

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR PEOPLE

**SHORT BREAKS FOR DISABLED CHILDREN
INFORMATION STATEMENT 2014-2017**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to publish an updated Short Breaks for Disabled Children Information Statement for 2014-2017 as required by regulation.
- 1.2 The proposed Short Breaks for Disabled Children Information Statement reaffirms the existing commitment that all children in North Lincolnshire with a disability have access to a Short Break. The revised statement takes account of the views of service users.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 North Lincolnshire Council's current Short Breaks' Statement was published in January 2013. This statement has recently been refreshed to take account of the developing agenda in respect of disabled children and young people and feedback from service users. As with the existing statement, the proposed Short Breaks for Disabled Children Information Statement 2014-17 ensures that all children in North Lincolnshire with a disability have access to a Short Break.
- 2.2 The 'Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011' provides the framework for the development of short breaks. These regulations place statutory duties upon all local authorities (LAs). These are:
 - 1) **Duty to make provision**, under which a local authority must:
 - a) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be unable to provide care unless breaks from caring were given to them
 - b) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be able to provide care for their disabled child more effectively if breaks were given to them to allow them to -
 - I. undertake education, training or any regular leisure activity,
 - II. meet the needs of other children in the family more effectively, or

- III. carry out day- to-day tasks which they must perform in order to run their household.

In performing this duty the regulations specify, so far as is reasonably practicable, that a range of services be provided that is sufficient to assist carers to continue to provide care or, to do so more effectively, these include:

- a) day-time care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere,
- b) overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere,
- c) education or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes, and
- d) services that are available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays.

2) **Duty to provide a Short Break Services' Statement**

The statement must be prepared in consultation with local carers of disabled children, be kept under review and be updated as appropriate, to enable sufficiency to be maintained. The detailed 'statement' informs carers in the area of the range of short break services available and outlines how these services can be accessed, including how any eligibility for the services will be assessed

2.3 Access and Eligibility

The North Lincolnshire Framework for Access and Eligibility which was developed in consultation with the Parents Involvement and Participation Group (PiP) ensures fair and equitable access to Short Breaks. It provides a tiered approach to assessment and allocation of provision and will inform our local offer under the SEND reforms. The framework enables the use of specialist assessment resources to be utilised proportionately according to the complexity of need.

Eligibility requires that the child has a disability and is resident in North Lincolnshire. Parent / carers are asked to register their child for short breaks with the Short Breaks and Provisions Team as a first point of contact.

The needs of children 0-5 pre statutory school age are embedded within Early Support and access and assessment are encompassed within individual children's Early Support Plans.

The access framework has been reviewed and amended to make clearer the Local Authority's duty to assess the needs of disabled children and their families.

2.4 North Lincolnshire Council has continued its commitment to services for disabled children. We have been able to meet our statutory duties in full and this investment has had a impact upon outcomes for parents, children and young people. We have been able to focus attention specifically on the needs of the young people as they move through transition to adulthood, in

line with the transformation agenda. The overall number of children registered for short breaks has increased to approximately 450.

- 2.5 A steering group made up of parents / carers, PIP group representatives, providers and the short breaks team oversees the development of the short breaks. This has ensured that the voice of parents, children and young people continues to be heard.

The steering group also monitors the safety and effectiveness of the activities and has particularly focused upon take-up of the service and appropriate efficiencies.

The proposed Short Breaks for Disabled Children Information Statement takes account of this consultation, including:

- maximising the use of Blossom Lodge, our purpose built log cabin, through the development of a parent led steering group
- developing the range of providers to deliver short breaks with particular emphasis on the individualised support for those children and young people with complex needs and those who want to pursue a personal budget
- meeting the needs of disabled children with complex health needs in each area of short breaks, through developing opportunities to jointly commission services with our health providers
- reshaping our overnight short breaks provision to take account of changes in demand for this type of support – families choosing short break provision that is more family home-based (e.g. fostercare, childminders). The Children and Families Act 2014 and the development of Personal Budgets will require changes in the market place to enable greater flexibility, choice and control for families.

3 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 To publish the revised Short Break Services' Statement on the North Lincolnshire Council website in accordance with council publishing requirements.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 The 'Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations' require the Local Authority to publish its Short Break Services' statement and keep it under annual review. This will ensure the council's continued compliance with the statutory requirement of the 'Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations' and ensure information is available to parents / carers, short break providers and partner agencies.

4.2 Failure to publish the revised Short Break Services' Statement will contravene the requirements of the 'Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations'.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Variations to the service specifications of commissioned short break services will be made to ensure value for money and to respond to the needs of service users.

5.2 The service will be provided for from the current budget and those identified for 2014-2017.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 North Lincolnshire's statutory duties are met and parents / carers, short break providers can readily access the statement.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 There is ongoing consultation with all key stakeholders (including parents, carers, disabled children and young people) the outcomes of which are incorporated into the revised statement.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 To publish the refreshed Short Breaks for Disabled Children Information Statement 2014- 2017 in line with regulations.

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Date: 20/06/2014

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: Regulations (as outlined), Access and Eligibility Framework.

**North Lincolnshire Council
Short Breaks for Disabled
Children**

Information Statement 2014-2017

Safe Children; Supported Families; Transformed Lives

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1. Introduction and background

This statement is for families living in the North Lincolnshire area who have a disabled child aged 0 to 18 years. 'The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011' placed a statutory duty on councils to prepare and publish a 'statement' to inform parents / carers of the range of short break services available. It has to include how eligibility for these services will be assessed and how they can be accessed. The original statement was published in October 2011. The statement has been reviewed annually in consultation with local parents / carers of disabled children, providers of short break services and other partners.

The North Lincolnshire Parents' Involvement and Participation Group (PIP) has worked very closely with North Lincolnshire Council in the development of short break provision and their continued input has informed this statement.

2. What are short breaks?

A 'short break' is a valuable break from caring for a parent / carer of a disabled child or young person. It is also an opportunity for a disabled child or young person to take part in fun activities. Short breaks can take a variety of forms, including the provision of day, evening, overnight and weekend activities. Short breaks can take place in the child's own home, in a community setting, the home of an approved carer, or in a residential setting. Short breaks can help contribute to the child and young person's social inclusion and personal development.

3. Our vision

The North Lincolnshire Children and Young People's Plan 2013 – 2016 sets out the overarching vision for all children and young people in North Lincolnshire. We want to ensure that we have **Safe Children, Supported Families and Carers and Transformed Lives**. There are six key strategic priorities to make this vision real. These are:

- Raise aspirations;
- Children and young people are safe and feel safe;
- Best start;
- Close the gap in outcomes between the vulnerable and disadvantaged;
- Celebrate and engage children and young people;
- One Vision, One Workforce.



Short break provision in North Lincolnshire will support this vision and these strategic priorities by ensuring that:

- Disabled children will have the same opportunities to develop and fulfill their potential as all other children;
- Disabled children will have the same opportunity to enjoy fun, meaningful experiences independently of their primary carers, thereby contributing to their social development and reduce social isolation;
- Families with disabled children will get the support they need, when they need it;
- Universal children's services will be more genuinely inclusive of disabled children including those with complex needs;
- Parents / carers and families will have a valuable break from their caring responsibilities.

4. Who is responsible for this statement?

North Lincolnshire Council.

5. How will the short breaks statement be published?

North Lincolnshire Council's short break statement will be published on:

- North Lincolnshire Council Website - www.northlincs.gov.uk
- North Lincolnshire PIP Forum website - www.northlincspipforum.co.uk
- Family Information Service - the statement will be available in hard copy format where required.

6. Breaks for carers of disabled children regulations (summary)

A copy of the *Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011* is available for detailed reference via the following link:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/707/made

In order to meet the requirements of the Regulations, councils must have regard to the needs of carers in respect of their capacity to care for, or continue to care for, their disabled child and must provide a range of services designed to meet this need.

A Short Break Services Statement must be prepared and published, outlining how this is to be achieved. The Statement must be kept under review and revised, as appropriate (Section 5 of the Regulations).

Duty to make a provision (section 3)

Councils must take into account the needs of carers who would:

- Be unable to continue caring for their disabled child unless breaks from caring were given;

Or

- Be able to give more effective care, if breaks were given to allow them to, for example, attend educational classes or training, or regular leisure activities or meet the needs of other children in the family, or carry out necessary day-to-day tasks in the household.

Types of services that must be provided (section 4)

Councils must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide a range of services sufficient to meet the needs of carers to care or to care more effectively, including:

- Day-time care in the child's own home and elsewhere;
- Overnight care in the child's own home and elsewhere;
- Educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside of their own homes;
- Services in the evenings, at the weekends and during school holidays.

7. Short breaks in North Lincolnshire

The development of our Short Break Services continues to be strengthened by the active participation of parents/carers representing the PIP forum and wider parent/carers both on working groups and through ongoing feedback.

Disabled children and young people are key in the shaping of our local services giving feedback at provider events and through the children and young people's participation group.

The overall number of children and young people registered for short breaks continues to increase steadily now averaging 450.

7.1 Progress on Actions 2013-14: You Said, We Did!

What parents / carers said -



- Activities being available during the day and evenings during holidays;
- Activities for disabled children as close to home as possible;
- Support with transport for those who need it;
- Venues that are safe with clearly identifiable staff and outside space for children;
- Individual 1:1 support to enable children to access universal / community activities, or to have a short break at home;
- Activities specifically for young people 15yrs-18yrs.

What disabled children and young people said -

Disabled children and young people have continued to express that they would like to have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities the same as non disabled children:



- Music, singing, drama and dance
- Trampoline and bowling;
- Cycling;
- Fishing;
- Horse riding;
- More sporting activity;
- Swimming.

What we did:

- We have undertaken a full review of our locality based short breaks looking at how to achieve the best take up. This has included the range of activities, the venues, the times of the activities and access to transport. We have reshaped the service around these to maximize opportunities. To assist the review our short breaks providers held open events for families to come along and give their views about the service and have been keen to develop the style of their public information to make it more user friendly. The programme of activities will now include opportunities for more trips out and themed events.
- We have developed a resource tool called “Including You”, to enable better access and inclusion for disabled children and young people to universal activities.
- We have joined other council teams and services consultation events, as part of the development of positive youth activities for disabled young people. Following this consultation, we met with 15 youth activity providers to help them look at how they promote quality inclusion in their activities.
- We have continued to develop the ‘Playscheme for Disabled Children with Complex Needs’, and now have dedicated health support, with a health professional on site throughout each scheme to give advice and support.
- We have continued to progress development of the Cygnets short break home, to encompass overnight short breaks for children with more complex health needs. All children attending the Cygnets have a health plan overseen by a health professional.
- We have invested in recruiting short break foster carers for those children with learning disabilities and complex behaviours.
- We have invested in a purpose built log cabin ‘Blossom Lodge’. This new resource provides a dedicated and secure environment to support disabled children and their families and those caring for them. It is a venue where disabled children and young people can undertake safe and fun activities, particularly when access to mainstream activities is limited. The lodge has a fully equipped kitchen area, wet-room facilities, outdoor playground, indoor and outdoor games and sensory equipment.
- We have continued to work with our Sport, Leisure and Culture Services, to widen the range of opportunities for disabled young people and there is now a ‘Do Something Different’ programme of activities for 16+ age group.



- Individualised Short Breaks has continued to be an area of significant growth and we have been working with the range of providers so they are more focused upon supporting individuals to develop their potential, improve their life chances and promote independence.

7.2 Range of short break services available in North Lincolnshire

The short break services available in North Lincolnshire meet the requirements of the the 'Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011'. These are:

1) Day-time care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere (S.4 (2) a):

- **Day care** is care that takes place on any day of the week and can include evenings but not overnight stays. Care is provided in the **carer's home** and may include activities outside the home. Carers are either approved as foster carers or, for children under eight, are registered child-minders.
- **Sitting** is care that takes place in the **child's own home** on any day of the week. The sitter would be employed by a registered agency or by the parent(s) through Direct Payments. Alternatively, for children under the age of eight, the sitter may be a registered child-minder. The main focus of care is within the child's own home but the sitter may also support the child in community-based activities.

2) Overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere (S.4 (2) b):

- **Overnight sitting** is the same thing as sitting (defined above) **but** includes overnight care. Parents may or may not be present.
- **The Cygnets** short breaks home provides overnight short breaks to children with a learning difficulty and complex needs aged five to eighteen years.
- **The 'Butterflies' short break foster scheme** provides overnight short breaks to disabled children, whose needs can be best met from more individual care within a family based setting aged 0 to 18 years.

3) Educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes (S.4 (2) c):

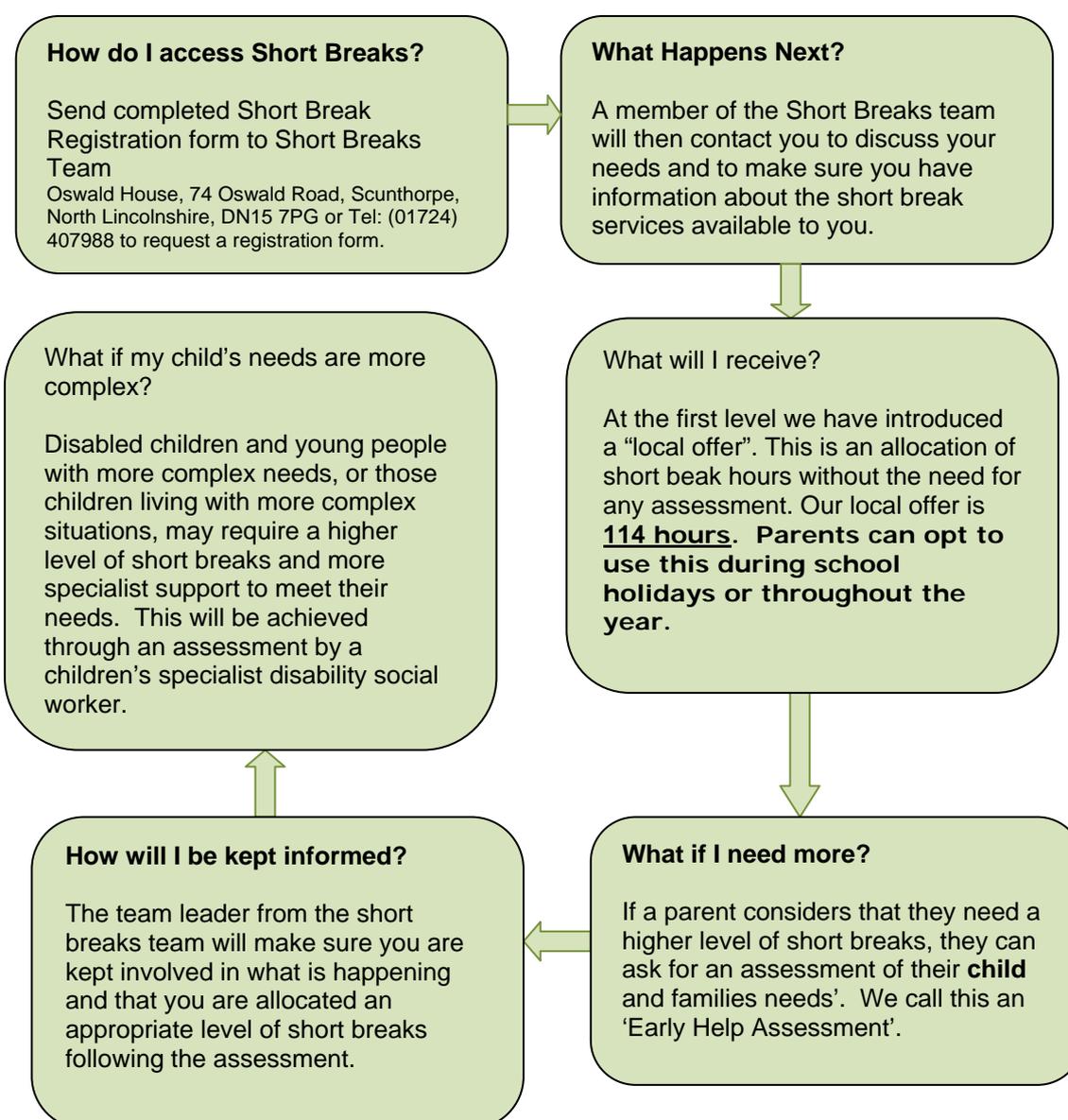
- **Social befriending** is a one to one relationship that specifically enables a child or young person's access to community or leisure activities.
- **Community-based short breaks** - Each locality area in North Lincolnshire has a range of group-based activities and opportunities for disabled children and young people e.g. out of school clubs, sport and leisure services and youth clubs. Disabled children and young people can attend these with or without support along with non-disabled children for a short break.
- **Locality-based specialist short breaks** - Foresight offer group-based activities for children across North Lincolnshire, specifically for disabled children.
- **Play-scheme for disabled children** - This is a holiday play-scheme during the Easter and summer holiday period. It is for disabled children with complex needs aged five to eighteen years and who are unable to make use of group based activities even with the use of additional support.

4) Services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays (S.4 (2) d):

The schedule of short breaks includes activities across a range of times, including in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.

8. How do I get a short break?

To be eligible for short break services the child or young person must have a disability (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) and live in North Lincolnshire. You are 'disabled' as defined by the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.



Children's individual allocation of short breaks will be reviewed at regular intervals and parents can request that their needs are reassessed at any time.

Additional specific criteria applies for the following:

Specialist overnight short breaks - to meet the criteria for overnight short breaks disabled children and young people are assessed as having additional needs which impact on the family causing ongoing sleep deprivation for family members and / or high levels of family stress.

Play-Scheme for Children with Complex Needs – to meet the criteria for the play scheme children and young people must:

- Be age 5-18 years.
- Be attending a school / facility for children with special educational needs.
- Be unable to benefit from short break activities in the community even with additional support.

Children's individual allocation of short breaks will be reviewed at regular intervals and parents can request that their needs are reassessed at any time.

The framework for short breaks takes account of the following key principles:

- That universal and mainstream provision (services we all use) are accessible to all disabled children and their families whilst acknowledging that some children will always need specialist support / services.
- That need arises from a combination of barriers to accessing universal and mainstream provision and family and environmental factors.
- That levels of need can change and that children, young people and their families can move up and down through the levels of support.
- That for some families a short break will be part of a package of services that enables their needs to be met.
- That there is full acknowledgement of the child / young person's and family's views / preferences in assessing and designing their individual package of short break care and support.

9. Actions for 2014-2017

The regular oversight of the steering group for locality short breaks, input of the PIP group and feedback from children and young people enable us to have a focus on what works well and areas for development. We want all of our short break providers to be aspirational for our children.

The following have been identified as key areas for development over the next three years:

- Rolling out the use of our "Including You" resource kit to enable better access and inclusion for disabled children and young people to universal activities.
- Maximising the use of Blossom Lodge through the development of a parent led steering group.
- Developing the range of providers to deliver short breaks with a particular emphasis on individualised support for those children and young people with complex needs and those who want to pursue a personal budget.

- Meeting the needs of disabled children with complex health needs in each area of short breaks, through developing opportunities to jointly commission services with our health providers.
- Reshaping our overnight short breaks provision to take account of changes in demand for this type of support.
- Continuing review of short break arrangements to maximize take-up and ensure all services are value for money.

10. Key contacts

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