Short breaks service statement

February 2017

This information is for families living in Stockton-on-Tees who have a disabled child aged 3 - 17.

Woking together with

Children and Young People

Big plans for the young people of our Borough
Introduction - what is a Short Break?

A Short Break is a good quality, fun, positive activity that your disabled child or young person attends with the family or independently.

Short Breaks can help young people to develop their communication and social skills improving their confidence and enabling them to access a wider range of services.

A Short Break could last anything from a couple of hours to several days. The length and type of break will depend on your child/young person and family. It can take place in the child’s home, in a supported setting or within the community. A Short Break can also provide families with a break from their caring role and time to spend with other family members or to have time for themselves.

Example of Short Breaks include: school holiday clubs, overnight stays and weekend clubs or any other leisure activities that the child/young person enjoys such as swimming, dancing or horse riding.

Who can access a Short Break?

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council offers a range of Short Breaks for all families who care for a child with a disability affecting their ability to access universal activities.

A person has a disability if they have:

- a physical or mental impairment
- and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities
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 for everyone to read including on the internet
- Have a clear criteria for eligibility for the Short Breaks Services
- Say how the services will meet the needs of families

How has this statement been prepared?

Stockton on Tees Borough Council has worked with Stockton United for Change to prepare the Short Breaks Statement.

Stockton United for Change is the Parent Participation group who work with the Council to represent the views and opinions of parents and carers. We asked them to work with us to prepare this year’s Short Breaks Service Statement and opinions of parents and carers.
Who was involved in preparing this Statement?

- Disabled Children and Social Work Team
- SEN and Engagement Service
- Stockton United for Change

Who is responsible?
The lead officer with responsibility for ensuring this statement has been prepared is the SEN and Engagement Service Principal SEN Officer. Overall responsibility for the statement sits with the Director of Children’s Services and the Lead Member for Children’s Services of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

What have we achieved in the last 12 months?
During the last 12 months Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has allocated funding to families for short break activities for disabled children. We have provided a Short Breaks Grant that parents/carers have used to purchase short breaks activities for their child.

We have further developed the Disability Register which gives data and information to help the Council plan services.

We have maintained a specialist changing facility in Stockton Town Centre.

In October 2015 we consulted with parents and carers to gain their views about the Short Breaks Grant. As a result of this consultation, we made the decision to stop commissioning Short Break Grant activities from specific providers and instead, we introduced a larger Short Break Grant from 1st April 2016, to allow parents and carers more choice and control over the activities their child accesses.
How do we measure outcomes?

Parents are telling us that Short Breaks in Stockton are having positive outcomes for disabled children and young people:

“My son enjoyed attending the gym, we were delighted to receive the short break funding”

“The Youth Club has made a big change in my child”

“It has been a huge relief to me that my child has been able to attend a group where he ‘fits in’ as so often he is on the margin of everything”

“A brilliant resource for children and their families:”

If parents, carers and children are telling us they enjoy the activities then we know we are getting it right.
How do we know that Short Break services deliver better outcomes for children and young people?

We know this from the feedback we receive from parents/carers and children and young people.

Here are some examples:

A parent was very positive about the weekend club her child attends. She said her child is 10 years old and cannot be left. However he loves coming to the group and this gives her time to spend with the other children. She said the staff were lovely.

At the Health Eating & Cookery Club one young person commented he has “made an omelette last week and then he was able to make one at home”.

The following examples are from a questionnaire carried out by Stockton United for Change:

A parent said that for their child ‘giving him supported time from doing everything with Mum and Dad is beneficial to gain independence.'

Another child ‘feels accepted and has made friends with children he would not otherwise meet.’
How do we know what types of Short Breaks are needed?

Following a survey carried out in October 2015, we have considered a more personalised approach to Short Breaks and implemented this from the 1st April 2016. This means that the Short Breaks offer will be delivered through the development of the grant rather than commissioned services. Parents/Carers will be able to apply for the Short Break Grants giving more choice and control over the activities they choose for their children. This will be instead of the Council commissioning fixed short break services which may restrict parents/carers choice, resulting in a increased grant being available.

What Short Breaks are available in Stockton-on-Tees?

Details of providers can be found on the Local Offer: www.stockton.gov.uk/localoffer

The Short Break Grant can be used to pay for specialist activities operating in the local area. These include:

- Riding for the disabled
- Swimming Lessons
- Individual Soft Play Sessions
- Drumming
- Football
- Dancing
Up to date information regarding Short Breaks can be provided to parents/carers by text services provided by our Families Information Service. To register please contact Families Information Service on 01642 527225 or at fis@stockton.gov.uk.

For details about where to find further information and a full list of contacts please see back page.

What services are available following an assessment?

Some disabled children and their families need a higher level of support. This is identified by having an assessment.

The Local Authority provides the following Short Breaks which are assessed services via Social Care:

OASIS - Oasis offers after school and day care, short breaks for children and young people aged 8-17 with a learning disability.

Hartburn Lodge - Hartburn Lodge provides short breaks and overnight stays for children with complex and additional needs from the ages 8-18.

Information concerning eligibility for services is available in the ‘Parents Guide to Accessing Services’
What do we want to achieve in the next 12 months?

- Continue to provide and develop the information available to parents/carers including through the Local Offer
- Review processes for consultation with parents/carers and children and young people about Short Breaks
Where can you get information on these services?

There are a number of places where you can find information regarding Short Breaks in Stockton-on-Tees:

- Stockton’s Local Offer
  www.stockton.gov.uk/localoffer

- The Families Information Service - Texting Service

- Stockton United for Change provide a ‘no frills’ information leaflet detailing all activities - They also run One-to-One Drop-in Sessions at Newton Community Resource Centre, Durham Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 0DE from 11.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Every Tuesday (term time)

- The Short Breaks Grant application form and guidance is available to download on the Local Offer and the Stockton Borough Council website or alternatively you can call 01642 528739 or 01642 527145 to request a form
What do parents do if they want to register a compliment or complaint?

If a Short Break is delivered by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council directly then the Council’s commendations and complaints’ procedures should be followed (for further information contact complaints, commendations and comments by going to www.stockton.gov.uk/ccc or calling 01642 393939.)
Help with transport for families

Short Break funding grants can not be used to access transport. Transport costs may be provided from certain welfare benefits. Advice regarding welfare benefits can be found on the Local Offer.

How do we support the transition to Adult services?

Transition to adult services should be a smooth process with the disabled young person and their family at the centre of the planning and decision making. The personalisation agenda is central to this process giving greater choice and independence to the young person. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is committed to giving young people every opportunity to reach their full potential in a planned and supported way.

If you require further information on transitions you can contact your Participation Adviser from Youth Direction.

Contact by Telephone 01642 677600.
How is the Council developing the workforce?

We recognise that it is important that Stockton has a workforce with the skills and competencies to deliver safe and appropriate Short Breaks for disabled children.

Wherever possible the Local Authority will support the workforce with training which assists the delivery of Short Breaks.

How can people access the statement?

Stockton-on-Tees Short Breaks Service statement will be available in the following places:

- Stockton’s Local Offer
  www.stockton.gov.uk/localoffer

- Published on the Council’s website
  www.stockton.gov.uk

- Families Information Service

- Stockton United For Change

- The SEN and Engagement Service

To access further information and details of contacts please see Contacts List.
Contacts

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
www.stockton.gov.uk
01642 393939

SEN and Engagement Team
SenSection@stockton.gov.uk
01642 528739 or 01642 527145

Local Offer Website
www.stockton.gov.uk/localoffer

Families Information Service
fis@stockton.gov.uk
01642 527225

Stockton United for Change
stocktonunitedforchange@gmail.com
www.stocktonunitedforchange.co.uk
07935447375

Complaints/Commendations/Comments
www.stockton.gov.uk/ccc
01642 393939

The Parents Guide to Accessing Services is available from any of the above contacts.