

SHORT BREAK SERVICE STATEMENT



September 2019 – March 2021

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Future

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Introduction

Welcome to Hartlepool's Short Breaks Statement. The aim of this statement is to provide parents and carers with information about:

- How we design short break services to meet the needs of disabled children and young people aged 0 – 18 years in Hartlepool and their parents/carers
- Who is eligible to receive short breaks
- The range of short breaks available in Hartlepool and how to access them

Hartlepool's Vision

'Our vision is that we are committed to ensuring that all disabled children and young people and their families in Hartlepool should have equal access to a range of flexible services that support their ambition to live ordinary lives, enjoy a happy and fulfilling childhood and grow up to achieve their full potential.'

Better Outcomes for Families of Disabled Children

The delivery of the short break priorities are designed to improve the outcomes for disabled children and their families. As part of our service delivery the outcomes below are designed to make a difference for families of disabled children.

- Short Breaks aim to support parents and carers in their caring role and reduce levels of stress and anxiety due to the demands of caring
- They will aim to support disabled children and young people to access activities whereby they can make friends, have fun and support the development of their social, communication and independence skills
- When disabled young people are leaving school and making the transition to adulthood that they will be supported and are able to express their wishes and make appropriate choices
- Short Breaks will provide opportunities to enable families to spend time, relax together and for parents and their children to get to know other families and to build up a network of support and develop friendships

What is a Short Break?

A short break is an opportunity for children and young people to spend time away from their parents and carers, to take part in enjoyable activities and meet up with friends while being appropriately supported. It provides a break for parents and carers from their caring responsibilities; giving the parents a chance to relax, recharge their batteries, complete those everyday task and spend time with other family members.

A short break could be a couple of hours each week to an overnight stay in a residential setting or with a carer. The offer currently includes:

- Holiday Play schemes
- Out of School Clubs
- Extended Activities Provision
- Sport & Physical Activities
- Overnight Stays, including local residential or foster care provision
- Page | 3 Social groups
- Parent led Activities
- Specialist Toy Loan Service (including Stay & Play)
- Family based short break 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 and accessible
- Have a clear criteria for eligibility for Short Break Services
- Say how the services will meet the needs of families

How has this statement been prepared and who was involved?

Hartlepool Borough Council has worked with Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum – 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future to develop this statement.

1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future is the Parent Participation Forum who work closely with the council to represent views and opinions of parents and carers across Hartlepool. They support the ongoing development and reshaping of services to support families.

Who is responsible?

The lead officer with responsibility for ensuring the statement has been prepared is the Short Break and Parent Participation Officer. Overall responsibility for the statement sits with the Director of Children and Joint Commissioning Services.

What have we achieved in the last 12 months?

During the last 12 months Hartlepool Borough Council have commissioned a series of services that have been identified within the Short Break Activity Annual Survey and through discussion and consultation with families via the Parent Carer Forum. The council has also taken on board the feedback and evaluations from commissioned services that have been accessed by families. The services have reflected on the feedback and adapted where appropriate.

We have reviewed the Children's Disability Register which provides us with data and information to help the Council plan services and this will also be available on line to make it easier for families to access.

We continue to maintain as a council the specialist changing facilities managed by the local authority which are located across Hartlepool.

We have consulted and worked with the Parent Carer Forum to review and revamp the Local offer of Services website and this will be located under the banner of Hartlepool Now website

We have provided free Max Discount Cards and continue to do so for families which provide great discounts to many attractions both locally, across the North East and the rest of the country. Families have benefitted from access to this service and saved money.

Short Breaks Support

Not all children and families will need the same level of support and short breaks. Some will need more than others because of the nature of their child's disability while some families may need more support because of their individual family circumstances. As a local authority we therefore need to assess your child and family to ensure that we provide the right level of support and short breaks at the right time.

Not all services require an assessment to be carried out and can be accessed directly by families. These are called 'Universal Services'.

Universal Services

These short breaks are available to all families where there are **low support needs** and might include youth clubs, holiday play schemes, activity clubs, children's Centres and the Max Discount Card (which offers a discounted cost to access many attractions across the country.) The local authority also produce a Short Break Activity Programme which does not require an assessment of need, but includes commissioned services that are more targeted to meet the needs of disabled children. To find out more about these universal short break services for disabled children and their families you can contact the Short Break and Parent Participation Officer on: 01429 284876 or go onto the Local offer of Services website: <http://www.hartlepool.fsd.org/send>

Targeted and Specialist

Targeted

These are services available to children/young people with some support needs but may not meet the threshold for specialist social care support. In this case the family will have an Early Help Assessment which has been completed by any practitioner involved with your child/family such as a teacher, health visitor, Parent Support Advisor or a Family Support Worker within the Early Help teams.

Following assessment, a plan is drawn up outlining the support needed, which may include a short break. Plans are reviewed regularly to check what progress is being made and to decide whether less or more support may be needed.

Although the Short Break Activity Programme does not require an assessment of need to be undertaken these services partially commissioned by the local authority provide more targeted support than those delivered by universal services.

Specialist

These are highly specialist or bespoke services which are available to children and young people with high support need. They can only be assessed as a result as a Child in Need (CIN) assessment which will be carried out by a social worker from the Children's Disability Team.

The Social Worker has 45 days to complete the CIN assessment which looks carefully at the child's development needs, the parents'/carers' specific needs, any parenting issues and the wider family circumstances and environment. They will also gather relevant information from professionals involved with your child.

A support plan is devised following the assessment, which includes the services and short breaks that may be appropriate to be provided and how this will meet the child's/families' needs. The plan needs to be approved a panel before the short break is approved.

All plans are reviewed at least 6 monthly to make sure they respond to the needs of a child and family. Examples of a specialist short breaks package may include: day placements/overnight stays within a residential or foster placement, or, the provision of a Direct Payment in order to fund specific activities to meet the identified needs of your child such as accessing a specialist group or club or to fund 1:1 support to enable attendance and participation at a specific activity.

How do we know that Short Break services are meeting needs of children and young people?

In Hartlepool we have a very proactive Parent Led Forum that works in partnership with the Local Authority Short Break Lead Officer, other relevant agencies and groups to ensure that service delivery meets the need of families of disabled children.

There is also parent representation on a number of strategic and operational groups, which provides a platform for parents to contribute and influence change. Parents are also actively involved in the commissioning of non-assessed short break provision and continue to play a very active role in the development of the local offer of services.

Children and young people are actively engaged in having their say about things they like to do. This is carried out in a number of ways, including: questionnaires, face to face discussion and group work within the short break sessions. This information is gathered to also plan for future delivery.

All of our commissioned services are required as part of their terms and conditions of funding to engage service users in evaluating services on a quarterly basis. It is expected that this helps providers to adapt their services as required.

Examples of feedback are set out below:

Sport and Physical Activity Team

The team on behalf of the Short Break Services Programme deliver 2 session a week across 50 weeks of the year. These sessions consist of Fun-ability session every Thursday and a Multi Sports Session every Saturday morning for children and young people aged 6 – 16 years to support them in participating in a wide variety of physical activities.

Throughout the year staff carry out participation feedback sessions to assist the delivery of future sessions to meet the needs of individuals accessing the session.

This is what parents, children and young people told us they enjoyed:

"Playing various sports with my friends"

"The beginning where we play all different games"

"Meeting new people"

"Mixing with kids and making friends"

"My son always enjoys coming along to the Fun-ability sessions. He really enjoys taking part in different sports each week"

"My child looks forward to the Thursday session, never moans and enjoys it from start to finish"

"My child is able to socialise amongst children of his own age and has become more confident within himself and he sleeps well following the sessions"

"These sessions have helped my child move onto new activities and increased the number of activities he partakes in now"

"Staff are always good with the children and are really supportive. I always recommend the sessions to other parents"





Families First North East & Hartlepool, including Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group

Provide the commissioned short break service on behalf of the local authority.

These services are offered over 50 weeks of the year and include extended afterschool activities, holiday play schemes, weekend activities, toy loan service and stay & play sessions.

Here are quotes from families that use these services:

Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group

"My son loves attending the summer scheme, he does something different every day. It is a very well organised and the children are well looked after. My child is always so excited to go"

"My son is now a young adult but always looks forward to going to the scheme. He loves the freedom to ride a special bike that he can't do normally. The staff are always very friendly, caring, organised and professional"

"My daughter looks forward to the summer scheme all year and discusses it throughout the year as one of her memories. The staff and the children there are her social support and I cannot even begin to tell you how important this is to her"

"He decorated his super hero pottery and we were all amazed as he doesn't normally take part in crafts. It will have a special place in our home"

"My son came home and said he had made friends and that it was one of the best things he has ever done"

Families First NE

"The guys are amazing...my son has been going here for some time now during the holidays, he is now continues to go full time since leaving school. All of the staff will go out of their way to help and make sure that your child's needs are being met"

"Kristy the worker has been fab and my son is loving every minute of the day doing arts and crafts and being out and about as well as other activities"

"All I can say, if you get the chance for your child to go to FF, snap it up, don't wait cos your child is seriously missing out"

"My son attends the youth project and has also attended the play scheme during holidays. I honestly couldn't recommend FF enough. My son has made so many friends, the staff are fantastic and he has the opportunity to take part in activities he would never have gotten to do"

"After our daughters Autism diagnosis we felt like we were pushed out of the door and no help offered. I discovered FF and the help and guidance from them has been invaluable. She attends 3 group a week and last night I cried happy tears to see her playing and laughing, properly laughing, when I came to pick her up from the Girls Autism Group. The difference in her is amazing"

"We've not looked back. Our daughter loves it and is so much better now. She loves the team who work there and the difference in our daughter is amazing"

Parent Carer Forum - 1 Hart 1Mind 1 Future

1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future has continued to work with families in Hartlepool to develop family led activities. Through consultation with families the Forum has delivered many parent led activities for families to enjoy together. The activities delivered have brought the whole family together and the impact on families has been extremely positive. The Forum has increased families' resilience, reduced isolation and increased social opportunities for the whole family.

This is what families have told us:

"Great opportunity to meet other families and find out what is available"

"Had a great day, absolutely loved getting out with the kids and not worrying if they have a meltdown"

"Lovely that families can meet and not feel like they fighting a battle alone"

“The parent forum is fantastic, I am new to the sessions and they are so helpful, I get more information and guidance to help my son than I do from services. So glad I came along”



Short Break Activity Programme Survey

During the early part of 2019, a survey was circulated to parents and carers in relation to open access short breaks in Hartlepool. The survey questionnaire could be completed either by using the on-line Survey Monkey or by completing a paper version of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was circulated to both special schools, to groups delivering services, via the parent led forum, direct link to the survey monkey situated on the local offer of services webpage. Workers also circulated the survey.

Here are some of the findings which have supported the types of services families like to access and shape the delivery of services going forward.

Responses mainly came from parents within the 5 - 11 years age ranges.

The three highest descriptors of need were:

- Autistic Spectrum
- Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
- Physical Disability

From the responses received they stated they accessed some form of non – assessed short break. When asked about the type of support they received or accessed, the following came out as the most accessed:

- 88% stated that they accessed extended activities delivered by a specialist provider
- 32% stated that they accessed play schemes delivered by a specialist provider
- 15% stated that they accessed physical sport activity
- 15% accessed parent led forum activities
- 18% stated they have accessed short break training for parents and carers

70% of families who responded preferred to access short breaks delivered within Hartlepool and the same number were happy with the distance they currently travelled. 18% said they would be happy to travel across neighbouring authorities to attend a short break activity.

76% of respondents told us that they were satisfied with the short breaks accessed, however 50% didn't know about all of the services on offer.

42% of respondents said they weren't aware of the Local Offer of Services. However those who were aware, 39% said they have used it.

Families were asked about how they found out about the short break activities on offer. The top 5 other than the local offer of services were:

- Free text messaging service
- Via Email
- Parent Carer Face Book page
- Other organisations websites
- Leaflets

Families were asked about the type of short break activities their children accessed. 47% accessed extended activities delivered by Families First, with 41% stating they used Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group. 15% stated that they accessed the physical activity sessions delivered and others accessed services delivered by other voluntary organisation based within and outside of the borough.

From the responses that were received, these are some of the things families say are working well:

"My child enjoys all social events at HSNSG. Her needs are being met at all times. She says she can be herself and not worry about anything"

"The holiday plays scheme at Families First is amazing for both of my children. They have a great time and make fantastic memories. It has been a life saver for us especially in the 6 weeks it helps ease the pressure massively"

"The Saturday football is a fantastic session"

"Activities suited to children's needs"

"That all of the family can do activities together"

"It is a calm environment and the staff are brilliant"

"We currently attend the Fun-ability session and my child loves it. He has gained loads in terms of skills for different sports and also confidence"

This is what families told us that could be better to improve their experiences:

"More places on the holiday play schemes as demand outweighs the number of places available"

"Access to funding for services operating outside of the town"

"Increase the variety of services for children with Autism"

"Sessions where I can leave my child for a couple of hours"

"Drama clubs, singing, dancing and swimming"

How does the council support transition to adult services?

The 0-18 Children's Disability Team and the Adults 18 – 25 Disability Team will work together in partnership with a young person and the people that are important to them to explore if support needs to continue or be in place in preparation for the young person turning 18 years old. Children's and Adult Social Care will work together in carrying out assessments of need under the Care Act 2014 to ensure that effective arrangements are in place which enhances the quality of life for all young people with a disability and their family as they move forward into adulthood.

The children and adult disabilities teams also work closely with the SEND education team to ensure that young people can access education and training.

Where can families get more information about Short Breaks?

There are a number of places where you can find Information regarding Short Breaks in Hartlepool:

- Contacting the Short Break & Parent Participation Officer. Tel No: 01429 284876.
- Hartlepool's Local Offer of services for families of disabled children website <http://www.hartlepool.fsd.org/send>
- Sign up to the Children's Disability Register either by contacting the Children's Disability Team by email: ChildrensDisabilityRegister@hartlepool.gov.uk or request on line via the Local Offer of Services
- Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum - 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future T Contact: 07896 054361 or via their email address: HartMindFuture@yahoo.co.uk or join their face book page: 1Hart, 1Mind, 1Future Group Forum

If you are looking for more targeted or specialist service which may involve an assessment of need contact the Childrens Hub on: 01429 284284

What do we want to achieve in the next 18 months?

All the feedback from children, young people, families and the Parent Carer Forum has been taken into account for the priorities for the next 18 months which are set out below:

Priority	Action
Holiday Play schemes	Maintain and wherever possible to increase the numbers of places to accommodate children and young people to include 11 weeks of holiday play scheme provision
Extended Activities - out of school hours	Continue to maintain delivery of extended activity provision across 50 weeks of the year
Family Based and parent led activities	Continue to support the work of the Parent Carer Forum to increase awareness and engage with new families accessing short break services.
Specialist Toy Loan service, including Stay & Play	Maintain the service to include access to specialist toy provision for families and settings and to support families of children under the age of 5 to access play and stay services
Sport/Physical Activities	To maintain the delivery of the current number of sessions across the year (100) in total, to increase the participation and encourage access to club based sporting activity.
Increase access to information	<p>Maintain the provision of the free text messaging service facility and promote to increase the number of subscribers.</p> <p>Redesign and launch of the local offer of services website to increase better access to information.</p>

	<p>The Parent Carer Forum to continue to use and promote their own face book page to reach wider audiences to disseminate information.</p> <p>Attend information day events to widen the reach of families accessing service.</p> <p>Produce easy read literature on services and products available.</p>
Max Discount Card Membership	Maintain access to free discount cards for families of children with additional needs and disability to enable them to access many attractions across the country at discounted prices.
Continue to support Parent Participation to influence the development of services	<p>Continue to support the parent led forum in the delivery of their work.</p> <p>Continue to raise awareness and increase the membership base of the group to ensure a broader range of parents are involved in the development of services.</p>
Increasing the capacity of the workforce	Continue to ensure that both the workforce and parents have access and signposting to relevant training to ensure that they have the right skills and knowledge for supporting children and young people

What do parents/carers do if they want to register a complaint or compliment?

If the Short Break is either delivered or commissioned by Hartlepool Borough Council, then the Comments, Complaints and Compliments Procedure should be followed. For further information you can complete an online form by going to: www.hartlepool.gov.uk or via email to cascomplaints@hartlepool.gov.uk or by calling: 01429 284020.

How can people access the statement?

Hartlepool's Short Break Service statement will be available in the following places:

- Hartlepool's Local Offer of Services for Families of Disabled Children Published on the councils website: <http://www.hartlepool.fsd.org/send>
- Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum: 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future
- The Children's Disability Team
- The Short Break & Parent Participation Officer. Tel No: 01429 284876