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Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum

# SEPTEMBER 2024 SHORT BREAK SERVICE STATEMENT



**Family Hubs**  
HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL  
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## Introduction

Welcome to Hartlepool's Short Breaks Statement. The aim of this statement is to provide parents and carers with information about:

- How we design short break services to meet the needs of disabled children and young people aged 0 – 18 years in Hartlepool and their parents/carers
- Who is eligible to receive short breaks
- The range of short breaks available in Hartlepool and how to access them

## Hartlepool's Vision

"All children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities will enjoy a happy, safe and healthy childhood that prepares them for adult life and enables them to be the best they can be."

## Better Outcomes for Families of Disabled Children

The delivery of the short break priorities are designed to improve the outcomes for disabled children and their families. As part of our service delivery the outcomes below are designed to make a difference for families of disabled children.

- Short Breaks aim to support parents and carers in their caring role and reduce levels of stress and anxiety due to the demands of caring
- They will aim to support disabled children and young people to access activities whereby they can make friends, have fun and support the development of their social, communication and independence skills
- When disabled young people are leaving school and making the transition to adulthood that they will be supported and are able to express their wishes and make appropriate choices
- Short Breaks will provide opportunities to enable families to spend time, relax together and for parents and their children to get to know other families and to build up a network of support and develop friendships

## What is a Short Break?

Short Breaks are activities for children and young people with SEND that enable them to have fun, spend time with friends and build their confidence and skills in a safe environment. As well as promoting best outcomes for the child, the Children Act 1989 Schedule 2 requires Local Authorities to provide services designed to assist family carers

of disabled children 'to continue to [provide care], or to do so more effectively, by giving them breaks from caring'.

There are a variety of Short Breaks available to children and young people in Hartlepool:

- All Short Breaks take place outside of the school day. This means that activities could happen in the evening, at a weekend or during school holidays.
- Many Short Breaks take place outside of the family home; for example in local leisure centres or community spaces, although some Short Breaks may be within the family home with specialist support, such as Personal Assistant, depending on the need of the child or young person and their family.
- Short Breaks can also include overnight stays, depending on the need of the child or young person, their family and the type of activity. This may be at the home of an approved Short Breaks Foster Carer, a Specialist Residential Home.
- Some Short Breaks can be for a child or young person with SEND to attend independently of their families, giving parents and carers the opportunity to have a break from their caring role.
- Some Short Breaks give siblings and/or families the opportunity to take part in activities together.

### Who are Short Breaks for?

Short Breaks in Hartlepool are available to children and young people who:

- Have a special educational need and/or disability
- Are aged 0 to 18 years old
- Ordinarily reside in Hartlepool

Eligibility decisions are based on individual need including to what extent a child or young person's disability or impairment affects their lives and the lives of those who live with and care for them.

### Why do we need a Short Breaks Service Statement and what is it for?

The Local Authority is guided by 'The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011' and 'Disabled Children Regulations 2011'. This means that all Local Authorities must:

- Prepare a statement that explains the range of Short Break Services it will provide
- Make information available and accessible
- Have a clear criteria for eligibility for Short Break Services
- Say how the services will meet the needs of families



## How has this statement been prepared and who was involved?

Hartlepool Borough Council has worked with Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum – 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future to develop this statement.

1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future is the Parent Participation Forum who work closely with the council to represent views and opinions of parents and carers across Hartlepool. They support the ongoing development and reshaping of services to support families.

## What types of Short Breaks are available in Hartlepool and how are they accessed?

Many children or young people with SEND will access a mixture of services. Some children will be able to access Universal Short Breaks services with or without support. Some of these may be Specialist Services provided through an assessment, and some will be accessed through Targeted Services commissioned from voluntary or independent providers.

Short breaks can be described in the following three categories;

- Universal Short Breaks;
- Targeted Short Breaks;
- Specialist Short Breaks.

The information below describes what is available within each of these categories and how different types of Short Breaks can be accessed.

### Universal Short Breaks

Universal Services offer Short Breaks opportunities that are open to ALL children and young people in Hartlepool who choose to use them whether or not they have SEND. There are lots of Universal Services available in the community which all children and young people can access such as libraries, youth clubs, family hubs, leisure centres, Scouts, Brownies, after school clubs and sports clubs. Most children or young people's needs can be met within Universal Short Breaks services and they do not require Targeted or Specialist Short Breaks.

The underlying principles of Universal Short Breaks are:

- To be preventative and to increase the inclusion offer for all children, enabling them to access their community, doing activities of their choice.
- To improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.

Family Hubs act as a hub for families in their local community. Hartlepool Family Hubs are a one stop shop for all families of children 0-19 (25 with SEND) for universal and targeted support. Parents, carers and young people can access advice, guidance and support from professionals in line with their needs, access a safe space and activities for younger children.

Universal Services offer activities that enable ALL children and young people to have fun and make friends and children with SEND should be able to access these if they want to. The people who run these activities have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure children and young people with SEND can access these services, for example, accessing additional training to meet behavioural or medical needs.

### **How do I access Universal Short Breaks?**

Many Universal Services advertise their activities within libraries, schools, Family Hubs, and community hubs. You can access Universal Services by contacting organisations directly to discuss the activities they offer. Some of these activities may be free. Some may have costs for all children and young people who access them. Children and young people with SEND should not be charged more than other children or young people.

Though we recognise that children and young people with SEND may have specialist support requirements, we encourage parents and carers to access Universal Services and discuss with providers the support that their child needs. This will help providers to increase their knowledge and skills in regards to supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Information about activities for children and young people can be found at [www.hartlepoolfamilyhubs.co.uk](http://www.hartlepoolfamilyhubs.co.uk), Hartlepool Family Hubs Facebook page or pop into your local Family Hub.

### **Targeted Short Breaks**

Sometimes Universal Services cannot meet the needs of children and young people with additional needs, even when reasonable adjustments have been made. Targeted Short Breaks are designed specifically to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND, and include weekend, holiday activity schemes, residential and evening activities.

The underlying principles of Targeted Short Breaks are to:

- supplement the universal provision available locally.
- be preventative and provide targeted support – not just as a crisis intervention.
- enable families to access Targeted Short Breaks without assessments.
- improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.

Some Targeted Short Breaks are funded by Hartlepool Borough Council while others are provided by voluntary groups and charities. Details of Targeted Short Breaks that are currently commissioned by Hartlepool Borough Council can be found at [www.hartlepoolfamilyhubs.co.uk/send-local-offer](http://www.hartlepoolfamilyhubs.co.uk/send-local-offer). The current commissioned services include:

Hartlepool families First North East

<https://www.hartlepoolfamiliesfirst.org.uk/>

Hartlepool Junior Funability and a Saturday Multi-Sports session

Families can book on to sessions either e-mailing [participation@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:participation@hartlepool.gov.uk) or calling (01429) 402896 / 07790809677.

### How do I access a Targeted Short Break?

Families can use Targeted Short Breaks without an assessment of need. Families can directly contact the service they are interested in and arrange for the child or young person to attend.

Families can also get support to identify short break opportunities from Family Hubs. They can offer you support and guidance about what is available. Contact your local Family Hub on 01429 292444 or [familyhubs@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:familyhubs@hartlepool.gov.uk).

If parents feel they need more support there are services available to children/young people with some support needs but may not meet the threshold for specialist social care support. In this case, the family will have an Early Help Assessment which has been completed by any practitioner involved with your child/family such as a teacher, health visitor, parent support advisor or a family support worker within the Early Help teams.

Following assessment, a plan is drawn up outlining the support needed, which may include a short break. Plans are reviewed regularly to check what progress is being made and to decide whether less or more support may be needed.

### **Specialist Short Breaks (which includes Direct Payments)**

These are highly specialist or bespoke services which are available to children and young people with high support needs. They can only be assessed as a result as a Child and

Family (C&F) assessment which will be carried out by a social worker from the Children's Disability Team. Specialist short breaks can only be accessed if specified in a child's plan.

The Social Worker has 45 days to complete the Child and Family assessment which looks carefully at the child's development needs, the parents'/carers' specific needs, any parenting issues and the wider family circumstances and environment. They will also gather relevant information from professionals involved with your child.

A support plan is devised following the assessment, which includes the services and short breaks that may be appropriate to be provided and how this will meet the child's/families' needs. The plan will need to be approved by SEND Commissioned Placement panel before the short break is approved. All plans are reviewed at least 6 monthly to make sure they respond to the needs of a child and family.

To be provided with a direct payment, the child must meet a specific eligibility criteria (see Appendix A).

### **How do we know that Short Break services are meeting needs of children and young people?**

In Hartlepool we have a very proactive Parent Led Forum that works in partnership with the Local Authority Officers, other relevant agencies and groups to ensure that service delivery meets the need of families of disabled children.

There is also parent representation on a number of strategic and operational groups, which provides a platform for parents to contribute and influence change. Parents are also actively involved in the commissioning of non-assessed short break provision and continue to play a very active role in the development of the local offer of services.

Children and young people are actively engaged in having their say about things they like to do. This is carried out in a number of ways, including: questionnaires, face to face discussion and group work within the short break sessions. This information is also gathered to plan for future delivery.

All of our commissioned services are required as part of their terms and conditions of funding to engage service users in evaluating services on a quarterly basis. It is expected that this helps providers to adapt their services as required.

### **How does the council support transition to adult services?**

The 0-18 Children's Disability Team and the Adults 18 – 25 Disability Team will work together in partnership with a young person and the people that are important to them to explore if support needs to continue or be in place in preparation for the young person turning 18 years old. Children's and Adult Social Care work together in carrying out assessments of need under the Care Act 2014 to ensure that effective arrangements are in place which enhances the quality of life for all young people with a disability and their family as they move forward into adulthood.

The children and adult disabilities teams also work closely with the SEND education team to ensure that young people can access education and training.

### **Where can families get more information about Short Breaks?**

There are a number of places where you can find Information regarding Short Breaks in Hartlepool:

- Hartlepool's Local Offer of services for families of disabled children website: [www.hartlepoolfamilyhubs.co.uk/send-local-offer](http://www.hartlepoolfamilyhubs.co.uk/send-local-offer)
- Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum - 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future Contact: 07896 054361 or via their email address: [HartMindFuture@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:HartMindFuture@yahoo.co.uk) or join their face book page: 1Hart, 1Mind, 1Future Group Forum
- Contacting the SEND Social Worker add contact details

### **What do parents/carers do if they want to register a complaint or compliment?**

If the Short Break is either delivered or commissioned by Hartlepool Borough Council, then the Comments, Complaints and Compliments Procedure should be followed. For further information you can complete an online form by going to:

[www.hartlepool.gov.uk](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk) or via email to [cascomplaints@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:cascomplaints@hartlepool.gov.uk) or by calling: 01429 284020.



## How can people access the statement?

Hartlepool's Short Break Service statement will be available in the following places:

- Hartlepool's SEND Local Offer of Services published on:  
[www.hartlepoolfamilyhubs.co.uk /send-local-offer](http://www.hartlepoolfamilyhubs.co.uk/send-local-offer)
- Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum: 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future:  
[www.1hart1mind1future.co.uk](http://www.1hart1mind1future.co.uk)

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# SEPTEMBER 2024

## Short Break Service Statement

# APPENDICIES



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## Appendix 1

### Criteria for short break or direct payment

#### **Short breaks provide opportunities for children and young people:**

To spend time away from their parents carers;

The chance to develop new friendships;

To develop their independence

To take part in new experiences and to have fun doing positive activities such as swimming, youth clubs, day trips with friends and much more.

#### **Short breaks aim to provide their parent carers with:**

A necessary and valuable break from their caring responsibility;

A chance to rest and unwind;

To spend time with other members of the family.

Short Breaks provision can range from a few hours a week to an allocated number of overnight breaks per year and anything in between.

**Hartlepool Borough Council Short Break Offer is provided under three categories, Universal Services / Local Offer, Targeted Services and Specialist Services –**

#### Universal Services

Some families are able to get a Short Break by using free or low cost local services. These services are not funded or commissioned by the Local Authority. Examples of these are; school clubs, youth clubs, Scouts, Brownies, Guides, sport clubs and charity funded club provision and parents can access independently.

Services have a duty to make reasonable adjustments and must not treat a disabled person less favourably. Some universal services offer sessions specifically for children and young people with additional needs, however, not all universal services will be suitable for everyone.

## Targeted Services

Our self-referral clubs take place after school, on weekends and during school holidays and are specifically for children with additional support needs and/or disabilities. These clubs are commissioned and funded by the Local Authority.

The clubs take place in and around Hartlepool, providing children and young people with an opportunity to meet new people and try a wide range of activities such as sports, arts and crafts, cooking, music and much more. Whilst also providing parents with a break from their caring role.

Families can refer themselves to this service without the need for a social care referral or a diagnosis but must be able to evidence to the club their child/young person has additional support needs.

## Specialist Services

Sometimes a child or young person may have more significant or complex needs due to their disability and/or family circumstances and will need more specialist support.

Support may include one or more specialist services such as a personal assistant, overnight care in or away from the home, care in the home or in the community.

The level of support needed will be identified by a Social Worker assessment and a request for services will be presented to the Children with Disabilities Multi Agency panel for consideration. This is called the SEND Panel

These services will be commissioned specifically for the child's/young person's needs or alternatively a family may prefer to request a **Direct Payment** to arrange the services themselves.

We have a number of different providers who are commissioned to deliver Social Work Referral Short Breaks.

To be provided with a direct payment or a short break, the child must meet the below eligibility criteria.



Over all criteria that the child **HAS** a diagnosed disability and the social work assessment completed has identified that without intervention or specialist service, the child will not develop and the need cannot be met with Universal Services, Early Help Support or the Local Offer

- The Child has to be either know to SEND Support within school or have an EHCP Plan.
- The child has to attend either a mainstream school – with a SEN package or a specialist educational provision.
- The child will not meet need for a short break or direct payment with a diagnosis of Autism, ADHD, Learning Difficulty, mild or moderate learning disability or other neurological development condition **unless** also diagnosed with at least one of the following; Learning Disability - as determined through a recognised cognitive assessment, by relevant professional, severe physical disability, hearing impairment, vision impairment or multi-sensory impairment that will last longer than 12 months, life limiting illness, complex medical needs or a severe communication difficulty.

When considering entitlement to a direct payment worker or short break service the young person will be measured against the following criteria that can be managed on the direct payment pathway

### **Eligibility Criteria**

#### **Multi-Agency Professionals involved**

The child or young person must have consistent access to two or more of the following professionals

- LD CAMHS or CAMHS consultant or ongoing therapeutic/behavioural support (not for medication only)
- Educational Psychologist for longer term intervention
- Consultant Paediatrician or other specialised Doctor for medical intervention that will last longer than six month
- Ongoing Occupational Therapy intervention that will last longer than six month
- Ongoing SALT Therapeutic Intervention that will last longer than six month
- Teacher of visually impaired whose intervention will last longer than six month and where vision is profound
- Teacher of the deaf whose intervention will last longer than six month and where hearing is profound

## Personal Care

- The child or young person needs lifting or carrying and specialised equipment to support personal care
- The child or young person needs total or a high level assistance, compared to peers similar age with toileting, bathing and dressing for a child of school age upwards
- The child or young person needs total or a higher level of assistance with feeding. For children of school age upwards, compared to peers of a similar age

## Supervision

- Child's sleep pattern is regularly interrupted with long levels of adult supervision, to ensure the child or young person's safety needed during this period. This disturbed pattern of sleep is having a detrimental impact upon adult sleep pattern and causing severe sleep deprivation. Impacting on parent's ability to function and care.
- The main carer has very few people apart from themselves who are both able and willing to look after child or young person. A Family Network Meeting must have been held to consider who is in the family network and if any support can be given to adults within the network, to offer care over and above their current involvement in the child or young person's care.
- The main carer must be constantly available, over and above a child of a similar age for crisis that may occur whilst the child is away from their care, impacting upon ability to manage through the day
- The child has limited perception of danger to self or others and requires 1:1 supervision most of the time that cannot be managed with support of universal or specialist services both within the community and at home.
- The child must need constant care, supervision and monitoring from an adult to constantly ensure their safety, which is over and above that similar to peers their age
- The child requires supervision to perform daily tasks that cannot be managed under the support of Universal or Specialist Services
- There is a need for specialist safety equipment in the home to keep the child safe, which is allocated by a specialist provision and supervision is still needed, despite the safety equipment.

## Sleep

- The child's sleeping is interrupted on a regular and prolonged basis, and they need significant adult intervention during these waking periods, impacting upon sleep deprivation for the main carer
- The child's sleep routine must have been managed or supported by the sleep clinic and despite intervention, continues to cause a detrimental impact upon both/either the child, young person and/or main carer

- The main carer has limited support network to support with sleep routines with a chance to have a break

### **Education or Employment**

- The child or young person must have SEND Support within their education provision or an Educational Health Care Plan
- The child or young person must access an education provision within a specialist setting, whether this be a specialist school or base within education provision, without a plan or expected move back into mainstream provision
- The child or young person requires a significant support within education environment and would not be able to attend without intense level of support.
- The child or young person is receiving at home tutoring as their disability means they cannot attend or be supported within an education environment and there is no planned move for this to move into a mainstream education provision. This does not include elective home education (EHE).

### **Behaviour and Communication**

- The child or young person is unable to communicate their needs by any method, despite intervention and not able to use communication aids
- The child or young person's disability means that they are unlikely to develop comprehensible verbal communication.
- The child or young person is unable to understand language used around them without direct support.
- The child or young person is unable to join in with social activities without direct support with communication.
- The child or young person may have some processing difficulties which affect their social use of language and ability to understand things in context.
- A child or young person's behaviour pose a significant risk to their safety and/or others and that it cannot be managed by universal or targeted services. The child or young person would place themselves at constant risk of harm, without constant supervision during the day

- The child or young person behaviour, which challenges the people around them impacts upon all aspects of the child's functioning and their ability to participate in social activities. A specialist provision is needed to allow for the child or young person to function socially and allow for main carer to have a break from their caring role.
- The child has no ability to perceive danger to themselves or others, which impacts upon the child's ability to participate in social activities
- The frequency or severity of child's behaviour requires some specialist advice or provision over threshold of the Local Offer i.e CAMHS and not Daisy Chain

### Whilst in the community

- A wheelchair, prescribed or other movement aid is needed to allow for the child or young person to access the community safely
- A level of supervision is needed for all outings in the community, which, would be over and above what would usually be expected for a child or young person of a similar age and cannot be met under universal or targeted services

### Management of Disability

- The child or young person needs daily assistance with administering drugs, taking oxygen, giving physiotherapy, giving injections, using medical equipment etc.
- The child or young person needs to attend frequent appointments and the main carer must attend with them. The main carer must liaise with many professionals.
- The child or young person is fed via a Nasogastric feeding tube, Nasojejunal feeding tube and Gastrostomy tube.
- The child or young person has had or is about to have major surgery and a lengthy period of recuperation is expected.
- The child or young person is receiving invasive therapy for conditions such as cancer e.g. chemotherapy, radiotherapy.
- The child or young person has frequent hospital admissions or needs frequent emergency medical intervention for conditions that are not well controlled by medication e.g. asthma, epilepsy.



- The child or young person receives daily input of therapy by family members following programmes devised by professionals.
- A child or young person with autism may require their home environment to be maintained in a specific way e.g. low stimulus, need to follow strict routines as set out with plans and regular reviews from specialist provisions such as CAMHS

### Access to Social Activities

- The child or young person needs physical support to access social, leisure and recreational activities and/or where additional equipment or specialist access is required to facilitate activities, that cannot be met under universal or targeted services
- The child or young person requires supervision for safety issues beyond that usually needed for a person of a similar age, that cannot be met under universal or targeted services
- Support is needed to enable the child or young person to have appropriate friendships or where family relationships are replacing peer friendships due to their disability, that cannot be met under universal or targeted services
- The child or young adult's leisure activities are limited to the home environment due to their disability. This may also affect the opportunity of the wider family to enjoy day to day activities and opportunities, that cannot be met under universal or targeted services

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE UNLIKELY TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR  
SERVICES FROM CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES TEAM:**

- Children/young people with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) who have no other impairments.
- Children/young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties who have no other impairments.
- Children/young people with learning difficulties who have no other impairments.

**\*PLEASE NOTE – An assessment can be completed and support package/ plan can be offered by an alternative team within Children’s Social Care/ Early Help.**

Children and young people who are not eligible for short break services from the Children with Disabilities Team may be eligible to receive services from other sources within Social Care, Education, Health or Housing Services. An assessment of need can be completed to understand the child’s needs and family dynamics to support with appropriate signposting to relevant services. It is important that every child and young person receive the right support, at the right time by the most appropriate services.

## ALLOCATION OF SERVICES

It is the responsibility of parents and extended family to provide care for their children. If children meet the criteria for the service we will work with other agencies to provide services to support children within the family/extended family, unless children meet the criteria for being a Child In Our Care.

Local Authorities have a general duty to provide a range and level of services to meet the needs of the children within its area. Children can be eligible for these services but do not have an absolute right to them. Services are limited by the level of resources made available to us.

Access to services is determined by an assessment which considers the above factors by looking at the needs of the child, the strengths and needs of the parents/carers and how looking after the child impacts on their lives. As well as the environment within which the child is living and how safe and suitable that is, and the support networks for the child and the family.

The decision on the provision of services and the allocation of resources is made on the basis of this assessment. Decisions about the allocation of services are made by the SEND Panel to ensure that we are as fair as possible and that we provide the best support that we can for each child or young person.

Services may be provided on a short-term basis only during a time of crisis, or to achieve a particular outcome. If services are provided on a longer-term basis they will be reviewed and may be reduced or increased according to assessed need and/or priorities.

Reviews will take place on at least an annual basis but can take place sooner at the Local Authority's discretion.

