



Common Access Framework

Short Break Services for Disabled Children
and Young People



London Borough
of Hounslow

NHS
Hounslow

Common Access Framework

The following is an agreed common access framework for Support and Short Breaks in Hounslow that has been developed to promote transparency and consistency.

The Common Access Framework aims to provide information for families about access to short breaks in plain and easy-to-read language, and is available in other language formats if required.

Introduction

Short breaks used to be called respite care/breaks, however they are now usually called 'short breaks' because we want everyone to think positively about disabled children and young people. Short breaks are there to give children and young people the chance to do something they enjoy doing away from their parents or carers. They are also a chance for parents to have a short break from caring.

From 2009 the government provided additional money through 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' to support local areas to develop and provide more short breaks for disabled children, young people and their families. Through Aiming High, additional consultation with parents, carers, children and young people, took place with regard to the type of short breaks they wanted in Hounslow.

Aiming High also asked Local Authorities to think about standards of service for families with disabled children can expect, which was known as the Core Offer. These standards included thinking about how information is given, being transparent in what we do, and what services families are offered, ensuring a child or young person's needs are assessed appropriately, and involving families and their

disabled child in the decisions that are made and listening to their views.

Information for families

Disabled children and young people have the same rights as their non-disabled peers and we want to ensure that they and their families have access to the right support, in order that they have the same opportunities as other children to lead fulfilling lives.

There is a range of funding and support services available across Hounslow to support disabled children, young people and their families. Some of these services and funding are statutory and Hounslow has a duty in law to provide them, this includes a duty to assess need. Other services are provided through funding decisions the Local Authority makes through elected members and/or through other funding streams, e.g. Government grants. Other services that are available may be from the voluntary sector, sometimes these are provided in partnership with Hounslow, and sometimes these services may charge parents/carers or Hounslow may purchase them on behalf of parents/carers.

All disabled children are deemed 'Children in Need' in terms of the Children Act 1989, and therefore every disabled child in the London Borough of Hounslow is entitled to an Initial Assessment. An initial assessment is carried out by a social worker from Hounslow's Children's Services, who will gather information about the child in order to work out what services are needed, and who should provide them. This process involves discussing issues around, your child's developmental needs, how you are coping with parenting and any other pressures that you may be facing.

However, only those assessed as having a substantial and permanent disability will be eligible for support through the Children's Disability Team. This may include family support, residential short breaks, family based care and/or outreach services. Families who are not eligible for services through the Children's Disability Team may still be eligible for services from one of our other social care teams or mainstream services.

In Hounslow we aim to create a service where disabled children, young people and their families can have a short break when they need it and have a good time. The short breaks through Hounslow are usually provided free of charge to disabled children, and although some services may charge this will be made clear to the family before they accept this service. We think it is important to share out the short breaks in a fair way and some children and young people will need more support than others will because of the nature of their disability or how it impacts on them and their family. Because every disabled child/young person and their family is different, we will provide short breaks at three different levels of support for different levels of need as this is fair and sensible.

Disabled children and young people tell us they want to be able to do the same things as other young people of their age, and have choice about when, where and with who they do this. Some disabled children and young people can go to mainstream activities with support and we are working on making all the services in Hounslow accessible and suitable for disabled children and young people.

Other disabled children and young people

will need or want short breaks that are designed around their particular needs. A small group of disabled children and young people will need help from specialists to enjoy a short break. This could be because they have serious health problems, they need a lot of physical care or due to their disabilities that they need a lot of help to manage their behaviour. Sometimes this means their families/carers would really enjoy a break as well as the children and young people themselves. A short break can help to reduce stress and isolation for both the child or young person and their family. For this small group of children, young people and their families/carers we will offer short breaks with extra, specialist care.

Access to the short break service – Transparency about how decisions are made

We aim for children, young people and families to have short breaks they want, when they want them. We include children, young people and their families in deciding which short breaks are best for them.

We try to make access to short breaks as simple as possible for families.

For each of the three pathways of need we try to use information we have already – and not undertake new assessments. We aim to have all the professionals working together with families, children and young people to make the plans and provide the short breaks. Some short breaks parents/carers can access directly through self-referral and other services are allocated through the Resource Allocation Panel (RAP).

Where a family can self-refer to a short break the publicised information will clearly state

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the services eligibility criteria based upon the Pathways below and the service will discuss with you whether it is an appropriate service for your son or daughter. Some short breaks require an assessment of the needs of the disabled child or young person and/or their family by a social worker and some services may be aimed at children or young people of a certain age in order to ensure their welfare is paramount, e.g. Travel Training or rock climbing !

Pathways

The Pathways (attached at the end of this document) are designed to be indicative of the needs of a child or young person at the time they or their family access a service. The Pathway has three levels of need, Pathways 1, 2 and 3, and the eligibility criteria for short break services will be publicised at these Pathways. Each Pathway has three groups of need, bands A, B and C, Children and young people who meet the criteria of band A are likely to meet that Pathway. Children and young people who meet one or more of the criteria from BOTH Bands B and C, are likely to meet that Pathway. It is acknowledged that the needs of children and young people can change over time and therefore they may move through the pathways at different times in their lives,

Pathway 1

This offers access to mainstream activities with support from the services providing the activity. Pathway 1 services are open to all disabled children and young people, and will not usually require any form of assessment of need, although services may operate their own eligibility criteria, e.g. age based

services. These short breaks can be accessed directly by the young person, their family or carer. The service provider and/or a specialist worker involved with the family can support access to Pathway 1 short breaks and activities. Specialist workers, e.g. teacher, HV, Portage worker, can help the family and young person to decide which short breaks and activities to access. These may include Youth clubs, sports and leisure activities, extended school activities, play groups in the community, or children centres

Through Aiming High funding, we are working with services to enable them to support as many disabled children and young people as possible. This includes additional training for mainstream workers to develop their skills, developing additional funding so disabled young people have greater choice in the activities they want to access and specialist equipment they may need. We are also working with leisure services to increase access to services.

Pathway 2

Pathway 2 offers short breaks with support designed around a child or young person's particular needs, as well as the short breaks offered in Pathway 1.

For this pathway, the service provider will discuss with the child, young person and their family the kind of support they need and want. Before the meeting, the service provider or one of the professionals involved with the child or young person may need to make an assessment of their needs. This will help everyone decide what support would be most helpful. Pathway 2 services will include more specialist short breaks provided through either mainstream or specialist services, and could include specialist youth

provision, specialist groups and/or additional support to access mainstream provision.

Pathway 3

Pathway 3 is designed for the small group of children, young people and their families/ carers who need short breaks with extra, specialist care. This could be in a mainstream activity or a specialist type of short break.

A panel of people from the different services who provide support to disabled children meets regularly. This group looks at the best way of providing and funding short breaks for children and young people with the highest levels of need. When they are looking at a package of short break support, the panel takes into account the assessed needs, the opinions of the specialists who work with the child or young person. The parents and/or carers' opinions about the kind of short break that they would find beneficial and the where appropriate the views and wishes of the child or young person. The panel brings everyone's ideas together to work out how best to provide the right short break package for the child/ young person and their family.

The type of services available at this level will include specialist play sessions, overnight short breaks, Direct Payments and a specialist worker who will offer care in either the home or the community.

Getting better all the time

Hounslow wants to continue to develop the ability for disabled children and young people to access short breaks and activities, as well offering more variety in what we offer and more choice for children/young people and their families. We want to make sure our short breaks and services get better all the time. We plan to continue working with parents/carers through our Parents' Forum to understand what they want. We will also be developing more opportunities for disabled children and young people to give their views and contribute to planning and reviewing of services provided or commissioned by the Local Authority.

To ensure that services are fair and transparent, the Eligibility Criteria for access to the Pathways is shown below. We understand that caring for a disabled child or young person can present additional challenges to parents and carers. Therefore, if you are unhappy about the service you receive or have any questions about services you are receiving we will always aim to respond to your concerns promptly, by phoning you within 2 working days to discuss the issue.

If you do not believe the assessment that a social worker undertakes is reflective of your child's needs then you have the right to complain. In the first instance, you should contact the Social Work Team for Children with a Disability on 020 8583 3163.

If you do not believe the assessment that a short break provider undertakes is reflective of your child's needs then you have the right to complain. In the first instance, you should contact Aiming High on 020 8583 3636.

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If you continue to be unhappy with the service or the response you received you can contact The Customer Relations Manager, CS&LL, Pavilion BF, Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow TW3 4DN. Telephone: (020) 8583 3333 or follow the link to complete an on-line complaints form. <https://eforms.hounslow.gov.uk/ufs/ufsmain?esessionid=1>

We also want children and young people to be able to ask questions or challenge us about the services we provide. To support disabled young people to do this, we will always provide an advocate to support a young person where requested.

Tell us what you think

We want to hear what you think about the services we provide and your experience of them. We also want to hear what short breaks you would like to see and we want more parents and carers to become more involved in contributing to how services are developed. So to talk to us in Hounslow, please contact Khalid Oumar, the Project Coordinator on 020 8583 3636 or the Aiming High Parents Forum on 020 8994 9602, or e-mail: aiminghigh@hounslow.gov.uk

Pathways of Need

	Pathway 1 Level of Need	Pathway 2 Level of Need	Pathway 3 Level of Need
Band A	Mobility	Walks, but only with aids or assistance. May use a wheelchair sometimes.	Full time wheelchair user and/or Mobility severely restricted without special provision.
	Vision	Able to read print with simple aids or assistance. Defect of at least half visual field. May be eligible for registration as partially sighted.	Unable to read large print without intensive educational assistance or sophisticated aids. Registered.
	Hearing	Hearing loss 41-70 dB	Hearing loss >71 dB
	Functioning and Learning ability	Overall functioning around half expected level for age. Has a moderate learning disability	Overall functions significantly below expected level for age. Have a severe learning disability or a moderate learning disability and diagnosed ASD.
Band B	Health	Health condition that limits normal activities, including self-care and personal hygiene, access to services. May interfere with opportunities for development or education.	Diagnosed health condition, which is severe and potentially life threatening, and results in frequent hospital admissions that limits accessing developmental or educational activities. May be in receipt of Continuing Care or palliative care from Health Services.
	Communication	Delayed language development only.	Uses communication other than words, e.g. symbols, makaton, BSL.
	Personal care	Child requires minimal support beyond that of their peers with everyday care needs; this will include toileting, washing and dressing.	Child requires assistance beyond that of their peers with all everyday care needs; this will include toileting, washing and dressing and can be problematic and need skilled intervention.
Band C	Safety and Supervision	Needs supervision to perform daily activities significantly greater than that expected for developmental age. Limited perception of danger to self or others.	Needs constant supervision during the day and night. Would place themselves or others at risk without supervision.
	Behaviour and Social Integration	Behaviour problems severe or frequent enough to require some specialist advice or provision. Significant support required to achieve social integration. Only able to sustain peer relationships with support. Child requires services to prevent or alleviate stress in the family.	Long-term behaviour difficulties make it difficult for the child to function appropriately most of the time, and maybe of risk to the child or carers without special provision. Dependence upon carer for social integration. Limited awareness of impact of behaviour upon others. Services required to prevent high risk of accommodation for the child.

Children and young people who meet one or more of the criteria within Band A are likely to meet that Pathway. Children and young people who meet one or more of the criteria within both Bands B and C are likely to meet that Pathway. For more information please discuss your son/daughters needs with the short break provider or Aiming High on 020 8583 3636.

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If you have queries or would like to find out more about Aiming High for Disabled Children, please contact: Jo Dawson, Aiming High Project, London Borough of Hounslow, Civic Centre (Pavilion CG), Lampton Road, Hounslow TW3 4DN.
Tel: 020 8583 3636: Email: joanna.dawson@hounslow.gov.uk