

Doncaster Council Short Breaks Offer

Enabling children and young people with a disability or complex health need, to access services and activities that will enhance their life experiences; whilst offering a break to families/carers.

What are Short Breaks?

The purpose of the Short Breaks scheme (SB) is to help children and young people that have a disability and/or complex health need and to support families. The Council aim to offer opportunities to widen life experiences and enjoy recreational and learning activities; enhancing personal and social development. SB also provides a valuable break to families and primary carers.

Short Breaks can last from a few hours to a few days – during the day or evening; overnight or at weekends. They can take place in the home, a carer's home, residential setting or elsewhere in the community. The amount of time and level of services offered will depend on the assessed needs of an individual child or young person.

A child who is in foster care, under special guardianship, or residing full-time in a residential school is not eligible for Short Breaks. Support for such children is provided elsewhere.

Short Breaks Services in Doncaster

Universal Short Breaks Offer

Local Offer:

- Doncaster's local offer provides information for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) and their parents or carers in a single place. This help includes leisure activities and, under certain circumstances, assistance with transport. The local offer can be found via the following link: www.doncaster.gov.uk/localoffer

Together Information Exchange (TIE):

- All children with a disability, including SEN, are able to independently access the Universal Short Breaks Offer. They do not need a Lead Practitioner or Early Help Assessment to apply. Lead Practitioners, however, should support families to access the offer as part of the Whole Family Action Plan.
- To make use of universal services families must be registered with TIE which is Doncaster's voluntary register of children and young people with a disability. The register is administered by the Family Information Service (FIS) which assists families to access the Local Offer including activities in school holidays. Families can access universal services and for disabled children TIE offers additional activities.

TIE members receive:

- Access to the afterschool and weekend clubs
- The school holiday activity timetable ,accessed via the Family Information Service, enables disabled children to book places prior to each school holiday
- A free TIE membership card to receive discounts at various places including Yorkshire Wildlife Park, The Dome Leisure Centre, Vue Cinema and many more
- Regular information and updates about events and activities taking place

Application forms to join TIE are available from FIS by applying on-line at:

www.doncaster.gov.uk/doitonline/together-information-exchange-tie-application-form and click on the 'do it now' button. Alternatively, you can contact FIS on: 01302 735434 or Email: FIS@doncaster.gov.uk

Targeted Short Breaks support for children and young people with complex needs.

Children from all ages up to 18 years old must meet ALL of the following criteria:

- The child or young person will have Special Educational Needs and/or Disability regardless of whether the child has an SEN support plan or an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) issued by the Local Authority.
- Children and young people where universal provision has been considered and found not to be suitable or easily accessed due to the child's needs. There is an expectation that families will have accessed universal services and TIE activities before a SB application will be progressed.
- Families are in receipt of middle or high rate of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) for at least one component (i.e. care or mobility).
- Needs of the whole family have been assessed by a named Lead Professional using the Early Help Assessment (EHA) or Social Care Child and Family Assessment (C&F), which identifies the need for targeted Short Break support

Targeted support can include:

- Daytime care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere, outside of school hours
- Overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere
- To fund and/or support learning and/or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes
- Services to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.

How to apply for a Short Break

The Council has a duty to offer a range of services to eligible children, young people and their families¹.

Families who wish to refer themselves are required to contact the Early Help Hub ('One Front Door') and an assigned Lead Practitioner will initiate an Early Help Assessment. This assessment will identify the needs of the family and what support/services are available. This information *may* lead to a Short Break referral.

If the referral meets the above criteria, a Short Break Assessment Officer will undertake a Needs Based Assessment (NBA). This will assess the levels of need of the child/young person and discuss potential options to meet need.

The SB support can be the main intervention or part of a package of multi-agency support. Parents/ carers will be involved in deciding what type of support they believe is necessary for their child.

Applications will be considered by a panel of relevant professionals. Parents/carers will be informed of the outcome in writing.

If an application is rejected, parents will have the opportunity to discuss the decision with the Short Breaks Manager. Formal complaints can be escalated via the Doncaster Council Complaints Procedures. This can be found on the council website: www.doncaster.gov.uk.

How are Short Breaks managed?

Following a successful application some families choose to 'buy' their own support via Direct Payments. This means that instead of receiving services directly from Doncaster Council, they are able to purchase the help they need. Families appointing a support worker have access to a Managed Account or Direct Payment Account. Assistance is available to help set up an account, if required, and further information will be provided by the Short Breaks Officer, during the NBA visit

Relevant insurance cover will be required and all support workers must have a current Disclosure Barring Service certificate. Financial assistance is provided to help obtain a DBS.

There is no fixed list as to what you can get with a Direct Payment. Some families use Direct Payments to employ a person to help out with their child at home or in the community, while others have bought overnight care for their child. A Direct Payment may also contribute towards social activities. The type of activity must first be identified, and agreed, in the Whole Family Action Plan.

Parents or anyone with legal parental responsibility, or anyone living at the same address as the child/young person are not entitled to receive these payments. If grandparents or

¹ The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970; The Children Act 1989; The Equality Act 2010; Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011; Children and Families Act 2014.

other family members seek financial support an assessment must first identify that activity claimed for is over and above the usual caring role.

Sessional Support.

For families who wish to use sessional workers, or are unable to purchase support through Direct Payments, they can ask the Local Authority to approach approved companies who may be able to provide a sessional worker. As with Direct Payments, the child's needs are identified through the Whole Family Action Plan. The plan is shared (with parents' consent) to a potential provider to judge whether it can meet the child's individual social and emotional needs and achieve the identified outcomes aspired to.

Will I have to pay towards SB activities?

Parents/carers may be required to fund any additional costs associated with activities for their child, e.g. transport to and from events and refreshments. Such expenses will be made clear in advance by those providing the service. Disability Living Allowances (DLA) can be used to support SB activities.

Preparing for Adulthood

Short Break provision is not for use when a young person reaches the age of 18 when, if appropriate, they transfer to Adult Services. A transition should be a purposeful and planned process; adapting to the ongoing medical, psychosocial, educational and vocational needs of young adults as they move from child-centred to adult-oriented provision.

Doncaster Short Breaks will support young people and families to prepare for the challenges of adulthood and, where relevant, more independent living. For young people who are aged 16+, we will work with them and professionals to ensure the transition from Children's Services to Adult Social Care is as smooth as possible. More information can be found on: <http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/transition-to-adulthood>.

Commissioning

The Council is committed to commissioning services that have the potential to increase resilience, help to prevent family breakdown and promote independence through universal, targeted and sustainable support. We will commission services that enable children and young people to access more opportunities in their local communities which deliver the best value for money.

Quality Assurance

As a Council we are committed to evaluating the quality of care every child receives from any service or organisation we commission to deliver on our behalf; including Short Breaks. To help us achieve this we shall carry out annual Quality Assurance visits. The Council's Quality Team will support agencies to continually improve services. This will involve feedback from families together with observation or audit of Short Breaks providers. You may be contacted by a member of the Quality Team from the Council asking if you would be

prepared to share your experience of the care received and about the services you would like to see in the future. Your opinions are important to our aims to continually improve.

What if you have a problem with a Short Break activity?

If you experience any problems in accessing a short break activity, or concerns while your child is attending, please discuss this with the activity provider in the first instance and ask for a copy of their complaints policy. You can also contact a Short Break Assessment Officer who will assist you via the FIS email: shortbreaksteam@doncaster.gov.uk

Public Sector Equality Duty.

This statement has been written in compliance with the Public Sector Equalities Duty under the Equalities Act 2010. If anyone believes that it does not comply they are invited to write to us at: Doncaster Council, Short Breaks Team, Third Floor, Civic Building, Doncaster DN1 3BU, stating why they feel this document is not compliant.

Further to a public consultation event which occurred in May 2017, Doncaster Council will seek the views of service users and providers on this revised Short Break Offer in January 2019.