



March 2013

# Central Bedfordshire Short Breaks Statement

Security classification:  
Protected

## **Introduction.**

This Statement applies to disabled children aged 0-18 who live in Central Bedfordshire and their families. The Statement will be reviewed bi-annually by the Local Authority and disabled children and their parents and carers to ensure their needs are being met.

The document will give you information about:

- Who can access Short Breaks;
- The range of Short Breaks currently available;
- How the short breaks service will meet the needs of disabled children and young people and their families in Central Bedfordshire.

This is a partnership document informed through joint work with Children's Services, parents, carers, children with disabilities, health, schools and the voluntary sector.

## **Definition of Short Break Services.**

Short breaks are opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to spend time away from their primary carers, and provide opportunities for their parents and carers to have a break from caring responsibilities.

In Central Bedfordshire Short Breaks can include day, evening, overnight, weekend or holiday activities that take place within the home of the child or young person, in the home of an approved carer, a residential or a community setting.

Short breaks come in many different forms and can be anything from a couple of hours to days – the length and type of break will depend on your child and family.

## **Our Aims and Vision**

In Central Bedfordshire our aim is to ensure that we provide quality Short Breaks which support families to live an 'ordinary' life.

We recognise that all families are different and require different levels of support and different types of Short Breaks depending on the age and disability of their children; some families may need more support than others because of circumstances and the support may be required for a short period of time or it may be longer.

It is also important to note that whilst we know that both local and national research demonstrates that Short Breaks are a priority for families with disabled children, we believe that they should be delivered as part of a much broader package of family support services. All recent research indicates the need for 'early intervention'; this was also highlighted as part of the SEN and Disabilities Green Paper and included in the recommendations from the recent Tickell report into Early Years Foundation Stage. To achieve this the Children with Disabilities Service is working with all our partners – health, education, social care and the voluntary sector, to ensure that all families with disabled children have timely and regular access to services, advice, guidance and information

We aim to provide families with the best possible support and to work in partnership to develop and improve our services and we will continue to evaluate Short Breaks and

ensure that they are meeting the needs of disabled children, young people and their families.

## **Consultation - What has happened so far?**

The Statement has been informed by partnership consultation events:

- 2009 Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) Parent Consultation. The 2009 AHDC consultation was informed by in-depth consultation with parents through Family Voice. The focus of this included clubs, social activities; communication, information; access and general provision.
- July 2011 – September 2011. The Council consulted with professionals including social workers, early years, health care professionals and voluntary organisations. The views of parents, carers, children and young people were sought. The Register of Children with Disabilities and existing support groups for families, carers and children in Central Bedfordshire contributed.
- September 2012 – November 2012. The Council reviewed the consultation
- Incomplete actions from consultations and review have been carried forward and are now part of the Children with Disabilities Transformation Programme.

The 2011 consultation informed the authority that all partners including parents and children would like to see further improvements in a number of areas. Central Bedfordshire is committed to ensuring this feedback influences the development of future services and to demonstrate this Short Breaks now include:

- Holiday activities.
- Out of school social activities during the week and at weekends.
- Sibling Group activities.
- Overnight Short Breaks.
- Support to access the community.
- Assisted leisure activities.
- Day Care.
- Specialist Childminders (up to age 11).

## **Transport**

We are aware that transport can be a barrier to accessing Short Breaks. We will continue to support local groups to become more accessible so that families spend less time travelling to their Short Breaks. We will work with our providers and our colleagues to ensure that wherever possible and appropriate young people are supported to become independent in travelling to access their Short Breaks and that environments are adapted appropriately.

## **Transition**

Central Bedfordshire will continue to support young children as they become young adults. We will work towards developing positive activities for young people including facilitating them to take part in local community activities linked to the transition programme. The

Children with Disabilities Service will work to ensure that Short Breaks address the transition needs of young people moving from children's to adult's services and will work with partners to develop short break support that reflects the changing needs of teenagers and young adults.

The 2012 Review raised issues around access, flexibility, allocation and information. These will be addressed by:

- Development of local bases in Biggleswade and Dunstable increasing local services
- Increasing parent participation
- Development of participation for children and young people
- Ongoing review of Short Break Provision

In 2013/14 a multiagency group, which has been set up to take forward the required changes to SEN and Disability provision, will be driving improvements in post 16 provision, transition to adulthood, children's participation, and workforce development.

## **How do I find out about Short Breaks?**

There are different ways to find out about Short Breaks:

- Families and carers can phone 0300 300 3000 and asking for the Children with Disabilities Team. The Team will also be able to give information about who is the best person to speak to for more specialised Short Breaks.
- There is a fact sheet for parents and carers available on the website or by phoning 0300 300 3000 and asking for the Children with Disabilities Team.
- A professional who works with your family eg social worker, family support worker, community nurse, will be able to find out information for you.
- The Central Bedfordshire Council Website, Children with Disabilities page has information on Short Breaks  
**<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/support-for-families/Children-with-disabilities.aspx>** or by entering 'children with disabilities Short Breaks statement into the search box on front page of the Website  
**[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**.
- Ask another parent! Parents tell us that speaking to each other is one of the best ways of finding out about available opportunities.

## **Access to Short Breaks.**

For children to be eligible for a service from the specialist Children with Disabilities Team they must:

Be aged under 18 years old and live within Central Bedfordshire

Have a permanent and substantial diagnosed disability from one or more of the following categories

- Severe or profound learning disabilities/autism
- Severe or profound physical disabilities
- Severe visual disability
- Severe or profound hearing loss
- Significant or profound sensory disabilities
- Multiple disabilities which together severely impact on quality of life
- Complex long term health needs
- Severe or profound social and communication difficulties related to disability

Children with the following disabilities would not be eligible for services from the Children with Disabilities Team unless they also have a diagnosed disability as outlined above:

- Emotional and behavioural disorders
- Mental Health Difficulties
- Medical conditions that are not permanent
- If the presenting problem is not related to the child with a disability (eg another family member)

Families meeting Blue and Red Levels of the eligibility threshold (Appendix Two) will be eligible for the Local Offer as set out in Appendix One. Families already receiving a service will have their packages adjusted accordingly.

At Blue and Red Levels children and families require an initial assessment as a minimum to access this provision. Packages provided will be reviewed at a minimum six monthly interval to ensure the family is receiving the right level of support. Families can request a review or a further assessment of needs at any time and it is possible for families to move between the levels.

The Council proposes that access to the “local offer” will be available to those disabled children in Blue Level and Red Level of the eligibility threshold.

The children in Yellow and Green Levels can access mainstream services through the Family and Youth Information Service (0300 300 8119). Many children with disabilities will not need a direct service from the children with disabilities team but in these cases families will be signposted to organisations for general support and information or to specialist teams for help in specific areas.

The Children with Disabilities Duty Team can be contacted on 0300 300 8169.

## **Reviewing the Statement and measuring impact**

The Council appreciates the importance of consultation to ensure this provision is meeting needs for children with disabilities. It will evaluate the provision and its effectiveness alongside partners.

The Central Bedfordshire Children with Disabilities Service will ensure that the short break services focus on providing quality services by continuing to develop our strategy alongside families and young people, recognising that the views of parents and carers and children and young people are essential for future successful outcomes. Consultation with parents and young people will be further developed.

We will continue to measure the satisfaction of parents and young people receiving Short Breaks services. We will closely monitor the views of users and staff thereby ensuring everyone is involved and supported in the development of services.

We will publicise changes that we make in response ensuring that parents, carers, young people and children know that we are listening and acting on their views.

Information about the Statement and Short Breaks Services is available on the website [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Information about transition is also available on the website. When young people are 18 they will transfer to Adult Services if they meet the Adult Services thresholds.

Following consultation the Statement will be published in January 2013 and will then be reviewed bi-annually. The first review of the new Statement will be in January 2015. The outcomes of consultation and reviews will be made available on the Central Bedfordshire website.

### **Contact us...**

by email: [Christine.Collis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Christine.Collis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)  
on the web: [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

or by telephone: 0300 300 6311

Write to Short Breaks Consultation, Central Bedfordshire Council,  
Amphill Area Office, Houghton Lodge, Oliver Street, Amphill MK45 2TG

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact us on  
0300 300 6311

## Appendix One

The Short Breaks Grant is no longer available and will be replaced by the Local Offer following consultation.

### The Local Offer

There are two levels of support depending on the needs of your child. This is a flexible system and families can move between levels as their needs change.

**BLUE LEVEL These children will have a severe diagnosed disability in the categories outlined. Their disabilities are likely to have a moderate impact on family life and the children's quality of life would be improved with access to universal services, signposting and up to 156 hours per annum of Short Breaks activities. These children will either have a severe diagnosed disability and be in special schools or have a severe diagnosed disability and be receiving a minimum of 20 hours per week 1:1 help in mainstream schools.**

All eligible children and young people are offered flexible support so that they can take part in local activities. Children can access the Local Offer of **up to** 156 hours of support which can include

- Up to 156 hours of direct payments – allocated cash, to a maximum of £1519.44, for the family to provide a personal assistant to support their child **or**
- Up to 156 hours of an alternative short break such as
  - \* Youth groups
  - \* Playscheme or holiday activities
  - \* 1:1 support at home
  - \* 1:1 community support

Assessment at this level – an Initial Assessment will be carried out and reviewed at six-monthly intervals.

**RED LEVEL Children in this category will have severe diagnosed disabilities in the categories detailed which are having a severe impact on family life and the children's quality of life is severely affected. These children are unlikely to be able to access universal services and will need specialist provision in education, health and social care.**

This level of support is available to fewer families facing extra challenges and includes:

- Families with a child with a life limiting condition;
- Families with a child with a disability whose severe behaviour difficulties challenge carers/siblings/other family members;
- Families with a child with complex health needs which require a carer with specialised training;
- Families with additional caring responsibilities.

Options can include:

- Overnight stays in a residential setting;
- A comprehensive package of direct payments or Short Breaks.

Assessment – Following the referral the family will be contacted by a social worker from the Children with Disabilities Service and they will work together to decide on the level of support which will be offered.

**Direct Payments** Please note Direct Payments are paid at a rate of £9.74 per hour which makes the maximum payment for the Local Offer £1519.44 per annum. The payment will be made on assessed need not on maximum hours/payment.

## **Appendix Two**

### **Central Bedfordshire Eligibility Threshold**

In order for children to be eligible for a service from the specialist Children with Disabilities Team they must:

Be aged under 18 years old and live within Central Bedfordshire and have a permanent and substantial disability, from one or more of the following categories

- Severe or profound learning disabilities/autism
- Severe or profound physical disabilities
- Severe visual disability
- Severe or profound hearing loss
- Significant or profound sensory disabilities
- Multiple disabilities which together severely impact on quality of life
- Complex long term health needs
- Severe or profound social and communication difficulties related to disability

The table below can be used to categorise the severity of the impact of the impairment on the child's functioning, within a disability type. The indicators in the table assist in classification of severity of disability only. They do not constitute disability classifications.

All children receiving services from the Children with Disabilities Team in Central Bedfordshire would be expected to have a diagnosed disability



	Meets Threshold for Services		Does Not Meet Threshold for Services	
Disability Category	Profound Impairment RED LEVEL	Severe Impairment BLUE LEVEL	Moderate Impairment GREEN LEVEL	Mild Impairment YELLOW LEVEL
<b>Learning</b>	Has a Statement of Educational Needs. Attends a Special School for children with severe learning difficulties	Has a Statement of Educational Needs. Attends a Special School for children with severe learning disabilities or has a severe learning disability and attends a mainstream school receiving a minimum of 20 hours 1:1 support a week	Has a Statement of Educational Needs Attends a mainstream school with limited support.	Does not have a Statement of Educational Needs
<b>Mobility</b>	Unable to walk. Totally dependent on others for mobility. Wheelchair user.	Unable to walk without aids or assistance. Able to manoeuvre self some of the time. May be able to stand or transfer with support.	Able to walk, but occasionally requires aids or assistance.	Able to walk/move independently, but with some limitation of function. May have poor co-ordination of movement.
<b>Gross &amp; Fine Motor Skills</b>	Unable to use hands for any purposeful movement.	Mostly unable to use hands to complete tasks effectively. Able to use switch systems	Considerable difficulties with control of hands. Requires some assistance to complete tasks.	Some difficulties with control of hand movement for precise work.
<b>Health</b>	Unable to take part in normal social and educational activities.	Frequent or daily interruption of normal tasks. Significant interference with development and / or learning.	Intermittent but regular limitations on ability to perform everyday tasks. The child's development or learning may be affected.	Known health condition, which is under control and only occasionally interfering with everyday activities in a minor way.
<b>Vision</b>	Mobility restricted without special provision. Requires education by non-sighted method. Eligible for registration as blind.	Unable to read large print without assistance or aids. Severe visual field defect with impaired visual acuity. Eligible for registration as blind or partially sighted.	Able to read print with simple aids or assistance. Defect of at least half visual field. May be eligible for registration as partially sighted.	Severe or profound problem with one eye. Defect of less than half visual field. Able to function independently.
<b>Hearing</b>	Hearing loss over 95 dB.	Hearing loss between 71 - 95 dB.	Hearing loss between 41 - 79 dB	Severe or profound hearing loss in one ear. Hearing loss between 20 - 40 dB.

	Meets Threshold for Services		Does Not Meet Threshold for Services	
INDICATORS	<b>Profound Impairment RED LEVEL</b>	<b>Severe Impairment BLUE LEVEL</b>	<b>Moderate Impairment GREEN LEVEL</b>	<b>Mild Impairment YELLOW LEVEL</b>
<b>Communication</b>	Unable to communicate needs by any method. Unable to use communication aids.	Limited or no verbal communication. Able to communicate basic needs without the use of language.	Delayed or disordered communication, including language disorders. Speech supplemented by another method of communication.	Mild delay of language development.
<b>Personal Care</b>	Total assistance required for bathing, dressing, toileting and eating.	Assistance required for bathing, dressing, toileting or eating.	Some supervision or assistance required for bathing, dressing, toileting or eating.	Occasional difficulties meeting own self-care needs.
<b>Consciousness</b>	Comatose. Intractable seizures, in frequent succession.	Regular seizures on a daily basis. Impacts on the child's learning or development.	Seizures day or night on a regular basis, usually once per week.	Occasional daytime seizure (up to one per month)
<b>Behaviour &amp; Social Integration</b>	The challenging behaviours are impacting on all aspects of the child's functioning. The behaviours pose a significant risk to the safety of the child or others.	The challenging behaviours are impacting on some aspects of the child's functioning. Specialist provision is required for the child to function socially or within the family group.	The frequency or severity of the behaviours requires some specialist advice or provision.	Behaviours are occasionally difficult to manage. Special provision not required when managing the behaviour.
<b>Safety and Supervision</b>	Needs constant supervision both day and night. No ability to perceive danger to self or others.	Needs constant supervising during the day. Would place themselves or others at serious risk without supervision.	Requires supervision to perform daily tasks. Requires supervision significantly greater than that expected for children of the same age. Limited perception of danger to self or others.	On occasion, requires more supervision than other children of the same age.

It is more difficult to establish eligibility of under fives using the above classifications, The classification below is the eligibility criteria backbone for the under fives in Central Bedfordshire. The children receiving services from the Children with Disabilities Team in Central Bedfordshire would be expected to have a diagnosed disability.

	Meets Threshold for Services		Does Not Meet Threshold for Services	
Age	<b>Profound Impairment</b> <b>RED LEVEL</b>	<b>Severe Impairment</b> <b>BLUE LEVEL</b>	<b>Moderate Impairment</b> <b>GREEN LEVEL</b>	<b>Mild Impairment</b> <b>YELLOW LEVEL</b>
Under 5 years	Significant failure to meet developmental milestones.	Functioning moderately behind the level expected for age.	Functioning moderately behind the level expected for age.	Functioning slightly behind the level expected for age.
Over 5 years	Child is completely dependent on others to perform tasks.	Child is unable to perform tasks without aids or assistance most of the time.	Child requires some assistance to perform some tasks.	Some limitation evidenced, but able to function independently.

Information must demonstrate that the referred child needs more help or supervision than other children of the same age.

## **Appendix Three:**

### **Legal Context**

#### **Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011**

The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations took effect from April 2011, making it a legal duty for local authorities to provide a range of Short Breaks and a 'Short Breaks Services Statement'.

Paragraph 6(1)(c) of Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 requires Local Authorities to provide services to assist carers of disabled children that will give them breaks from caring for a disabled child.

To meet the requirements of the Regulations Local Authorities must have regard to the needs of Carers in respect of their capacity to care for, or continue to care for their disabled child, and must provide a range of services designed to meet this need. [*'Carer' means a person who provides care for a disabled child and who is either the child's parent or a person who has parental responsibility for that child. 'Disabled' has the meaning given in section 17(11) of the 1989 Children Act (2)*]

#### **Short Breaks Services Statement**

By 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011 a statement for carers about the Short Breaks available to disabled children and young people must be provided outlining:

- The range of services provided;
- Threshold to access Short Breaks services;
- How the range of services are designed to meet the needs of carers in Central Bedfordshire.

The Statement must be published on the local authority's website and be regularly reviewed. The Statement must be written in partnership with families and disabled children. The document must be widely promoted.

#### **Types of services which must be provided**

A range of services must be provided which are sufficient to assist carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively:

In particular local authorities must provide:

- Daytime care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere;
- Overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere;
- Educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside of their homes;
- Services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays.

#### **The outcomes of Short Breaks**

Local authorities must provide a service to carers of disabled children in order to :

- Allow them to care more effectively

Allow carers to undertake education, training, regular leisure activities and/or day to day tasks.