

# Short Breaks

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The term “short breaks” refers to services that help parents/carers to more effectively provide care for their disabled children by providing them regular breaks so that they can meet the needs of other children in the family; study or take part in leisure activities themselves; or carry out day to day household tasks. We also want short breaks to help make sure young people access positive activities.

Royal Greenwich has a duty to provide access to short break services for parent/carers of all disabled children aged 0-19 in Royal Greenwich (or up to 25, where part of a support plan). This statement explains:

- The range of services on offer in Royal Greenwich
- Who is eligible for services
- How to access services
- How we develop short breaks
- How you can shape short breaks

## How are short breaks organised?



There are a range of short breaks to meet different needs. A family may require a mixture of different services as their needs change.

Universal services: inclusive services that are used by most disabled children

Targeted services: Are services that are specifically for children and young people with disabilities. This may not require an assessment.

Specialist services: for disabled children and families who have exceptional needs or when there are safeguarding concerns. An assessment will be required.

## Universal Short Breaks



There are an estimated 3850 children and young people with disabilities in Royal Greenwich. The vast majority of families are able to have a short break by using free or affordable local services.

These could include:

- Early years settings providing education and childcare
- Child minders and other child care providers
- After school clubs
- Drama and music clubs
- Leisure services (swimming, football, dance)
- Youth services (youth clubs)
- Uniformed groups (scouts, brownies)

More information on universal services, including opening times and contact details can be found on the Local Offer or through the Family Information Service.

## Eligibility

Universal services aim to be inclusive and open to all disabled people, wherever possible.

Families and young people can contact the service providers directly and discuss:

- What is on offer
- Any eligibility criteria
- The needs they can cater for
- The availability of spaces
- Any fees

Some are free to use whilst others will make a charge. Some are free to use whilst others will make a charge. A subsidy may be available for families on low incomes.

Access by disabled children and young people Service providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments and must not treat a disabled person less favourably. However, not all universal services will be suitable for everyone. It is advisable to contact the provider to discuss your child's needs and what they can offer.

The Government provides many families with direct financial support via Disability Living Allowance (DLA). The Government also provides financial help for childcare for working parents. Families may use this to help them pay for short breaks.

## Targeted and targeted plus Short Breaks



The range of targeted short breaks services in Royal Greenwich includes:

- Targeted clubs and schemes for children with high needs
- Other activities not commissioned by Royal Greenwich such as targeted after school clubs for children and young people with disabilities.

### Targeted clubs and schemes

Targeted services provide breaks of up to 2 hours and are available to children and young people with disabilities who are unable to use mainstream services already available.

Royal Greenwich commissions a small range of clubs and schemes targeted towards children with high needs.

You can see details of the current range of targeted short breaks in the related links to you right.

### Targeted Plus clubs and schemes

These services support children and young people with the most complex needs, including those with severe ASD needs and/or severe learning disabilities, who require higher staffing ratios.

Targeted Plus services provide longer breaks of up to 5 hours with higher levels of staffing.

Royal Greenwich commissions a small range of clubs and schemes targeted towards children with high needs.

You can see details of the current range of targeted short breaks in the related links to your right.

## Specialist Short Breaks

Most families will get the support they need from the range of universal, targeted and targeted plus services on offer to them.

A small number of families will have exceptional needs that require special provision to help them. This may occasionally include specialist short breaks such as direct payments or overnight stays, or agency support.

The use of specialist services is always based on a social work needs assessment and a related goal or outcome.

An assessment will usually be done by a social worker from the Children with Disabilities Team. Families and professionals can make referrals to the MASH team directly by phone or e-mail. An assessment will consider your family's needs, the support and resources already available to you, including from your friends or family. If specialist support is required to meet exceptional needs a social worker will work with you to draw up a disabled child support plan.

## Shaping Short Break Services

Our short breaks offer has been developed in response to feedback from children, young people, families and professionals.

Over the past three years we have actively looked for feedback by:

- Talking to children and young people at short breaks activities
- Talking to the SEND young people's representative group in Greenwich (ACE)
- Talking to parents and carers at short breaks events, other events, focus groups and in standing meetings.
- Talking to professionals from health, social care, education and the voluntary sector
- Asking families to feedback on services
- Asking for feedback from parents and young people as part of the contract monitoring process.
- Working with Greenwich Parent Voice on an on-line short breaks survey
- Carrying out a Royal Greenwich on-line short breaks survey.

Young people and parents have also been involved in the commissioning process around short breaks. Royal Greenwich works closely with others, including Greenwich Parent Voice to support parents and carers in shaping short breaks services in Greenwich.

Recent changes to short breaks in Greenwich have been made in response to what people have told us:

- ASD youth provision to address a gap in short break provision for young people with ASD
- Increased provision of weekend short breaks
- Increased offer of evening and after school short breaks
- More age appropriate activities from providers

- We are looking at increasing the range of support workers available.
- The range of opportunities available now meets the needs of those with the most complex needs.
- We are looking at new ways of allocating short breaks to ensure that this is fair and transparent.