



Short Breaks Statement for families who have children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in County Durham

Durham
County Council



What is a Short Break?

We know that looking after children with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities can be exhausting for parents and carers and they may sometimes feel like they need a short break 'time out' from their caring role.

A short break is something that a child/young person can access which provides parents/carers with a break. This can range from a couple of hours taking part in a local activity with friends to holiday schemes or specialist over-night hospice care. The type and length of a short break can vary to meet the needs of each family.

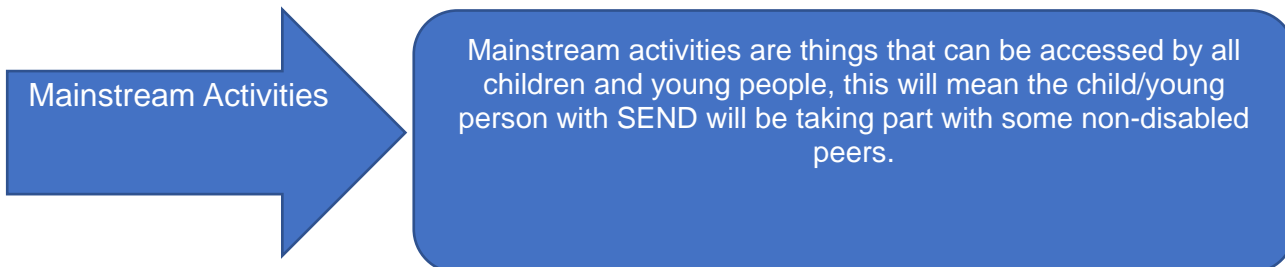
How can Short Breaks be accessed by families?



Family Members and Friendship Networks

Families can explore opportunities for a short break from their caring role by using other family members and networks. A couple of hours at a friend's house, or a family member looking after the young person to allow parents a break. Parents can explore this option themselves.

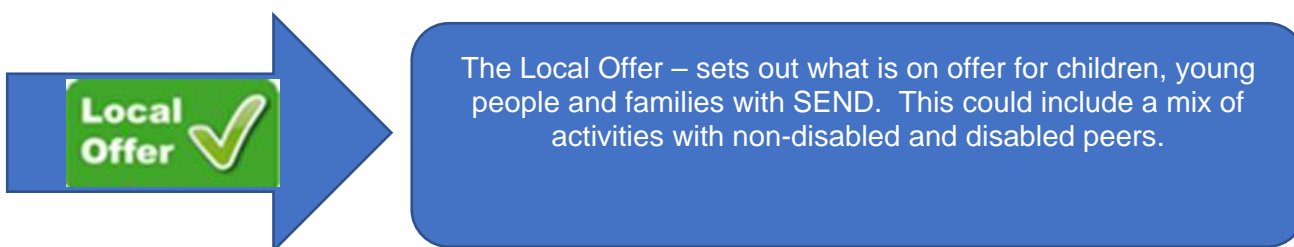
Mainstream Activities



Mainstream activities can range from football sessions, drama, arts and craft sessions, holidays camps etc. These activities can be located on the Durham Families Information Service <http://www.countydurhamfamilies.info> There is a 'what's on' section which provides all leisure opportunities.

The Local Authority are not responsible for quality assuring these providers. It will be up to the parent/carer to work with these providers so that they can better understand the needs of the child/young person and agree how they can take part and agree any additional support they may require.

The Local Offer – Activities



Inclusion may not always be possible within mainstream activities due to a number of factors. Children or young people may prefer to take part with other children and young people with SEND or the provider may be unable to meet the needs of the child/young person sufficiently. If this is the case then parents/carers can search on the '**Durham Local Offer**' website <http://www.countydurhamfamilies.info> which sets out a range of services and activities for children, young people and families with SEND.

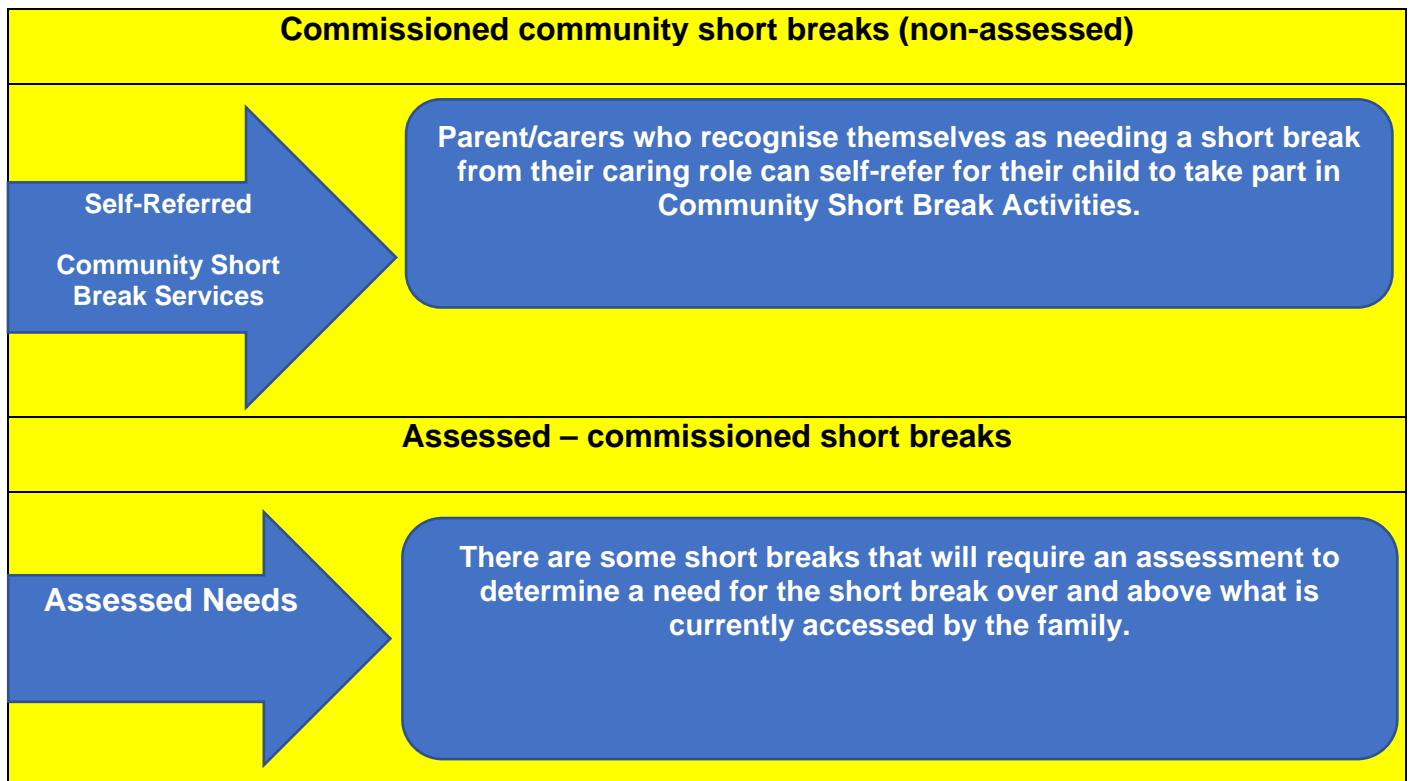
When searching the Families Information Service for 'what's on' for children and young people, you will see those providers who are 'local offer' providers will also have this symbol next to their organisation.



It will be up to the parent/carer to work with these providers so that they can better understand the needs of the child/young person and to agree how they can take part and any additional support they may require.

Commissioned Short Break Services

The Local Authority and Health partners arrange (commission) a menu of short break services for families. This menu aims to fill gaps in service provision to meet the needs of families. There is a graduated approach to this menu in order to meet the range of individual needs and complexities of children and young people with SEND.



Community Short Break Services

Parents/carers can gain access through self-referral to providers directly for their child/young person and receive a short break whilst they attend these sessions. These activities will be in groups with other children with SEND. They can range from youth clubs, arts sessions, sports, day trips, holiday schemes. Although the Local Authority do not fund siblings attendance, most of the providers will allow this at a small cost if there is space.

In response to public consultation prioritisation of spaces at these breaks will be for those families who are unable to access general culture and leisure opportunities in their community to provide a short break for carers. These activities will be delivered in community venues in group sizes of no more than 20 children per session.

There will be a small charge for some of these so that providers can make their services go further and benefit more families. There will be a charge of £3.00 per hour for these.

Area	Provider	Contact Details
Easington	Gateway North East http://www.gateway-north-east.org.uk/contact/	evan@gatewaynortheast.org.uk 0191 526 3112
Derwentside	Sports Works http://www.sportworksltd.co.uk/contact/	matt.hill@sportworksltd.co.uk or call: 0191 580 0120
The Dales	Gateway North East http://www.gateway-north-east.org.uk/contact/	evan@gatewaynortheast.org.uk 0191 526 3112
Sedgefield	Sports Works http://www.sportworksltd.co.uk/contact/	matt.hill@sportworksltd.co.uk or call: 0191 580 0120
Durham and Chester le Street	Integrating Children http://www.integratingchildren.co.uk/	integratingchildren@outlook.com or call: 07914 376 228

There are also short breaks that all of the family can attend together by contacting the County-wide provider. There will also be a charge for accessing these breaks.

County-wide family breaks	Durham Area Disability Leisure Group (DADLG) http://www.dadlg.org/	dadlg08@googlemail.com or call: 07592 366 454
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Further details of the activities on offer from these providers can be found on the Local Offer also directly on the individual provider pages.

[Assessed Needs Short Breaks](#)

Sensory needs - visual/hearing - There are some short breaks that are delivered to support children who are open to Durham's Sensory Support Service. These breaks are specially designed to provide appropriate support to allow these children and young people to take part in a range of opportunities they couldn't otherwise take part in. These breaks are provided in line with assessed needs of those families open to the sensory service.

There will be some families who will require an assessment in order to gather information about the child and family to decide what help they may need. Where required a Single Assessment will be completed <http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2364/Single-Assessment-Framework>

As part of this assessment, on consideration of the range of options to support the family, a short break may be identified as required in addition to the local and community offer due to needs for the parent/ carer for a short break and the complexity of the young person/ family.

The assessment will identify the requirement for a short break and will highlight specific outcomes to be achieved with the child/ family as part of the short break service. Once the worker has determined the recommended level of short break, this will be referred to a Multi-Agency Validation Panel to approve.

A variety of services have been developed to meet a range of complex needs of some children and young people and families. These short breaks will provide buddy services, community outreach services, group sessions, domiciliary care, 1:1 support, over-night within a residential setting or foster care and very specialist hospice care.

All of these short break services will only be accessed by families on referral from Children's Services and Transitions via the Commissioning Service. The duration, frequency and volume of break will vary for each family in line with their assessment.

Commissioned Services – Assessed Short Breaks	
Buddy Services	Outcome Based Framework One Framework of providers to meet assessed needs. Referrals to this framework through the Commissioning service on approval of funding.
Community Outreach from the home	
Community Outreach from a provider base	
Group activities	
Family breaks	
Domicilliary/Home Care Services	Framework of providers who deliver home care. Arranged through Care Facilitators once funding is agreed.
Specialist over-night short break provision	Framework of providers who deliver over-night provision. Arranged through Commissioning once this funding is agreed.
Specialist Hospice Care	Spot purchase specialist contracts with Hospice Providers. Services arranged through Commissioning on approval of finance.
Specialist Health Care Providers	Commissioned from Health on approval of funding through validation panel.

[Children and Young People's Network](#)

Children and Young People's Network is a voluntary register for families. This is another good way that families can find out what is on offer. Also, families will receive a MAX discount card when registering on this network which will allow them discount to a number of attractions to make them more affordable. To register families should visit www.durham.gov.uk/cypn or telephone 03000 265 792.

[Is there any support for parent/carers?](#)

As well as a range of short breaks that can be accessed for children and young people with SEND, there are also breaks available for the parent/ carers. These short breaks can be accessed directly by the parent/ carers through **Durham County Carers Support**. The organisation will also complete a parent/carer assessment on request by the parent/carer. For more information telephone 0300 005 1213.

Voluntary and Community Sector - There are some agencies who may provide services that go into the home to assist and support the family with the caring role. These will also be detailed on the Local Offer. It will be the case worker/family's responsibility to quality assure this provision.