

The Short Breaks Statement

September 2023



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Who is responsible?

The lead officer responsible for preparing and reviewing the Short Breaks Statement is the Service Manager, Children with Disabilities.

What is the Short Breaks statement?

Hounslow’s Short Breaks statement sets out the range of services available for disabled children and their families, eligibility criteria and how these services can be accessed. The Hounslow short breaks statement is a document developed for parents and carers of disabled children and young people (0- up to 18) living in the borough of Hounslow.

Local authorities are provided by law to produce and publish a statement of short breaks services for disabled children and young people and their families under the Children’s Act 1989 and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011. The Equality Act 2010 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.”

In Hounslow, services for children and young people with a disability are being developed within the context of the Children Act 1989 (2004), the Equality Act 2010, Carers Equal Opportunities Act 2004, the Carers and Disabled Children Act (2000) and the Children and Families Act 2014

What is a short break?

A short break was described by Together for Disabled Children (TDC) as “additional services required to support disabled children and their families; in other words, short breaks are services over and above the universal services expected and available to all families”.

- A short break can be for just a few hours to overnight care or longer, e.g. a holiday, and could be within a variety of settings, including the child’s home.
- Short breaks are designed to engage disabled children and young people in either one to one or group activities, which will be enjoyable, reduce social isolation and contribute to personal and social development and are usually undertaken away from their primary carer.
- A short break can be a range of activities; including sports, music sessions, going to the cinema, youth club, after school clubs, play schemes and/or residential care.

- Whilst all children should be able to access youth clubs, extended schools activities, community and leisure facilities – however, if additional support is required (e.g. the child requires support through a sessional worker service) – this may then constitute a short break.

Within Hounslow the short breaks on offer provide both specialist and access to mainstream activities for disabled children and young people up to the age of 18 years. Through the Hounslow Parent Carers Forum and continued consultation with parents/carers and disabled children and young people it has been acknowledged that some families want short breaks which are open to the whole family, including siblings and/or activities at times or within settings which are exclusively for disabled children and their families/carers.

Short breaks are not childcare, e.g. care when a parent/carers is working and requires care for their child.

Carers

Under the [Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000](#), carers aged 16 or over who provide a regular and substantial amount of care for someone aged 18 or over have a right to an assessment of their needs as a carer. If there is more than one carer providing regular care in your household, you are both entitled to an assessment.

Very occasionally, a 16 or 17 year old who cares for someone for a limited period may be entitled to an assessment. The Local Authority has a responsibility to make sure a young carers own well-being is looked after and that they receive the necessary support.

If you have parental responsibility for a disabled child, your needs as a carer will be assessed as part of a family needs assessment. You have the right to a family needs assessment under The Children Act 1989. You do not need to be the mother or the father of the child.



Short Breaks in Hounslow

Services are available in three categories: **Universal**, **Non-assessed** and **Assessed**

Universal Services

These are, for example, leisure centres, youth clubs, sporting activities etc and are available to all children and young people in Hounslow, details of these services can be found on the Family Service Directory (FSD) website: <http://fsd.hounslow.gov.uk> or you can call them on tel: 020 8583 3470.

An assessment of need is not required to access universal services. However, registration with Short Breaks is necessary to access the Short Breaks activities that are available for Pathway 1 activities.

Short Breaks - Non-Assessed

The non-assessed Short Breaks programme is open to all children and young people up to 18 years old who have a disability and/or Special Educational Need in the London Borough of Hounslow.

Access to the Short Breaks programme is via a short registration with the Short Breaks team where the needs of the child will be discussed and basic family and contact details will be taken. The registration will normally be between the parent/carer and the Short Breaks team; however, a child or young person can also be referred by professionals. It will be at that point that the child or young person's current Pathway will be established. The child or young person will be issued with a Unique Identifying Number (UIN) which will be required each time a short break is booked with a Short Breaks provider.

A newsletter is published before each school holiday period with a detailed programme of activities and mailed to families registered with the Short Breaks service. It is also available online at www.hounslow.gov.uk/shortbreaks or on the [Hounslow Local Offer](#) at the same time as it is mailed.

In order to ensure that those children and young people who have least access to mainstream activities are prioritised, the programme for each holiday period is opened in stages to each pathway. Each activity has a contact name and number so that a booking can be made by the family

Parent/carers need to register their child with the Short Breaks team before accessing services. The Short Breaks team can be contacted on 020 8583 3636.



The Short Breaks team provide activities as per below:

Scheme	Scheme description	Provider	Age group & Eligibility	When
Music therapy	1:1 music therapy sessions	Richmond Music Trust	5 – 18 years Pathway 2 & 3	All year round
Sunday Drop-in (Redlees Play Centre, Isleworth)	Access to a sensory room, soft play area and playground equipment including a wheelchair accessible treehouse	Hounslow Play Team	0 – 18 years Pathway 1, 2 & 3	All year round (every other Sunday)
Sunday Drop-in (Reflections Play Centre, Feltham)	Access to a white room, ball pool, soft play area and garden	Hounslow Play Team	0 – 18 years Pathway 1, 2 & 3	All year round (every other Sunday)
Range of sporting activities	Sporting activities comprise of multisports, swimming lessons, kayaking, tennis, gymnastics, cycling, weekly athletic sessions, deaf specific sports etc	Brentford Football Club Community Sports Trust	5 – 18 years Pathway 1, 2 & 3	School holidays and term time, dependent on the activity
Reporters club and after school club	A club comprising of visits , activities and interviewing people to produce a newsletter for the community. After School Club: a range of onsite activities	Brentford Football Club Community Sports Trust	11 – 18 years Pathway 1 & 2	Reporters club runs in the school holidays After school club runs during term time
Holiday Soccer Camps	A football club which runs alongside an arts and crafts session	Feltham Bees	7 – 18 years Pathway 1 & 2	School holidays
Family swim sessions and pool parties	Exclusive Short Breaks sessions held at Brentford Fountain Leisure Centre	Lampton Leisure	0 – 18 years Pathway 1, 2 & 3	School holidays
Soft play area	Access to soft play area all year round	Heathrow Gymnastics Club	0 – 7 years Pathway 2 & 3	All year round
Family fun-days	Day trips to the beach	Short Breaks	0 – 18 years Pathway 2 & 3	Summer holidays
Family Cinema and theatre showings	Exclusive relaxed sessions booked throughout the year	Watermans	0 – 18 years Pathway 1, 2 & 3	School holidays

The Short Breaks team provide activities (contd)

Scheme	Scheme description	Provider	Age group & Eligibility	When
Family Parties	Christmas and Summer Parties	Watermans	0 – 18 years Pathways 1, 2 and 3	School Holidays
Horse Riding	Meet the horses, learn about grooming and have a ride	Park Lane Stables	5 – 18 years Pathway 1 & 2	School holidays
Decisions R Us	A young person can apply for up to £250 of funds towards a 'personalised' activity they wish to take part in.	Short Breaks	5 – 18 years Pathway 1 & 2	All year round
Childminders	Funding of 24 hours per child to support the initial development of the relationship between the child and a registered childminder.	Short Breaks	0 – 8 years Pathway 2 & 3	All year round

Short Breaks - Assessed

Specialist services provide short breaks to support children and young people who require a high level of support. London Borough of Hounslow has a number of specialist services available, an assessment of need will be required to access the services. The assessment will be carried out by the child's Social Worker who will be a member of the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team. The following services are available.

Scheme	Scheme description	Provider	Age group & Eligibility	When	Referrals
Specialist Day Care					
Westbrook	Level of care is assessed by the Managers' Funding Meeting	London Borough of Hounslow	10 – 18 years Pathway 3	All year round	Referrals are made through the child's Social Worker Tel: 020 8583 3177
Specialist Daycare	Specialist daycare provision, level of service is allocated following an assessment by the child's Social Worker from the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team.	Kids	0 – 18 years Pathway 3	All year round	Referrals are made through the child's Social Worker Tel: 020 8583 3177
Direct Payments	Allocation of money for the carer to manage and buy services needed for the disabled child. An assessment is required by the Social Worker from the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team.	London Borough of Hounslow	0 – 18 years Pathway 3	All year round	Referrals are made through the child's Social Worker Tel: 020 8583 3177
Specialist Overnight Care					
Westbrook Short Break Unit	Specialist overnight care in the short break unit. The amounts of nights allocated is based on an assessment by the Social Worker from the Children with Disabilities Social Work team	Westbrook	11 – 18 years Pathway 3	All year round	Referrals are made through the child's Social Worker Tel: 020 8583 3177
Specialist Group Based					
Various Play schemes	A variety of play schemes suitable for disabled children.	London Borough of Hounslow Play Team	0 – 18 years Pathway 1, 2 & 3	All year round	Tyron Cargnello Tel: 020 8583 2920

The Eligibility Criteria

– Pathways of Need

The Pathways are designed to reflect the needs of a child or young person at the time they or their family access a service. There are three levels of need, Pathways 1, 2 and 3, which reflect the needs of the child and indicate the eligibility for access to the particular short break services offered. It is acknowledged that the needs of children and young people can change over time and therefore they may move through the pathways at different times in their lives. Below is an explanation of some of the characteristics of each Pathway and what services are available under each pathway.

Pathway 1

The child will most likely attend a mainstream school and can access most mainstream activities with minimal support.

This offers access to the universal mainstream activities within the borough and some of the non-assessed Short Breaks programme with support from the services providing the activity.

Pathway 1 services are open to all disabled children and young people, and will not usually require any form of assessment of need apart from those provided by the non-assessed Short Breaks service. Services may operate their own eligibility criteria, e.g. age based services.

These short breaks can be accessed directly by the young person, their family or carer. The service provider and/or a specialist worker involved with the family can support access to Pathway 1 short breaks and activities. Specialist workers, e.g. teacher, Health Visitors, Portage worker, can help the family and young person to decide which short breaks and activities to access. These may include Youth clubs, sports and leisure activities, extended school activities, play groups in the community, or children centres.

Pathway 2

The child or young person will either attend a mainstream school (with access to specialist support, eg. ASD centre) or attend a special school - they will most likely have an Education Health and Care Plan and will need some additional support to access short breaks.

Pathway 2 offers short breaks from the non-assessed Short Breaks service. These are available after registration of the young person with the Short Breaks team. Pathway 2 activities are provided with support from staff experienced with working with disabled children and young people.

Pathway 3

The child will attend a specialist provision and require specialist support to access short breaks. They will most likely have an Education, Health and Care Plan. They may be known to the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team.

Pathway 3 is designed for the small group of children, young people and their families/ carers who need short breaks with extra, specialist care. If the child or young person is known to the Children with Disabilities Social Work team, they may be able to access assessed short breaks via their social worker.

Where an Assessment of Need has been completed by a social worker, the Managers Funding

Meeting, which has members from the different services who provide support to disabled children, will consider the level of service required to meet the child or young person's needs and promote their welfare. This panel looks at the best way of providing and funding short breaks for children and young people with the highest levels of need. When they are looking at a package of short break support, the panel takes into

account the assessed needs and the opinions of the specialists who work with the child or young person. The parents and/or carers' opinions about the kind of short break that they would find beneficial and, where appropriate, the views and wishes of the child or young person are also considered. The panel brings everyone's ideas together to work out how best to provide the right short break package for the child/ young person and their family.

Assessed short breaks can include specialist play sessions, overnight short breaks, Direct Payments and a specialist worker who will offer care in either the home or the community.

Pathway 3 activities are also available from the non-assessed Short Breaks team.

You can talk to the Short Breaks team to help you decide which pathway your child currently sits on. Their number is 0208 583 3636.



Pathways of Need

Dimension	Pathway 1 Level of Need	Pathway 2 Level of Need	Pathway 3 Level of Need
Mobility	Able to walk unassisted, but with difficulty or poor co-ordination.	Walks, but only with aids or assistance. May use a wheelchair sometimes.	Full time wheelchair user and/or Mobility severely restricted without special provision.
Vision	Severe or profound problem with one eye. Less than half visual field loss. Able to function independently.	Able to read print with simple aids or assistance. Defect of at least half visual field. May be eligible for registration as partially sighted.	Unable to read large print without intensive educational assistance or sophisticated aids. Registered.
Hearing	Severe or profound hearing loss in one ear. Hearing loss 20-40 dB	Hearing loss 41-70 dB	Hearing loss >71 dB
Functioning and Learning ability	Overall functioning slightly below expected level for age. May have a mild or moderate learning disability	Overall functioning around half expected level for age. Has a moderate learning disability	Overall functions significantly below expected level for age. Have a severe learning disability or a moderate learning disability and diagnosed ASD.
Health	Known health condition, which is under control but occasionally interferes with everyday activities in a minor way.	Health condition that limits normal activities, including self-care and personal hygiene, access to services. May interfere with opportunities for development or education.	Diagnosed health condition, which is severe and potentially life threatening, and results in frequent hospital admissions that limits accessing developmental or educational activities. May be in receipt of Continuing Care or palliative care from Health Services.
IMPACT OF DISABILITY			
Communication	Delayed language development only.	Delayed/ disorganised verbal communication causing difficulty. Speech supplemented by alternate communication method.	Uses communication other than words, e.g. symbols, makaton, BSL.
Personal care	Child requires minimal support beyond that of their peers with everyday care needs; this will include toileting, washing and dressing.	Child requires practical support beyond that of their peers with everyday care needs; this will include toileting, washing and dressing.	Child requires assistance beyond that of their peers with all everyday care needs; this will include toileting, washing and dressing and can be problematic and need skilled intervention.
Safety and Supervision	Requires occasional supervision beyond that expected for their age. Poor sense of danger or risk of excitability.	Needs supervision to perform daily activities significantly greater than that expected for developmental age. Limited perception of danger to self or others.	Needs constant supervision during the day and night. Would place themselves or others at risk without supervision.
Behaviour and Social Integration	Some mild, transient or frequent behaviour difficulties. Able to use local non-specialist universal services. Able to sustain limited peer relationships and social integration with support. Child requires support to access services.	Behaviour problems severe or frequent enough to require some specialist advice or provision. Significant support required to achieve social integration. Only able to sustain peer relationships with support. Child requires services to prevent or alleviate stress in the family.	Long-term behaviour difficulties make it difficult for the child to function appropriately most of the time, and maybe of risk to the child or carers without special provision. Dependence upon carer for social integration. Limited awareness of impact of behaviour upon others. Services required to prevent high risk of accommodation for the child.

Children and young people should meet at least one of the dimensions in Band A and one from Band B to meet the criteria for that pathway. To discuss your child's pathway, please call the Short Breaks team on 020 8583 3636.

Advisory Groups

There are advisory groups available to support a family. Short Breaks works closely with SENDIASS, the Hounslow Parent/Carer Forum and Our Barn in the Community. The Family Service Directory has a comprehensive list of groups who provide advice and support to families of a child with disabilities or additional needs <http://fsd.hounslow.gov.uk>

Provider	Scheme description	Contact
SEND IASS	<p>Under the Children and Families Act (2014) it is a legal requirement that all Local Authorities have a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) The Hounslow Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) provides this service for parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in the borough. This service is also offered directly to young people as well. While the service is funded by the London Borough of Hounslow (LBH), Hounslow SENDIASS works independently of the local authority.</p> <p>Hounslow SENDIASS provides independent and impartial advice based on the law and government guidance.</p> <p>Hounslow SENDIASS can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with you virtually or in person to discuss your concerns or needs. Communication may also be by phone and email • Explain how the SEND system works – for instance, accessing Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans • Assist you in you navigating the often-complex world of SEND • Signpost you to appropriate local authority services, including the Local Offer • Support you through dispute resolution and mediation processes with schools and the local authority <p>We are a self-refer service. Parents are able to access us directly. We are unable to take referrals from professionals.</p> <p>If you would like our help, please telephone us on 020 8583 2607 or email us at sendiass@hounslow.gov.uk</p>	<p>Tel: 020 8583 2607</p> <p>Email: SENDIASS@hounslow.gov.uk</p>

Advisory Groups (contd.)

Hounslow Parent/Carer Forum

The Forum is a group of Hounslow-based parents or carers of children/young people (aged 0 to 25 years) with disabilities or special educational needs and local professionals who meet once a month in an informal meeting.

The Forum meets to discuss real issues that affect families such as health, education and employment. Professionals are invited to share their current plans and to hear what parents have to say. It is also a place to share information parent to parent and to ask questions.

The two hour meeting has minutes and an agenda to record parents ideas and concerns. These are used to inform policy making within Hounslow.

The Short Breaks team attend the Forum regularly to update parents and to consult on all aspects of the Short Breaks programme.

Hounslow Parent Carers Forum

postal address:

Hounslow Parent Carers Forum
Hounslow Youth Centre
Kingsley Road
Hounslow
TW3 1QA

Phone: 020 8570 4671

E-mail: hounslowpcf@gmail.com
www.hounslowpcf.co.uk

Our Barn Carers Support Group

Including drop-in service, themed discussions, and 1 to1 support. Sessions will focus on themes such as transition, inclusion, loss of identity as a carer, plus monthly newly diagnosed group. Session details on the Our Barn website events calendar: www.ourbarn.org.uk or email lesley@ourbarn.org.uk. Parents in Touch volunteers will be available to assist with form-filling and advice if required. If you require help with a DLA application, or other lengthy form please book an appointment by contacting the PiT Helpline by phone: **07548 219428** or email pit.helpline@gmail.com

Tel: **07548 219428**

Email: pit.helpline@gmail.com

**Running term-time
Wednesdays, 10am to 1pm**

Bridge Link Centre, Summerwood Road, Isleworth TW7 7QR
H20, 110, 267 and 481 buses run nearby. There is parking.

Carers therapeutic support, led by **Lesley Beck, BACP accredited counsellor.**

How we will review the statement

This statement will be reviewed regularly in consultation with parent carers and young people to ensure that we are constantly adhering to the needs of children in the Local Authority.

We will continue to work with the Hounslow Parent Carers Forum to ensure that their views contribute to the planning of the statement. The forum meets every month to discuss the needs of disabled children in the borough.



Getting Involved

If you would like more information about Short Breaks in Hounslow, the support offered to disabled children and young people and their families, would like to attend the Hounslow Parent Carers Forum or simply have a question, then please contact the Short Breaks Team who will be able to help or pass on your details to the appropriate service.

Contact the Short Breaks Team on:

020 8583 3636 or e-mail shortbreaks@hounslow.gov.uk

More information on short breaks and services to disabled children and young people can be found on the following:

The Local Offer <http://fsd.hounslow.gov.uk/localoffer>

The Hounslow website (<http://www.hounslow.gov.uk/shortbreaks>)

The Family Information Service (<http://fsd.hounslow.gov.uk>)



Consultation Process - 2023

“Thank you very much to the Short Breaks team. Your work very hard to make the families happy. We couldn’t go elsewhere and kids were not accepted in the normal playgroup but over the years, we felt belonging in the Short Breaks activities. The kids looked forward to every holiday and it’s activities. It helped us as a family and helped my mental state.”

In December 2022 all parent and carers of children and young people registered with the Short Breaks service were invited to complete a survey which sought their views on accessibility and delivery of short breaks in Hounslow. Parent/carers were asked to complete and return the survey by the beginning of February 2023.

The Short Breaks Survey was mailed to 1636 families with either one or more children registered with Short Breaks. An online version was also available via the Hounslow Council website. 103 questionnaires were returned which represents a 7% return.

Customer satisfaction

Outcome from 2023 Survey

The 2023 survey showed 99% felt that the short breaks activities were positive and enjoyable for their young person and 94% found the activities were positive and enjoyable for other family members. Both these results are a slight increase from the previous survey.

Aim for 2024

We are looking at ways to ensure that the Short Breaks activities are provided equitably and that the activities provided continue to be of a high standard and improve the outcomes for the young people registered with the service and their families. We will also continue to work with the Hounslow Parent Carer Forum to consult with parent/carers with regards to the Short Breaks programme and use the feedback from the survey to improve services.

Accessing Short Breaks.

Outcome from 2023 survey

85% find it very easy, easy or OK to book onto a Short Break. This is a 10% decrease from the previous survey and demonstrates the frustration with the ever-increasing demands on the service and subsequently on the availability of activities.

Aim for 2024

We continue to monitor attendance to ensure all booked places are used and will follow up with families if a pattern of non-attendance occurs. Due to the needs of our young people, we do understand that last-minute issues may occur that stop attendance to the activities. However, due to the increasing number of children registered with the service, it remains vital that booked places are taken up.

We are also working with local partners to increase the number of activities that are on offer and have been able to offer more activities in our summer 2023 programme as a result of this.



Impact of Short Breaks

Outcome of 2023 survey

99% responded that their child's behaviour had improved (60%) or stayed the same (39%). 65% responded that Short Breaks had either significantly improved (20%) or improved (45%) their family relationships, with 35% remaining the same. 67% reported that their stress levels had significantly (23%) or moderately (44%) reduced within the family.

"Allowed them to play freely, without having to stop an activity because other families do not understand."

"Gained confidence to do things on his own."

"My child's socialising confidence skills have greatly increased."

"Now able to sit for longer at cinema - able to enjoy new experiences."

Aim for 2024

We will continue to provide a programme that is adaptable, relevant and suitable for young people and their families. 59% of the respondents accessed the programme every school holiday or more.

Family activities continue to be very popular, with 91% wanting more family based activities - family

activities may not be considered a traditional short break but demonstrates that by providing a sympathetic, non-judgemental environment for the disabled child, it means that the whole family can enjoy a positive experience together and enjoy a 'short break' together.

Our sporting activities with Brentford FC Community Sport Trust are clearly the most preferred activity with 77% wanting more of these activities. Other activities that families want more of are our family swims and pool parties (53%), our theatre, film and parties with Watermans Arts Centre (Hounslow Arts Trust) (52%), our summer family trips to the beach (51%) and horse riding (48%). There is also a clear demand for play schemes and after school clubs.

58% of the responses felt that short breaks gave them a break from caring which is a slight decrease from the last survey; however 40% of families still feel they do not get a break from caring so we will continue to ensure that are activities are as stress-free as possible and look for opportunities that provides a break for all our parent/carers.

Complex Needs and Under 5s

Parent/carers were again involved in the evaluation and selection of the current providers on the new Short Breaks framework contract which commenced in April 2022. Providers were selected being mindful of our specification to provide specialist and non-specialist activities and services for children with complex needs. However, no providers who could provide such services tendered for a place on the framework. However, we have ensured that, as far as possible, that there are activities for all disabilities within the main Short Breaks programme. We are still aware that, for a very small percentage of our children access to the programme may be difficult. In this instance, families should talk to their Social Worker or refer themselves to Early Help Hounslow – tel: **020 8583 6600**.



If you have queries or would like to find out more about Short Breaks for Disabled Children, please contact:

London Borough of Hounslow,
Hounslow House
7 Bath Road, Hounslow
TW3 3EB

Tel: 020 8583 3636

Email: shortbreaks@hounslow.gov.uk

www.hounslow.gov.uk