

Specialist Short Breaks and Inclusion Frequently Asked Questions

What is a specialist short break?

Short breaks enable children and young people with a disability to access the kind of activities that are open to non-disabled children, so they can lead ordinary lives. Short breaks promote and emphasis on children and young people having fun, trying new activities, whilst gaining independence and making friends.

Short breaks are one of the services most commonly requested by parents of disabled children. These services also offer parents and carers the much-needed break that they need from their additional caring responsibilities.

Local authorities are required under the Children Act 1989 to provide services designed to give breaks for carers of disabled children. The 'Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations' (2010) sets out what local authorities should do to meet their duties in relation to the provision of short breaks. Services for children and young people with a disability are also developed in the context of other related Acts such as the Children Act 2004, the Equality Act 2010, the newly formed Children and Families Act 2014 and the recent Carers Act of 2014.

Services for children and young people with a disability are also developed in the context of other related Acts such as:

- The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000,
- The Children Act 2004
- The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014

What specialist short breaks are on offer in Tower Hamlets?

The following short breaks are available in Tower Hamlets

- Specialist Holiday play schemes
- Befriending Service
- Specialist after school club
- Specialist Saturday clubs for young people with ASD
- Overnight respite
- Direct Payments

**In addition, some of the borough's schools offer after school clubs for children and young people.*

What are Direct Payments?

Direct payments give parents, the opportunity to receive directly fund and manage their child's short break services. With direct payments you can receive money for services such as personal care, short breaks and so on. This allows you to arrange and pay for your disabled child's care package on your own. If you are interested in direct payments, you will need to be assessed by the children with disabilities (CWD) social care team to determine whether your child is eligible for direct payments.

Direct payments cannot be used to fund family holidays, short breaks money is to be spent on regular social, leisure and daytime activities only. The money can also not be used to fund school daytime or residential trips, as this will be considered an educational trip.

How can I access a short break?

Families can access specialist short breaks through the self-referral process. You can contact the short break coordinator on 0207 364 1450 and ask for a self –referral document.

We aim to promote choice and independence in the provision of our short breaks. The self-referral process assists with this as children and families are able to select their preferred short break.

The age criteria for each of the specialist short breaks may differ. However the overall age in which children can access a short break is aged 5 years or over.

We recognise however that children and families require different levels of support and so those requiring more than one short break or overnight specialist services can request this via a Social Care Single Care Assessment.

Families requesting direct payments as their short break will also need to undergo a social care assessment.

Once completed, the self-referral should be returned to the Short Breaks Co-ordinator once completed. Support with the completion of the self-referral is also available through the Co-ordinator along with help with accessing services. The self-referral can be downloaded from the Tower Hamlets website www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/childrenwithdisabilities or a hard copy obtained by contacting the Co-ordinator on 020 7364 1450. Self-referrals can be submitted electronically to short.breaks@towerhamlets.gov.uk .

What is the eligibility criteria involved in accessing a specialist short break?

Eligibility for Short Breaks in the borough of Tower Hamlets is as follows:

- Must live in Tower Hamlets
- Be aged between 5 and 17 years old
- Come under category A or B



2009-2010
Positive engagement of older people
2009-2010
Preventing and tackling child poverty
2003-2009
Winner of 7 previous
Beacon Awards



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Category A: Children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and severe learning difficulties with medium to high needs.

Category B: Children and young people with complex health needs including those with physical and/or learning disabilities and those with associated sensory impairments. Complex health needs includes children and young people with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

What inclusive services are on offer?

The Inclusion Service supports children and young people to access a range of fun and positive activities at universal settings such as youth services, leisure centres and outdoor activity venues within the borough.

Children and young people with a lower level of need such as those with mild-moderate learning difficulties or a visual or hearing loss are not eligible to receive a specialist short break as they are eligible to take up a short break in a universal setting.

What is the eligibility criteria involved in accessing Inclusion Services?

Eligibility for Inclusions services in the borough of Tower Hamlets is as follows

- Residents of Tower Hamlets (residents outside of the borough maybe considered)
- 3 years old to 13 years old
- Children with high functioning autism, attention deficient hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Children with mild to moderate learning needs
- Children with hearing impairments (HI) and visual impairments (VI)
- Children with physical disability only, such as cerebral palsy.

Can I get support with transport arrangements?

Tower Hamlets promotes and encourages independence and can provide independent travel training where appropriate. In most cases, we expect parent/carers to take responsibility for travel arrangements to and from the chosen short break activity.

The mobility element of DLA is to help assist in the transportation of children with disability. Where this is not possible, Tower Hamlets may be able to arrange transport to and from short breaks activities based on the lowest cost option. All requests made for transport assistance will be considered by the children with disabilities team, based on individual needs and circumstance.



2009-2010
Positive engagement of older people
2009-2010
Preventing and tackling child poverty
2003-2009
Winner of 7 previous
Beacon Awards



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



What do I do if I want more than one short break?

We recognise however that children and families require different levels of support and so those requiring more than one short break or overnight specialist services can request this via a Social Care Single Care Assessment.

Families requesting direct payments as their short break will also need to undergo a social care single assessment. You will need to complete a short break self-referral documents and send it to the person and address found below

Compliments, complaints and Feedback

If you wish to make a compliment, complaint or provide feedback you can telephone, email or write to us at the details below.

Short Breaks Coordinator
Children's Commissioning/ Children with Disabilities Team
Youth and Commissioning
5th Floor, Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
London,
E14 2BG

Telephone: 0207 364 1450

Email: shortbreaks@towerhamlets.gov.uk