

# Swindon Borough Council

## Short Breaks Statement Commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016

### Information about short breaks for children and young people with disabilities in Swindon



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# Introduction

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This document is about short breaks and positive activities for families of children and young people with disabilities aged from 0 to 18th birthday, who are residents of the Borough of Swindon. This document also provides useful information for services and professionals who work with families of disabled children and young people in Swindon.

## What are short breaks?

Short breaks provide opportunities for parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities to have a break from their caring responsibilities. Short breaks also enable children and young people with disabilities to enjoy social and leisure activities. Short breaks can include day, evening, overnight\*, weekend or holiday activities. This could range from a mainstream activity for all children to a specialist service for those with more complex needs. For example, an evening group, a holiday play scheme, a sports activity or an overnight\* break in a carer's home.

\* *Overnight short breaks are **only** available if assessed as a need via a Social Care Assessment*

## Background

Under the **Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011**, Local Authorities must provide a range of short breaks for children with disabilities. The regulations say that Local Authorities must provide, as part of the range of services they provide for families, breaks from caring for carers of disabled children to support them to continue to care for their children and to allow them to do so more effectively. (*Ref: paragraph 6(1)(c) of Schedule 2 to the 1989 Children Act*)

Each local authority must publish a Short Breaks Statement so that families know what short break services are available, any eligibility criteria, and how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of local families with disabled children. You can see the Regulations at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/707/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/707/contents/made) or you can contact the Aiming High Short Breaks Team.

## Definitions of disability

There are different definitions of disability. The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 refer to the definition in the 1989 Children's Act: that a child is disabled "if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed".

The more widely accepted definition of disability is in the Equality Act 2010: "a person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

We accept that it can be difficult to interpret a definition and relate it to your own child or young person. If you are unsure please contact the Aiming High Short Breaks Team.

## Local needs assessment

During 2014/15 approximately 520 children and young people with disabilities received a short break service in Swindon through Aiming High or the Disabled Children Social Care Team. Demand for short breaks services continues to grow. The Aiming High Team received 535 referrals in 2014/15, an average of 45 per month. This was a significant increase on previous years (422 referrals in 2012/13, 393 in 2013/14) and demand is not expected to reduce.

During 2014/15, about 54% of referrals were 'new' children who had no previous involvement or service from Aiming High. About 46% were children who had previous involvement from Aiming High, where there had been a change in need or circumstance. Many families just required information, advice and signposting (40%).

There is a particular pressure on the service in relation to children who have autistic spectrum condition / social communication and interaction difficulties (ASC / SCID). ASC / SCID is an area of significant and growing need in Swindon and approximately 60% of referrals to the Aiming High service identify ASC / SCID as the primary need.

## Changes to short break services for 2016/17: How this Statement has been prepared

This Short Breaks Statement 2016/17 has been prepared by the Integrated Service for Disabled Children and includes a number of changes to short breaks support in Swindon from April 2016. The changes follow a public consultation, undertaken during August to October 2015. There is more information about the consultation on page 8.

This Short Breaks Statement and more information about short break services in Swindon will be available online: [www.swindon.gov.uk/aiminghighshortbreaks](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/aiminghighshortbreaks) and via the Aiming High Short Breaks Team.

### Contact the Aiming High Short Breaks Team:

The Aiming High Short Breaks Team is part of the Integrated Service for Disabled Children, within Swindon Borough Council Children Services.

Telephone: 01793 464080

Email: [aiminghigh@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:aiminghigh@swindon.gov.uk)

Web: [www.swindon.gov.uk/aiminghighshortbreaks](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/aiminghighshortbreaks)

Address: Salt Way Centre, Pearl Road, Swindon, SN5 5TD



# How do short break services work and what support is available?

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## Information, advice and guidance

- One central point of contact for anyone looking for information about short breaks, the Aiming High Short Breaks Team.
- We will continue to produce the regular Aiming High Newsletter.
- We will continue to raise awareness to ensure that families know about the short breaks services and support available and to ensure that local services, professionals and schools know how short break services work and give families the right information.

## A range of short break services; enabling inclusion and choice, with a focus on individual needs

- Swindon will continue to provide a range of short break services, to ensure that families have choice. The Aiming High Team will work with families to identify the short breaks support that would be most suitable to meet their needs.
- Families will be supported to complete a 'Short Breaks Questionnaire' to look at the child and family's needs. This is not an assessment. The Short Breaks Questionnaire is a tool that will be used in partnership with you, to discuss your individual needs and look at the type of short breaks that would be most suitable. As part of this process we will discuss with you what level of need your child / young person has using the Short Breaks Criteria on page 4. This will determine the level of services / support / information and guidance that you and your child will receive.
- We will continue to gather feedback from families and services, and work with Swindon Parents and Carers Group\* in order to monitor short breaks services in Swindon (\*Swindon Parents and Carers Group is the recognised forum for the active involvement of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities in Swindon).

## Short Breaks Criteria and Offer

**All children / young people who are eligible for support will meet the following criteria:**

- Swindon resident aged from 0 to 18th birthday
- Have a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010: You are disabled under 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.

*(‘Substantial’ is more than minor or trivial. ‘Long-term’ means 12 months or more.)*



**The level of support offered will be determined using the following matrix:**

We aim to ensure a fair, transparent and proportionate response. It is recognised that children / families can and will move between these levels according to their particular circumstances.



Level 1 – LOW	Level 2 – MEDIUM	Level 3 - HIGH
Child / family meet the following criteria:	Child / family meet <b>all</b> of the following criteria:	Child / family meet <b>any</b> of the following criteria:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The child has a disability, but this doesn't prevent them from accessing social / leisure activities.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The child does, or could, access at least one social or leisure activity where a parent / carer doesn't have to stay.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Staff may require some advice / awareness-raising in order to support the child appropriately.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The family may need information, advice and signposting about what is available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The child is unable to access any other social or leisure activity without a parent / carer staying.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Child falls into A or B (or both):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Specially trained / qualified staff are required to safely meet the child's needs and we are unable to identify a setting with staff sufficiently trained / confident to meet those needs.</li> <li>B. The child requires a higher staff ratio.</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent / carer requires breaks from caring in order to continue to provide care or to enable them to provide care more effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The child has complex needs which require 24 hour supervision and a high level of support or the use of equipment.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The child/young person's health and development are likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of services.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clear evidence of the imminent risk of family breakdown.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Immediate danger and vulnerability of the child/young person or sibling(s).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Risk situation where the child or sibling(s) are likely to suffer significant harm.</li> </ul>

Type of assessment required:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No assessment required; contact services directly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Questionnaire by parent / carer. Aiming High Inclusion &amp; Outreach Workers will work in partnership with the family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory social care assessment</li> </ul>
Level of support offered:		
<p><b><u>Information, advice and guidance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aiming High will continue to provide information, advice and signposting to all families of disabled children and young people and work with settings to support them to be accessible.</li> <li>Social and leisure activities which are available to all children, young people and families.</li> <li>Targeted social and leisure activities for children with disabilities and their families.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Aiming High Team Short Breaks 'Offer'</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aiming High will provide support to access a short break activity, up to a maximum of <b>80 hours</b> per year.</li> <li>Support will be delivered via one of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusion Funding <b>or</b></li> <li>Specialist Groups <b>or</b></li> <li>Direct Payment</li> </ul> </li> <li>Level 2 aims to provide a low level of support without assessment. If this does not meet the needs of the family, or things change, families may require an Early Help Record/Plan or a Social Care assessment. See below for more information.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Social Care Team</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individualised packages of specialist support are offered, depending on the outcome of the specialist assessment completed by a Social Worker.</li> </ul>

## Recognising that needs may change

We recognise that every family is different, and that needs may change over time. For example, you may no longer require a service from Aiming High, or your needs may increase and require an Early Help Record/Plan or a Social Care assessment.

An Early Help Record/Plan is the common process in Swindon for supporting children, young people and families with additional needs. This is a planned, co-ordinated response supporting early intervention. The Early Help Record is 'part one' of Swindon's assessment process, which aims to give children, young people and their families a proportionate, co-ordinated and timely service if needs escalate. Swindon supports families through early help to escalating complex and urgent needs that require a statutory assessment from children's social care.

If you think you need additional support or you require your needs to be assessed through Swindon's assessment process, please contact Family Contact Point on tel: 01793 466903 or email: [fcps@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:fcps@swindon.gov.uk)

## Range of short break services available through Aiming High

- **Targeted, open access family sessions**

Aiming High provide a number of open access family swim and trampoline sessions for disabled children, young people and their families.

- **Funded local providers**

Aiming High also commissions several local providers to deliver a range of activities for disabled children and young people, for example, sporting activities during school holidays.

- **Inclusion Funding**

Where Aiming High arrange and pay for the extra support required to enable a disabled child or young person to access an activity, for example, paying for a support worker. Inclusion funding is to cover the **additional costs** to enable the child to access the activity, it does not cover the cost of the activity itself.

- **Direct Payments**

Where money is paid to the parent / carer of a disabled child, or to a disabled young person aged 16 or 17, so that they can arrange and pay for their own short break support. Once the appropriate level of short break support has been identified, you can choose to receive a Direct Payment, instead of Swindon Borough Council arranging the service for you. Families are supported by a Direct Payments Support Advisor, who advises you on how the money can be spent and provides ongoing assistance with managing the Direct Payment, for example, supporting families with recruitment of workers, payroll and complying with employment law.

- **Specialist Groups**

Aiming High run some specialist activity groups for children and young people with disabilities throughout the year and during the main school holidays. These groups are for children who have higher levels of need and would be **unable** to access mainstream activities / open access disability groups, even with support.

### Charges

We aim to ensure that families of disabled children do not pay more than families of non-disabled children for Swindon Borough Council short break activities. From April 2016, the price for Aiming High group services will **increase to £2.50 per hour**. This will become a charge, rather than a contribution. If this is a barrier to accessing the service, please contact the Aiming High Team to discuss your circumstances. A sibling reduction will be applied (full price for the first child, half price for subsequent children). Families will be required to pay in advance.

### Transport

We know that transport to and from activities is an important issue for many families. Parents and carers are expected to transport their children to and from short breaks. Consideration will be given to providing transport in **exceptional circumstances only**.

# Outcomes and impact of short breaks

Both nationally and locally, short break services have been shown to have huge benefits for children and young people with disabilities and also for their parents / carers and siblings. Here are some of the things parents / carers and children / young people have told us about the short break services that they use:

## Children & young people with disabilities:

- ✓ Enjoy a positive activity
- ✓ Stay safe
- ✓ Spend time with peers, make friends, increase socialisation, feel accepted
- ✓ Try new things
- ✓ Increase independence & confidence
- ✓ Get out and be active

'Wish I could go more often'

'I don't have to worry about the things I would deal with in normal situations'

'It's fun and good, get to make cakes and play ball'

'They do good activities and I have made friends'

## Parents, carers and siblings:

- ✓ A break from caring responsibilities, enabling parents and carers to continue to care or to care more effectively.
- ✓ Chance to spend time together or with other children
- ✓ Siblings get a break and some 1 on 1 time with their parents

'A chance to spend quality time with our 2 other children'

'A chance to rest and recharge my batteries'

'The clubs have made me feel I can make it through the holidays'

'The change in our family is amazing... we are a much closer, loving family'

'He comes back happy'

'He is accepted as he is'

'I feel my daughter is safe, well cared for and has fun'

'My daughter is gaining independence and learning new skills'

'I can relax and do other things, which helps reduce stress'

'Teaches my son social skills'

# Consultation 2015

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This Short Breaks Statement 2016/17 has been prepared by the Integrated Service for Disabled Children and includes a number of changes to short breaks support in Swindon from April 2016.

The changes follow a public consultation, which ran from **18 August to 16 October 2015**.

Reports outlining the outcome of the consultation which were put before and approved by the Swindon Borough Council Cabinet on December 9<sup>th</sup> 2015 can be seen on [www.swindon.gov.uk/shortbreakconsultation](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/shortbreakconsultation)

Paper copies of these documents can be obtained by contacting the Aiming High Short Breaks Team on the telephone number below.

This Short Breaks Statement and more information about short break services in Swindon will be available online: [www.swindon.gov.uk/aiminghighshortbreaks](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/aiminghighshortbreaks) and via the Aiming High Short Breaks Team on: 01793 464080 or email: [aiminghigh@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:aiminghigh@swindon.gov.uk) .

The information in this Statement can be produced in a range of languages and formats (such as large print, Braille or other accessible formats) by contacting Swindon Borough Council Customer Services:

Tel: 01793 445500

Email: [customerservices@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@swindon.gov.uk)

### **Contact the Aiming High Short Breaks Team:**

Tel: 01793 464080

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