

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

Short Break Services Statement

October 2011

Services for Children with Disabilities



Summary

This statement clearly sets out:

- what short break services Southampton City Council provide for children and young people with a disability
- what eligibility criteria are used
- how the services have been designed to meet the needs of parents, carers, siblings, children and young people.

The statement is available on the Southampton City Council website at the following address: <http://www.southampton.gov.uk/living/scchildren/ah/>. It will be distributed to families through a range of services: education, health, social care and the A-buzz parent forum.

The statement will be regularly reviewed in line with any changes to short break services. Further consultation with parents, carers, children and young people will be incorporated into this process.

Who is responsible for the statement?

The lead officer responsible for this statement is the Assistant Director, Childrens Services & Learning.

Services involved include:

- NHS Southampton Service Commissioners
- Southampton City Council Service Providers
- Special School Head Teachers
- Short Break Service Providers
- Parents and Carers of children and young people with disabilities

Contact details for all services and providers mentioned in this statement can be found at the end of the statement.

Introduction and background

The 'Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011' which came into force on 1 April 2011 introduced a requirement on local authorities to produce a statement describing the range of short break services they provide, the criteria used and how the services have been designed to meet the needs of carers.

Through the regulations the council has a duty to ensure that a range of short break services, sometimes called 'respite', are available for children and young people with disabilities and their families to support carers to care for their children.

Short breaks are defined as providing children and young people with disabilities with an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, to relax and have fun with friends or experience a new activity. In addition, they provide families with a break from their caring responsibilities; giving them a chance to unwind, relax or spend time with other siblings.

Over the last two years, thanks to significant investment; the number of children and young people accessing short breaks in the city has risen from about 140 in 2008-2009 to over 600 in 2010-2011.

Contact details for all services and providers mentioned in this statement can be found at the end of the statement.

This statement is contained within four sections:

The local offer	Page 3
Specialist services	Page 6
Consultation	Page 8
Key contact details	Page 11

The local offer

The Southampton Local Offer combines all short break services which can be accessed without a detailed assessment. These are sometimes called 'Universal' and 'Targeted' services.

Children & Young People's Information Service (CYPIS)

The best place to start when looking for short break services in Southampton is the CYPIS. This service can be accessed via the telephone or website and is for families to access information and advice on a wide range of issues and covers ages 0 to 18 years. The Buzz Network (see more information below) is based in CYPIS and has a dedicated co-ordinator who can discuss the short break services with families and also visit individuals or groups to share information about the Local Offer.

The Buzz Network

The Buzz Network was set up two years ago to provide information and easier access to short breaks.

The eligibility criteria for the Buzz Network are as follows:

Any parent/carer of a disabled child aged 0-19 living within Southampton City Council boundaries whose child meets the eligibility criteria shown below.

You are automatically eligible if you are able to tick one or more of the following categories for your child:

- in receipt of higher level Disability Living Allowance
- has a statement of special educational needs
- receiving a service from Jigsaw
- receiving a service from Complex Children's Health Team
- receiving a service from Community Children's Nursing Team
- receiving a service from Occupational Therapy
- receiving a service from Physiotherapy
- receiving a service from Portage
- receiving a service from Wordsworth House

Or if you are able to tick any two of the following for your child:

- On School Action Plus
- Normal activities are interrupted by frequent health needs, affecting progress in development or education.
- Requires regular support with basic self care functions e.g. eating, going to the toilet, washing, dressing and/or needs more regular supervision through the day and sometimes at night than you would expect for a child of their age
- Doesn't hear spoken words and/or needs help to make up for complete loss of sound awareness and may have hearing aids or implants
- Needs special support and understanding from someone else to communicate
- Has very little or no sight and/or registered blind or needs support to move around.

Any family who would like to register on the Buzz Network should contact the Children and Young People's Information Service and request an application form.

Buzz Network Services

There are three types of short break which can be accessed through the Buzz Network: Specialist Playschemes, the One2One service and Access to Universal Activities.

Specialist Playschemes

Playschemes are provided during the school holidays by Rose Road and Mencap. In addition to this Mencap run a Teen Scheme every other Saturday. The cost to parents and carers is approximately £7 for a three hour session. There are limited spaces, so booking early is advised.

One2One service

The One2One service provides children and young people with an entitlement to individual support. This support includes doing something they enjoy at home, activities before or after school, or activities at weekends. The three main providers for the One2One service are Rose Road, Smile and Kids. There are two other providers, Wessex Autistic Society and The Rainbow Trust providing One2One services for children with specific needs. All families registered on the Buzz Network who want to use the One2One service will be able to access between 1.5 and 2 hours support per week. The amount will change depending on the number of families registered and usage. The only cost to parents is for transport and accessing activities (if used).

Access to Universal Activities

These services support children and young people to access mainstream clubs, for example guides or scouts, as well as supporting the clubs to be inclusive in the longer term. There are two main providers who deliver this service; you can choose to use the Mencap yPod scheme or Sonus. Both organisations provide a support worker to accompany your child or young person and work alongside the club so they can eventually provide the support your child or young person needs.

Alongside these short break services, the Buzz Network also provides information and advice on other short break services which can be accessed via the Local Offer. These include many universal services which can be accessed by all children including play and youth provision and extended school activities at mainstream schools. We believe it is important to encourage children and young people to have fun and enjoy themselves with their friends, where possible in a mainstream environment.

The types of universal services which are available are described below:

School Activities

All 5 of the special schools in the city provide activities before, during and after school time, these are often called 'Extended school activities'. They are usually open to all pupils at the school and in some cases pupils from other schools. A few examples of activities which currently happen are:

- Sports clubs – including swimming, cycling, football and canoeing
- Music clubs – including Rock Challenge and dance.
- Activities away from school – including trips to the cinema, bowling and residential trips.

Many of the decisions about which activities happen in the school are made by pupils through their involvement in each School Council. There is also ongoing discussion between the school, pupils and parents about how to improve what is currently being provided and what other activities would be enjoyable.

To find out what specific activities are available, you should contact the school that your child attends.

Leisure Activities

In Southampton, a charity called Active Nation provides leisure services on behalf of the city council. Some of the specialist services they provide are:

- Paddleability – this is a canoe club at the Woodmill Activity Centre in Swaythling for all people with a disability aged 8 years and above.
- Sailability – this is a sailing club at Southampton Water Activities Centre (SWAC). The club has received funding in previous years from Aiming High and has many different boats including a Paralympic class keelboat which was officially launched by Princess Anne in June 2011.
- Diveability – this is a diving club held at the Quays Swimming and Diving Complex.
- There are many other activities, details of which can be found on the Active Nation website.

There are limited places available at these leisure activities, so booking early is advised.

In addition to these activities, children and young people with disabilities can access the range of leisure activities on offer to all children in Southampton. If they need extra support to do so this may be available from the Mencap yPod scheme (see ‘Access to Universal Services’ section above and ‘Support for parents to access employment or training’ section below).

Support for parents to access employment or training

If you are a parent of a child with a disability and looking to go back to work, training and learning or even to volunteer, then Mencap’s yPod service may be able to help your child go to a childcare provider. It does not matter what type of childcare it is as long as it is OFSTED registered. Examples of childcare could include: before and after school clubs, holiday playschemes, childminders or home carers. Mencap can provide a period of support to the childcare provider helping them to understand your child’s individual needs and make sure their setting is inclusive. The only cost to parents and carers is any charge made by the childcare provider and any transport costs to and from the venue. CYPIS can help you to find suitable childcare and they also have a register of childcare providers that have experience in caring for a child with a disability.

This service can be accessed by self referral to Mencap.

Support for pre-school children (aged 0-5 years)

The Southampton Opportunity Group is for children aged 0 to 5 with disabilities and provides playschemes at Hardmoor Early Years Centre, Thornhill Surestart Centre and Pickles Coppice Children’s Centre. They are registered with OFSTED and provide structured play sessions, indoors and outside. Children with learning, physical or health difficulties can attend and parents or carers can choose whether to stay or not during the session.

The groups can be accessed by self referral, using the contact details at the end of this document.

Specialist Short Break services

To access these services your child or young person will have had a social care assessment of need, having been accepted into our multi-agency disability service; Jigsaw. These services are only provided as part of an overall support package. This involves a more in depth and individual process to look at the specific needs of each child or young person and their family.

The flowchart below shows the process for accessing specialist short breaks:

Referral and acceptance to Jigsaw

Any referral to Jigsaw will be discussed at a weekly meeting where a decision will be made on whether or not it meets the Jigsaw eligibility criteria (see page below).
If the referral is accepted the next step is for a Foundation Assessment to be completed.



Assessment and Short Break Tool

A Foundation Assessment involves input from all members of the family and other professionals (e.g. teachers, doctors) to get the best possible picture of the family circumstances and the needs of the child or young person. Once the Foundation Assessment is completed an Action Plan will be produced detailing how the identified needs will be met, this is updated every 6 months. If the Action Plan identifies a possible need for short breaks then a 'Short Break Tool' document will be completed. This is not another assessment but uses the information already available to 'score' the needs of the child and their family. The tool covers 30 specific areas to produce a total points score which indicates an approximate level of need for specialist short breaks.



Short Break Panel

The short break panel will discuss requests for specialist short breaks and decide whether they are appropriate based on the short break tool, the most recent Action Plan and any other information that may be relevant (e.g. parental stress indicators or psychology reports). An appropriate provision will be offered to meet your child's needs, taking into consideration any health needs.



Panel outcome and start of short breaks

If panel agree short breaks they can start as soon as possible, your Lead Professional (e.g. social worker or nurse) will liaise with you and the short break provider to arrange a start date.
If you are unhappy with the panel decision you should discuss this with your lead professional to ensure that all available evidence has been taken into account.
You can also make a formal complaint via the City Council complaints process.

Eligibility for a Jigsaw service

Jigsaw will support Southampton children, young people and their families with a significant level of need in the following areas:

- Significant learning disabilities within the moderate, severe, profound range; OR
- An enduring medically complex health condition which significantly affects, or is predicted to affect, everyday life functioning over the child/young person's development; OR
- A diagnosis of Autism with a learning disability within the moderate, severe or profound range, which affects, or is predicted to affect, the child/young person's everyday life functioning and results in challenging behaviour and family difficulties; AND
- Complex family circumstances where the identified need for necessary intervention supports the child in reaching their full potential and reduces the risks of family breakdown.

Range of services

The specialist short break services which Jigsaw may offer are:

- Residential overnights
- Family based overnights
- Outreach
- Direct Payments

All of these will be allocated at the short break panel and where possible a choice will be offered between the different kinds of short breaks or a mixture of them. However some services are more appropriate in particular situations:

- If a child or young person with a disability wakes many times during the night requiring a carer's attention, this could have a severe impact on the parent and child, so regular overnight short breaks may be most appropriate. Alongside these we would also work with the family on sleep interventions which could be used both at home and during the overnight short breaks.
- If a child or young person has few opportunities to go out of the home, then outreach may be agreed which can be used regularly to support access to new environments and activities.
- If a family wants to purchase their own short breaks then direct payments may be agreed. These can fund an extended family member or other suitable person to provide short breaks. Jigsaw will provide support around tax issues, insurance and Criminal Records (CRB) checks.

Consultation

Needs Assessment

A significant amount of work has been put into finding out how many children and young people there are in Southampton with a disability and this work is ongoing.

The 2011-2014 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) found that:

“There are an estimated 1,900 children and young people (4.3%) living in Southampton with moderate or severe disabilities. Males make up two-thirds of this group and females a third. The majority of these children live in priority neighbourhoods, with deprivation an additional burden to these children and their family. Their disabilities are generally chronic, limiting and include learning disabilities, physical disability, autistic and sensory disorders.”

Children and Young People

1000 Survey

This was a survey, taken in the spring of 2011 of children and young people which asked a series of questions about when and where young people wanted youth services. There were 690 responses in total, 39 of which were from special schools in the city. The main findings of the survey in relation to short break type provision were:

- Young people wanted evening activities (not after school) in a separate community facility, in their locality with a preference for Friday nights.
- Larger events should be held in the city centre and are best promoted using web based and social networking approaches
- For young males, sport and outdoor activities are the most important activity but for females the majority said it was having a safe place to meet.
- Most young people felt that it was important that they should have their say but far fewer believed their views were listened to.

These will now be used to inform the commissioning process and design of services to young people.

Enabling All of Us: The Voices of Youth Local Service Users

A piece of research was undertaken in April 2011 by a Trainee Educational Psychologist to document the views and experiences of young people with learning, physical and emotional and behavioural difficulties with regards to the local facilities and services they access. The main findings in relation to short breaks were:

- Participants highlighted that while the leisure centres where they go swimming are mostly clean and hygienic, some improvements may be necessary when it comes to making some participants feel secure, and in terms of meeting others' needs for more privacy e.g. through providing changing cubicles.
- Participants have access to local, mostly clean, and spacious play parks and open areas which they

appreciate. They indicated that these open areas can be made more entertaining and enjoyable through adding additional play fixtures and introducing more organised sporting and coaching events.

- A number of barriers were identified, including: some surfaces in parks and open spaces for wheelchair access; actual or perceived high costs of joining sports and going to the cinema; the presence of insensitive or threatening individuals or “gangs” in open areas and in leisure (swimming) centres, where they indicated that improved security measures may be desirable.
- Participants who have good friendships seem to express higher satisfaction with the available facilities, feeling less bored, and feeling better and more secure about travelling on public transport with these friends, compared to participants with less close friendships or who are overly shy. This serves to highlight that investing in improving these youngsters’ friendship and social skills is as important as investing in their physical environments.

These findings will be used to influence future commissioning plans around short breaks and any spend on short break equipment, e.g. play areas.

Parents and carers

The council knows that detailed input from parents and carers leads to better commissioning decisions, more useful services and better value for money. This has also been recognised in national research by the organisation ‘Together for Disabled Children’ in their report ‘How Parent Participation and Parent Carer Forums leads to better outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families.’

Ongoing consultation through the Buzz Network

In 2009, the city council received a new grant called ‘Aiming High’ to be spent on improving access to short break services. When the project began, parents were consulted on the types of short break services they wanted and this directly led to the commissioning of the services which are under the Buzz Network, particularly the One2One service.

In order to make sure that our short break services are still meeting the needs of children, young people and their families we undertook a survey in January 2011 through the Buzz network. The responses were used to inform decisions about services from April 2011, particularly the One2One service. Most of the short break services were rated good or excellent and many comments were made about the difference which Buzz network short break services had made to families. These were used to justify continued funding after the main Aiming High grant finished in March 2011. Another Buzz network survey is planned for October and November 2011.

A-buzz Parent Forum

There have been many projects in which the city council and the A-buzz parent forum have worked together, these include:

- Decisions on how capital grants should be spent
- Representation on the Aiming High Project Board
- Representation on the Children’s Disability Forum
- Disability Living Allowance Take-Up project
- Representation on Parent Forum
- Information days, consultation sessions and workshops for parents

Representatives were involved in the interview and tendering process for providers of all the services offered by the Buzz Network and Jigsaw. In addition, the A-buzz parent forum has developed the PAT (Parent's Assessment Team) Quality Mark which has been included as a contractual requirement for all short break providers. The PAT mark is independent of the council, organised and run by A-buzz and is a process by which parents and carers visit short break providers to look at a whole range of issues relevant to children and young people with disabilities including physical access, provision for personal care, safety, sensory issues and the general environment. This is designed to give parents more information about a short break setting before their child attends and so increase confidence in that setting.

Key contact details

Children and Young People's Information Service (CYPIS)

Information and advice service

Website: www.youngsouthampton.org/

Email: cypis@southampton.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 169 8833 (freephone)

Jigsaw

Disability Team

Telephone: 023 8091 5702

A-buzz

Forum for parents and carers

Website: www.sotonabuzz.org/

Email: info@sotonabuzz.org

Telephone: 07554 997626

Twitter: [SotonA_buzz](https://twitter.com/SotonA_buzz)

Rose Road Association

Short break provider

Website: www.roseroad.org.uk

Telephone: 023 8072 1234

Smile Support & Care

Short break provider

Website: www.smilesupport.org.uk

Telephone: 023 8061 6215

Kids

Short break provider

Website: www.kids.org.uk

Telephone: 01329 312312

Wessex Autistic Society

Short break provider

Website: www.twas.org.uk

Telephone: 01202 483360

Rainbow Trust

Short break provider

Website: www.rainbowtrust.org.uk

Telephone: 01372 363438

Southampton Mencap

Short break provider

Website: <http://southamptonmencap.org>

Telephone: 023 8058 4088

Sonus

Short break provider

Website: <http://sonus.org.uk>

Telephone: 023 8022 0225

Woodmill Outdoor Activities Centre

Leisure service

Website: [/www.woodmill.co.uk](http://www.woodmill.co.uk)

Telephone: 023 8091 5746

Southampton Water Activities Centre (SWAC)

Leisure service

Website: www.swac.co.uk

Telephone: 023 8091 5743

Chamberlayne Leisure Centre

Leisure service

Website: www.activenation.org.uk/chamberlayne-leisure-centre.aspx

Telephone: 023 8043 7668

The Quays Swimming and Diving Complex

Leisure service

Website: www.activenation.org.uk/the-quays-eddie-read-swimming-and-diving-complex.aspx

Telephone: 023 8072 0900

Southampton Opportunity Group

Short break provider

Website: www.southamptonopportunitygroup.org

Email: admin@southamptonopportunitygroup.org

Schools

A list of all schools in Southampton with links to their websites can be found at:

www.southampton.gov.uk/learning/schools/list_map.aspx