**

**Short Breaks
Statement 2022**

www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreaks

Dear Parents, Carers, Children and Young People

As the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and Young People at Hampshire County Council, I am very pleased to introduce the refreshed Hampshire County Council's Short Breaks Statement for 2022.

This statement explains how our short breaks and social care support services for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs are organised and how you can access them.

This is the latest update of the statement which was first introduced in 2012. Creation of the 2012 statement involved a great deal of input from local parents and carers of disabled children - with sections being written by representatives from Hampshire Parent Carer Network (HPCN). I am delighted that HPCN has also been involved in reviewing and updating this updated statement

While the Short Break Activities Programme has undergone some changes since 2012, I am pleased that we have been able to maintain an effective programme, providing good quality breaks for parents and carers of disabled children and fun, educational opportunities for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities.

Don't forget that the Hampshire Local Offer: <https://fish.hants.gov.uk/localoffer> outlines all services and support available to children and young people aged 0-25 years with disabilities or special educational needs, including Short Break Activities, education, health, social care and leisure services.

I hope you find this comprehensive and a helpful source of reference and information.

Yours faithfully

Councillor Roz Chadd

Hampshire County Council's Executive Lead Member for Children's Services

Contents

Introduction and summary

What is a short break service statement?	4
How has this Statement been prepared and reviewed	4
Participation in future reviews of the Statement	4
Contact us	4

What is a Short Break?

Targeted Short Breaks	5
How can Short Breaks Activities help me and my family?	5
Who is it for?	5
Gateway Card+	6
How can I access a targeted Short Break	6
Community Buddy Scheme	7
Universal Short Break Activities	7
Gateway Card	8
Register for a Gateway Card/+	8
How will my data be used	8
Mainstream Providers	8

Specialist services from social care

Who is this for? (Eligibility criteria)	9
How to access	9
Types of support available	10
Personal budgets	10
Overnight Respite	11

Other useful information

SENDIASS	11
For children under five years old	12
Childcare	12
Early Help	12
Independent Futures Team	12
How to get involved with influencing services	13

Introduction to the Short Breaks Statement

What is a short breaks service statement?

This statement is a guide to the services offered by Hampshire County Council. This statement tells you what Short Breaks are available to support your family and how to find suitable services. Every local authority must provide a statement and listen and respond to parent and carers views.

How has this Short Breaks statement been prepared and reviewed?

For this most recent update we consulted HPCN parent representatives, key service staff and providers to refresh the information and ensure it is still relevant and accurate. The updated statement will be promoted through HPCN and the Hampshire Local Offer.

Participation in future reviews of this statement

This statement will be checked annually to ensure it remains an up-to-date reflection of current services. We will notify parents and carers of opportunities to get involved in influencing and planning services via Hampshire Parent Carer Network.

We would love to include more quotes and short stories from children and young people about their short break experiences in future statements. If you have anything that you would like to include, please contact the short breaks team:

shortbreaks@hants.gov.uk

Contact us

For more information, or if you would like this information in another language or format, such as Braille or large print:

Telephone: 03707 793569

Email: shortbreaks@hants.gov.uk

Website: www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreaks

What is a Short Break?

There are several types of Short Breaks that parents, and carers can access for their children and young people; they can range from community activities that can be accessed via a gateway card, short break funded activities accessed with a gateway card +, to specialist services from social care such as overnight respite and care support.

Targeted Short Break Activities

How can short break activities help me and my family?

Targeted Short Break activities are fun or educational activities for children and young people with a disability which allow their parents or carers to take a 'short break' from caring. These activities could provide respite opportunities to enable parents and carers to take part in training, leisure activities, day to day tasks, or education.

The current Short Break Activities Programme consists of a range of activities to suit your family's needs and the things that your child or young person likes to do, such as:

- Specialist playschemes and activities – run specifically for children and young people with moderate or complex needs.
- Support to attend mainstream activities, playschemes clubs and groups.
- Community buddy scheme.
- Exception Funding that considers those grant applications that may not fall into the Short Break priorities of having a break at the weekend, during school holidays or at youth clubs.

We are working with, and fund, a range of voluntary organisations and special schools to provide short breaks, including activity providers (arts, sports clubs etc.), holiday and weekend playschemes and youth clubs. Any activity provider that meets the Short Break priorities can apply for funding to include your child in their programme of activities. The priorities have been identified by families as;

- having a break within the school holiday periods, including; half-terms, Easter, and summer holiday periods;
- having a break via Youth Clubs during term-time;
- having a break that's available on weekends

Who is it for? (Eligibility criteria)

Our Short Break Funded Activities programme is open to children and young people who:

- have a disability and/or additional needs (supporting evidence required)
- need support to take part in leisure activities
- are between 0 and 17 years old
- live in the Hampshire County Council authority area (excludes Portsmouth, Southampton, the Isle of Wight and neighbouring authorities)
- have a Gateway Card +

Gateway Card +



The Gateway Card + is free and will give you access to activities, playschemes and buddy schemes available through our Short Break Activities Programme.

You will pay a standard activity cost for your child to attend the Short Break Activity. On booking the activity you may be asked to either pay the full cost or a partial amount, with the balance to be paid in full on the day of the activity. Please check with the activity provider on their payment policy.

We are aware that financial difficulties can be an issue for many families, so we have asked all activity providers to consider this when applying for their short breaks grant. If cost is a barrier to you attending an activity, please discuss directly with your activity provider about paying a concession rate. Please note that eligibility criteria will [apply](#).

Most activity providers will ask how they can support your child to enjoy an activity safely and happily – some families have used a 'book about me' or a '[communication passport](#)' to provide this information, which is available to download from the Leisure and Play section on the [Hampshire Local Offer](#).

How can I access targeted Short Break activities?

You will book directly with Short Break activity and playscheme providers. They will ask you to present a valid Gateway Card + either at the point of booking or when you arrive at the activity/playscheme. Your card will either be scanned, or the long card number will be recorded.

When your Gateway Card+ is scanned, or the long number is recorded this data will come back to our central database within Hampshire County Council. Information collated via scanning/ uploading Gateway Card numbers and project reports completed by Short Break activity providers, helps us to evaluate our short breaks provision and informs the decision-making process for future grants and commissioned services.

What if I have a problem with a targeted Short Break activity?

If you experience any problems in accessing a Short Break Activity, or problems while your child is attending, please discuss this with the activity provider or buddy provider in the first instance and ask for a copy of their complaints policy if needed. If you remain unhappy, or you need some support to address the problem, please contact us on **03707 793569** or email shortbreaks@hants.gov.uk.

Community Buddy Scheme

A Community Buddy is a person who enables children and young people with a disability and/or additional needs to access activities in the community. A Community Buddy is like a friend going along to a chosen activity which gives a greater sense of independence as well as giving time away from home.

A Community Buddy is a volunteer or paid member of staff who prior to being approved for the scheme has been interviewed, checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and suitably trained. When you enquire about a buddy, the provider will organise a pre-visit where you can discuss your requirements and talk about suitable buddy matches - this consultation is free of charge. The provider will work with you to help you to choose the right buddy based upon your child's individual needs.

You can then decide together with your child or young person how you would like to use the time. The Community Buddy will provide the support needed to do this, whether the chosen activity is shopping, bowling, going to the cinema or just taking a walk in the park.

The scheme is open to children and young people aged 7 and above who have a Gateway Card+ and can be used after school, at weekends, in the holidays, for a few hours at a time, or for a whole day - it is entirely up to you.

The Community Buddy Scheme charges an hourly (subsidised) rate to families of £6.50, plus the cost of any activity and travel.

For further information on Community Buddy Scheme go to our [website](#) or email community.buddyscheme@hants.gov.uk

Universal Short Break activities

Some parents and carers fed back to the short break activities team that they predominantly use their gateway card to access activities and services in the community that are not funded through the short break activity grant fund. In response to this we now have the Gateway Card, this card can be shown to community providers to indicate that your child or young person requires additional support to access their activity/service.

Gateway Card



Activities that may accept the gateway card can be found listing on the [website](#)

To register for a Gateway Card or Gateway Card + visit:

<http://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/specialneeds/shortbreaks/gatewaycard> where you will find further information about how to apply and the supporting documentation you will need.

You can find details of short break activities within the [Hampshire Gateway - Leisure and Play](#) section of the Hampshire Local Offer.

How will my data be used?

For information about how Hampshire County Council will use any personal information that you supply please refer to the [Privacy Statement](#).

How can I feel confident that mainstream activity providers can adequately support my child or young person?

We encourage mainstream activity providers to apply for funding and discuss what training and support that they need. We have found that most activity providers want to be inclusive for all children, they just need some extra support to gain the confidence to be able to do this. Activity providers are encouraged to talk and work together with families to create positive inclusion in their activities. They can find out about learning and development opportunities at:

<http://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/specialneeds/shortbreaks/learningdevelopment>

There is a lot of useful information about your child's right to be included at:

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/help-resources/resources/my-rights-your-responsibility-leaflets>

Specialist services from social care

Who are specialist services from social care for?

Specialist services from social care are targeted at families with the most complex needs, offering an individual support package (also called a 'child in need plan') to meet those needs. A social worker will assess your child to see if they are eligible for specialist services.

You can find out more about the **eligibility criteria** and factors that may inform or influence an assessment here:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/specialneeds/shortbreaks/specialistservices>

How do we access specialist services from social care?

To see what help might be needed from social care, you are able to request an assessment of your disabled child's needs at any time. This assessment should take into account the whole family's needs including parents, carers and siblings.

The assessment is a way of recording the information gathered by talking with you, your child and other people involved with your family. You will be fully involved, and you will be able to write your own comments on the assessment too. The social worker will need to discuss your family's needs with their managers to agree the plan that is required to support you and any services that they hope to offer.

To request help and support or to ask for an assessment from Children's Services, email childrens.services@hants.gov.uk or phone 0300 555 1384.

Please note: Emails are dealt with during normal office hours Monday to Friday. At all other times, if you require a more urgent response, call the above telephone number.

What if I disagree with your decision about eligibility for specialist services following an assessment?

You should be given a copy of the eligibility criteria along with the decision.

If you feel it has not been applied fairly, or that important factors were not taken into account during the assessment, you can follow the [mediation process](#). You can also find more information about why children may not be eligible for access to specialist services:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/specialneeds/shortbreaks/specialistservices/noteligible>

If you still remain dissatisfied, you can complain in writing to: Children's Services Department Complaints Team, Elizabeth II Court East, Winchester SO23 8UG or email childrens.services.complaints@hants.gov.uk

What types of support may be given from social care?

Each family's situation is unique. Staff will spend time with your family to understand your individual needs and to consider what services would be most suitable to support both the child or young person with disabilities as well as you as their parent or carer. Social workers can arrange suitable support from other professionals and frequently have a co-ordinating role to make sure all the different parts of the child's plan work well together. Some children and young people with very complex health needs will have funding support from health organisations too.

The types of services that might be considered include:

- **Care Support**

This is an individual worker employed by a care support provider, who comes into your home to support the family. This might be to assist with personal care, or to support your child to do something outside of the home such as accessing the community. Some children and young people will need experienced support workers or two support workers at the same time. Sometimes staff can stay in your home and support your child while you go out.

- **Direct payments**

This is where a young person or the parent or carer of a child or young person with disabilities is given a direct payment to purchase their own service, instead of the Local Authority arranging that service on their behalf. Some parents who are using direct payments find they have more control over the services they receive and find that the care provided can be more convenient and flexible. To be able to access this service your child will need to have had a social work assessment and meet the eligibility criteria for a specialist service. The parent or carer can use the direct payment to employ a carer(s) directly to care for their child. Parents and carers will need to keep a record of what is spent and will be supported to set up the payroll and employment factors of this arrangement if they chose to employ people directly.

More help and advice is available from

www.enhamtrust.org.uk/Pages/Category/direct-payments or telephone 01264 345862

- **Personal Budget**

Personal budgets help families to personalise the support they require in ways that work best for them. Care support and direct payments can form part of the personal budget, following an assessment of needs and to achieve the specific outcomes for the child.

Since the Children and Families Act 2014 families can request a personal budget for children or young people for whom the local authority maintains an Education Health & Care (EHC) plan or has decided to make an EHC plan. **Personal budgets** are an allocation of funding following an assessment which should meet identified needs in terms of personal outcomes. A parent or carer or the young person can either receive their personal budget as a direct payment, leave it to be managed by their local authority or have a combination of direct payment and commissioned support. Any personal budget allocated will be reflected within section J of the EHC plan.

- Further information can also be found here:
<https://fish.hants.gov.uk/personalbudgets>

- **What about an overnight break?**

A small number of families need the opportunity to have a break overnight. This resource is targeted at families where:

- the child regularly does not sleep through the night and needs supervision to stay safe
- the child has complex health needs that regularly need attention during the night
- the child's support needs are so intensive that the parents/carers need a longer break.

The overnight break can take place at a range of locations, including within a family home, or with trained foster carers in their home (Home from Home), or at a specialist residential unit.

Any organisation that provides overnight short breaks must be registered and checked thoroughly, and social workers will discuss this further with you if they feel that this is a service that your family needs.

How do families get the help they need before they reach crisis point?

Short Break Activities in themselves are intended to be preventative by giving parents and carers a break that enables them to continue in their caring role. The Short Break Activities Programme in Hampshire has been specifically designed to provide early support and intervention, ensuring wherever possible that families receive enough support so that they do not reach crisis point.

Other useful information

SENDIASS

[Hampshire SENDIASS](#) is an impartial Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) that aims to make a positive and lasting difference for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and their parents and carers. They do this by providing timely confidential, impartial information, advice and support through online resources for [parents and carers](#), [children and young people](#) and [practitioners](#); at events and workshops; via a helpline service and through individual casework.

Children under five years old

What if my child is not yet at school?

You can find out about activities and services for under-fives in your local area

<http://fish.hants.gov.uk/hampshiregateway>

Where can I find out about suitable childcare?

The Short Break Activities Programme is designed to give parents and carers a short break rather than regular childcare. However, we appreciate that finding suitable childcare is important to working parents. To search for local childcare and early years education services visit:

<https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/family.page?familychannel=1>

The Government's website <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> provides details of a range of support available to meet childcare costs.

Early Help

In Hampshire, Early Help is offered by a range of services and agencies, including Hampshire County Council's Family Support Service (FSS) and the Supporting Families Programme (SFP).

The Family Support Service aims to enable children at risk of poor outcomes to achieve educationally, socially, and physically by supporting parents and carers to build their skills and resilience. By enabling parents to meet their children's developmental needs more effectively and by offering support as needs arise, difficulties can be prevented from escalating into something more complex, requiring statutory intervention.

To find out more about the work of the Family Support Service and the support available visit:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/familysupportservice/aboutus>

For further assistance call **0300 555 1384** or email

childrens.services@hants.gov.uk.

Independent Futures Team

The team in Hampshire County Council which supports people moving between Children's Services and Adult social care is called Independent Futures. For further information on support during this transition at age 18, visit:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/transition-to-adult>

How do short breaks support transition?

Transition is the time when young people are moving from childhood into adulthood, between 14 and 18 years old. This is the time when young people are preparing to leave school and take the next steps in their adult life. For young people with disabilities and additional needs more support may be needed during this time to enable them to reach their full potential.

We aim to provide a range of age-appropriate Short Break Activities for teenagers. Information about these activities can be found in the [Leisure and Play - Hampshire Gateway](#) section of the [Hampshire Local Offer / <https://fish.hants.gov.uk/localoffer>](#)

How can I get involved in influencing services?

Hampshire Parent Carer Network (HPCN) www.hpcn.org.uk is an independent, parent-led group set up to ensure that the families and carers of children and young people with disabilities and additional needs can participate fully in the development of services within Hampshire. They would be keen to hear from you if you would like to have your voice heard, or if you feel able to represent other parents and carers when decisions are being made about the support and services provided:

<https://www.facebook.com/HampshireParentCarerNetwork>