

**Draft for consultation**

# **The London Borough of Bromley**

## **Short Break Services Statement 2011-12**

### **Specialist Support and Disability Service**



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## **Introduction**

Paragraph 6 (1) (c) of Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 requires Local Authorities to provide services designed to give breaks for carers of disabled children. Regulations relating to this duty came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, requiring each Local Authority to produce a Short Breaks Services Statement. The Statement aims to inform families of the services that are available, the eligibility criteria for these services, and how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of families with disabled children in their area.

This is the first Short Break Services Statement produced by the London Borough of Bromley in draft form for consultation. The final draft statement will be presented to the Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2011 for sign off prior to publication.

## **Who is responsible**

The Lead Officer responsible for preparing this Statement in 2011 is Jane Ching who reports to Helen Norris Head of the Specialist Support and Disability Service.

If there are any queries relating to the process for producing and agreeing the statement, these should be addressed to [jane.ching@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:jane.ching@bromley.gov.uk)

The Statement has been produced in partnership with a multi-agency planning group that has included representatives from Service User Groups, Bromley Council (Universal and Specialist Services), Bromley Healthcare Trust, Local Voluntary Sector Partners, Short Break Providers and Commissioners.

## **Reviewing the Statement**

As required, the Statement will be regularly monitored and reviewed via the Disability Strategy Group. Bromley Parent Voice (see page 2) is represented on this Strategic Group. This will enable Bromley Council to align any future consultation processes or reviews with service planning and commissioning cycles, to ensure that the Statement proceeds with a valid mandate.

The final version of this Statement will include a schedule for ongoing consultations and public review.

### **Consultation Process**

This Statement has been drafted using information from parents and carers, and children and young people gathered over the course of the Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) Short Break Transformation Programme, and as part of Bromley's ongoing Active Involvement Strategy that involves service users in the planning, commissioning and evaluation of their Short Break Services.

It will be subject to a period of formal consultation during July and August 2011 using existing mechanisms for participation and consultation with parents and carers and disabled children and young people in Bromley, and internal consultation processes with relevant professionals and partner agencies.

**Consultation with parents and carers** will be managed by the Specialist Support and Disability Services Parent Participation Officer and Specialist Information Officer working in partnership with Bromley Parent Voice, the forum for parents and carers of disabled children in Bromley. Including their own membership, they are also able to reach out to the wider population of parents and carers in the borough via their strong links with local schools and voluntary sector organisations, and universal service providers.

**Bromley Parent Voice** is a forum that aims to be a voice to inform service providers of the needs of children and young people with a disability or additional need and their families by facilitating two-way communication between parents and carers and service providers in the London Borough of Bromley. The Forum works to provide feedback on services, identify unmet needs and shape decision-making and planning for future service provision. Bromley Parent Voice believes that by working co-operatively with local service providers parents can contribute to improvements in the services delivered for disabled children and young people and their families. The forum is supported by a Parent Participation Officer within the Specialist Support & Disability Service.

**Consultation with our disabled children and young people** will be led by our Bromley's Young Advisers Group with the support of our commissioned advocacy service - Advocacy for All.

The consultation process will provide opportunities for parents and carers and disabled children and young people to express their views both directly and indirectly via questionnaires (Appendix 1).

### **Consultation with professionals and interested others**

This will also take place and be steered by the representatives on the planning group. It will include Social Care and Health Care professionals, Teachers, SEN, Youth and Leisure Services and Extended Service Providers. The Statement will also inform our commissioning plans for Short Break Services during the coming year 2012/13 and beyond. We envisage it becoming a valuable tool, that will enable us to continually review our Short Break provision, in order that we provide what service users require to meet changing needs, and to assist in making such provision within Bromley by good partnership working with local providers and voluntary sector partners.

Following this consultation process and receipt of comment and feedback from all of the above, the final Statement will be presented to Bromley's Policy and Scrutiny Committee for sign off/agreement prior to publication in October 2011.

We will ensure that our Short Breaks Service Statement is published on the Local Authority website and also made available in hard copy format as required. It will be distributed through our Family Information Service, Schools, Parent and Young People's Forums and other relevant information channels.

## **Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011**

A copy of the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 is available for detailed reference via the following link:

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/707/pdfs/ukxi\\_20110707\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/707/pdfs/ukxi_20110707_en.pdf)

### **Summary**

In order to meet the requirements of the Regulations, Local Authorities must have regard to the needs of carers in respect of their capacity to care for, or continue to care for, their disabled child and must provide a range of services designed to meet this need. A Short Break Services Statement must be prepared and published annually, outlining how this is to be achieved.

### **Duty to make provision (summary)**

Local Authorities must take into account the needs of carers who would:

- Be unable to continue caring for their disabled child unless breaks from caring were given;

### **Or**

- Be able to give more effective care, if breaks were given to allow them to, for example, attend educational classes or work, meet the needs of other children in the family, or carry out necessary day to day tasks in the household.

### **Types of services which must be provided (summary)**

Local Authorities must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide a range of services sufficient to meet the needs of carers to care or care more effectively, including;

- Day care in the child's own home and elsewhere
- Overnight care in the child's own home and elsewhere
- Educational or leisure activities for children outside of their own homes
- Services in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays

### **Short Break Services Statement (summary)**

Local Authorities must prepare a statement for carers in their area setting out:

- The range of services available
- Any eligibility criteria for these services
- How the range of services is designed to meet the needs of carers

This statement must;

- Be published by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011
- Be kept under review and where appropriate revised.
- Be prepared and reviewed with regard to the views of carers in the area.

### **A Definition of Short Break Services**

Short breaks provide opportunities for disabled children and young people to have enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers, thus contributing to their social inclusion and personal and social development. They also provide the parents and carers of disabled children with a necessary and valuable break from their caring responsibilities.

Short breaks can include day, evening, overnight, weekend or holiday activities. They can take place in the child's own home, in the home of an approved carer, a residential or community setting. Short breaks range from supporting disabled children to access their break within a universal setting, to providing specialist services at a local level.

### **The Current Position on Short Breaks in Bromley.**

Services providing Short Breaks for disabled children and their carers in Bromley has undergone considerable development and transformation from 2008/9 onwards. As a result of greater investment and more collaborative working with parents and carers of disabled children, as well as more effective consultation processes with the children and young people themselves, Bromley were able to plan and develop new services that have expanded the menu of Short Break Services on offer. These enabled the most severely disabled children to receive an increased level of short break offer, and has also increased the actual numbers of disabled children and young people and their families accessing Short Break Services.

This is supported by our short break data which shows the actual number of disabled children receiving short breaks rose from 318 in 08/09 to 507 in 09/10 and to 700 in 10/11.

Following extensive consultation with service users and professionals during 2008, we were able to respond to some of their wishes and feelings in our development of services during 2009/10 and 2010/11. (Consultation report with outcomes dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009 available on Bromley's web site).

Link: <http://www.bromley.gov.uk>

Some of the issues that arose during that consultation were as follows:

- Historically, Bromley had had a heavy reliance on the funding of overnight Short Breaks at a residential unit in Bromley (Hollybank) in partnership with Bromley Primary Care Trust. Since April 2011, Hollybank has been provided by Bromley Healthcare. Although this has always been a much valued service, and remains so, greater development of alternative provision was needed for disabled children and their parents and carers not requiring overnight breaks. Those who did require overnight breaks also wanted access to more family based care, particularly the parents and carers of younger children with complex health needs or challenging behaviour and autism.
- Overwhelmingly parents and carers requested more weekend and holiday club provision. They also wanted holiday clubs to run during all school holidays not just during the summer break.

- Parents and carers were also willing to consider Short Breaks within more universal and inclusive settings if they could be reassured that staff working within these settings had some of the specialist skills and knowledge required to be able to support their children to access such provision.
- Parents and carers also requested more flexibility around the use of Direct Payments.
- Disabled children and young people involved in this consultation highlighted the desire for Short Breaks to give them the opportunity to stay with friends, where they could 'have more independence', 'stay up late', 'play loud music', 'be away from their parents'.
- Those who were either receiving or requiring outreach and day care services emphasised the need for their support workers to be a little closer to their own peer group in age rather than to their parents age group.
- They generally wanted to do the same 'fun things' that their non-disabled friends and siblings were able to do, and be able to access it locally rather than have to seek specialist provision that sometimes involved lengthy journeys and presented them with transport issues.

All of the expressed comments and views assisted us in setting our priorities for Short Break Development during the following year.

## **How did we Plan, Commission and Evaluate our Short Break Services?**

### **Participation and the Active Involvement of Service Users**

This initial consultation exercise was followed by the beginnings of a 'cultural change' within Bromley's disability services where participation and the active involvement of service users started to become embedded in our processes.

### **Parent/Carers**

A number of parent and carers are employed within our Specialist Support and Disability Service, and other posts within the Council. These posts are diverse and include Parent Participation Officer, Specialist Information Officer and Deputy Keyworker Co-ordinator.

The funding of a Parent Participation Officer within the Specialist Support and Disability Service has facilitated the growth of Bromley Parent Voice from a membership of 161 in June 2010 to a current membership of 302 (June 2011). Bromley Parent Voice currently has 20 parent representatives who attend various strategic and operational groups within the Local Authority. The role of a Parent Representative is to represent the views of parents and carers across the borough. In addition 3 parents of disabled children have been involved in the commissioning of new Short Break Services. One parent of a disabled child has also been commissioned as a provider of one of Bromley's Short Break Services.

### **Disabled Children and Young People**

Since 2009 we have commissioned **Advocacy for All** to ensure that our ongoing consultation processes with disabled children and young people is appropriately tailored to meet their diverse needs. This service has enabled us to consult with, and receive feedback from, groups of disabled children and young people in Bromley. Some have commented on services they are already using. Others have helped to identify gaps in Short Break Service provision.

The development of a Young Advisers Group is progressing well. This enables us to support a group of disabled young people to be trained and supported to ascertain the wishes and feelings of other disabled young people across the borough and to represent them in the planning and commissioning of their services.

*'Its great because we changed the way holiday schemes are run'*

(Young Adviser who interviewed the provider of a holiday scheme)

*'It was good because Bromley are listening to what young people have to say'*

(Young Adviser who interviewed service users of a holiday scheme)

The ongoing 'active involvement' of service users within the Specialist Support and Disability Service is strengthened by there being an Active Involvement Strategy Group in Bromley's Children and Young People's Department (CYPD). Progress reports from Bromley's Active Involvement Disability Group (now chaired by the Parent Participation Officer) are a standing item at these quarterly meetings which are chaired at Assistant Director level.

### **Developing the Market**

As well as ensuring close partnership working with service users, considerable time has been given to developing the market for Short Breaks. This has been made possible by the appointment of a **Joint Commissioner for Disabled Children's Services**, who works closely with providers and potential providers to ensure that Bromley commission services of the highest possible quality, that meet identified needs, but remain within a cost effective framework. This has been particularly evident where the appropriate 'joining up' of funding streams across services has prevented duplication and led to some good outcomes. (Examples: see [Capital Projects](#) and [Mencap Childminding](#)).

### **Development of the workforce**

The development of the workforce across services has involved joint training initiatives. This has included parent led workshops and training, and providers from statutory, private and voluntary sectors working in partnership to develop roles such as dual working across schools and out of school environments, and the up-skilling of the Short Break workforce. (Example: joint training on the use of sensory equipment provided to outreach workers, childminders and extended service providers.

### **Progress and monitoring**

The progress of Short Break Service developments in Bromley has been monitored locally by the Joint Disability Steering Group. This was a Strategic Group chaired at Assistant Director level that was formed in 2009 to oversee and monitor the newly formed Joint Disability Service in Children and Young People's Department in Bromley and took the lead in monitoring the progress and developments of the AHDC agenda. From the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 this steering group has now been subsumed into the established Joint Disability Planning Group, which will now become the steer and monitor for Bromley's Short Break Services.

### **Access to Short Break Services and Eligibility**

The Disabled Children's Social Work and Short Break Team provides support for disabled children and young people where the disability has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the child/young person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The London Borough of Bromley interprets the definition of disability as described under the Equality Act 2010 and uses this to assist us to provide support to those families with the greatest needs. This is based on a holistic assessment of the child's developmental needs, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors as outlined in the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Initial, Core or Review Assessments. Children and Young People must be Bromley residents.

Support will be offered as related to the severity and nature of the child's disability. This may include a severe physical or learning disability, visual or hearing impairment. It includes children and young people on the Autistic Spectrum, particularly those who present with challenging behaviour. It also includes children and young people who have complex health needs and who may have palliative, life limiting or life-threatening conditions.

Support can also be provided to families where the need may be greater due to individual family circumstances and not necessarily due to the severity of the child or young persons disability. (Examples of this include, where there is more than one disabled child in the family impacting on the parent's ability to cope, or where additional support is required to safeguard a child).

Children and young people with mental health conditions as the 'primary need' are not eligible for support from the Disabled Children's Team. Information is provided to these families about the CAF assessment process and where necessary, referral made to Child in Need Services within Social Care. We may also provide families that do not meet the threshold for specialist assessments and services with general information and signposting to universal services.

In order to achieve transparency, we have endeavoured to provide Bromley's Short Break Services to meet the needs of children and young people and their families with a level of assessment that is appropriate to those individual needs.

### **These assessments can be broadly seen on three levels**

- Short Break Services within universal and targeted self referral provision are accessible to all disabled children in the borough via service providers applications only.
- Short Break Services at a Local Offer level which are accessed via a CAF.
- Short Break Services at Additional and Specialist level which are accessed via Initial and Core Assessments carried out by the Disabled Children's Social Work Team, and agreed at the Specialist Support and Disability Panel.

It is recognised that families may move between levels of service at different stages in a child or young persons life or when family circumstances change.

## **The Range of Short Break Services Currently Available in Bromley**

### **Universal Services**

The recent appointment of an Inclusion Support Co-ordinator with the **Early Years and Childcare Service** in Bromley is progressing both inclusive childcare provision as well as assisting extended services to ensure that providers make reasonable adjustments to include and support children and young people with additional needs or disabilities.

There are 41 providers of holiday and after school clubs in the borough. Recent research by the Inclusion Co-ordinator for Early Years has identified mainly children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, or those with emotional and behavioural difficulties as the main co-hort of children with additional needs or disabilities using these extended services. In order for these settings to extend their Short Break provision, the Co-ordinator has now identified a 6 point action plan to be incorporated into service plans.

The **Youth Support Service** in Bromley is an active partner in the development of our new co-located service to be based at the Hawes Down Centre. They will be running specialist and inclusive provision for at least 2 evenings a week on the Hawes Down site, as well as it being the base for ongoing Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes. Recent data collected from the Youth Service indicate that there are 104 young people who describe themselves as having Learning Disabilities or Difficulties (LDD). 71 young people have accessed the Specialist Monday evening provision during the previous 12 months.

### **Training within Universal Services**

Confidence within universal services to become fully inclusive has been enhanced by the provision of specialist training for providers via the Disabled Children's Access To Childcare (DCATCH) project. A large number of child care, and other universal service providers were able to access relevant training including the following:

Communication using Makaton, Autism Awareness, Promoting Positive Behaviour and Disability Awareness.

Some of this training was delivered by parents of disabled children.

**Superkids Out of School Club** providers and **Chucklebox** Children's Clubs are two such providers who are working in partnership with the Local Authority to further enhance their inclusive provision and are showing examples of good practice.

### **Eligibility and Access**

All disabled children and young people in Bromley should have access to universal services, but may need reasonable adjustments to be made or individual support to facilitate their inclusion in some activities.

### Capital Projects Supporting Access to Short Break provision within Universal Services

With Bromley being the geographically largest of all the London boroughs, Bromley have used, and will continue to use available Capital funding to ensure that new Short Break venues have been, and will be developed throughout the borough. The aim of this is to increase accessibility for all areas of our community, and to prevent disabled children and young people having to spend excessive time travelling from their homes to their chosen short break venue.

Examples of these are as follows:

- Joint working between Specialist Support and Disability Services during 2009/10 and the local provider of Leisure Services in the borough (Bromley Mytime) has led to the provision of a 'Changing Place' facility at one of the borough's Leisure Centres at the Walnuts in Orpington (completed in January 2011). It has also led to a commitment from the Leisure Services to incorporate another 'Changing Place' facility within their plans for the redevelopment of the 'Bromley' town centre Leisure Centre planned for 2012.
- Following a bid for additional funding for a co-located project, the Youth Service, Children and Family Centres, Extended School Services and the Specialist Support and Disability Service will have a new co-located site to move into from July 2011 at the Hawes Down Centre in West Wickham. The vision for the Hawes Down Centre is that it will become a 'centre of excellence' with a focus on inclusion of disabled children and young people. By close partnership working across the services located there, it is planned that the centre will provide school age children and their carers with a venue where both specialist and inclusive short break opportunities are provided throughout the year, during weekends, evenings and holiday periods. Having listened to parents and children, the first short break service planned for summer 2011 on the site, will be for the siblings of disabled children, or for disabled children and their siblings to attend together.
- An 'Eco lodge' facility is being developed in the grounds of Riverside Primary School (Beckenham). This facility will provide a regular venue for older disabled teenagers to meet and enjoy short break time together during weekends and holiday periods in an area of the borough that has few facilities such as this.
- Specialist play and leisure equipment has been bought for a number of providers by way of small capital grants.
- Funding for Family Days Out to amusement parks, etc. have been provided in the way of 'Merlin Passes' which are administered by Bromley Parent Voice and targeted at those families in most need. This again provides the opportunity for disabled children to enjoy inclusive play and leisure opportunities with their own family members.

**Parents who have used universal services have made the following comments:**

*'K. attends a mainstream school and if she wishes to access any after school activities, I have to be present to deal with her personal care'*

*'I feel that some service providers are fearful of the unknown in inclusive situations'*

*'We have just been down to the roller skating at The Walnuts. K went round in her manual chair, had a fantastic time and the staff were brilliant.'*  
(Parent of child with physical disabilities/wheelchair user)

*'Communicating with the providers about my child's complex needs in order that we alleviate any fears and barriers that exist between us and enables my daughter to access a mainstream after school/holiday club'.*

*'She is welcomed and treated like any other child in the group'*  
(Parent of child accessing Superkids after school provision)

### **Targeted Services**

These services have been commissioned by the provision of small grants to a variety of providers, and have proved very popular with disabled children and their carers alike. These Short Break Services do not require assessment beyond the providers own application requirements. The range of services have been commissioned to provide for a range of disabilities. Parents and carers have been fully involved in the commissioning process for these services and disabled children and young peoples views sought on preferences.

### **Eligibility and Access**

Self referral/direct access by disabled children and their parent/carers who live in the London Borough of Bromley. Providers information and application forms indicate the appropriateness of the resource to meet needs.

- **Bromley Mencap Holiday Club** provides Family Coach trips 4 times a year during school holidays for 15 disabled children with ASD/additional and complex needs, up to the age of 18 years and their siblings, parents and carers.
- **Bromley Mencap Activity Club** provides teenage group workshops and activities.
- **Caspa Junior Youth Club** provides a weekly Youth Club facility for 25 primary age children with ASD /Aspergers.
- **Caspa Play Scheme** provides 16 children with High Functioning Autism/Aspergers aged 5-18yrs with 15 days of activities during the summer holiday period.
- **Kids Crew Fun Days** provides 5 Fun Days during the summer holiday period for 15 disabled children aged 3-8 years with moderate needs and their siblings. Also provides Christmas 'Shop and Drop' sessions.
- **Photo Voice** provides photography workshops for 20 young people aged 12-18 years who have ASD/Aspergers during half term holidays.
- **Vari 8 Messy Play** provides messy play opportunities for 15 children aged 3-8 years with additional needs and their siblings during summer holidays. Also provides Christmas 'Shop and Drop' sessions.
- **Vari 8 Thomas Day Out** provides days out in the summer to 'Thomas the Tank Engine' at Tenterden for 15 children with additional needs aged 3-8years and their parents and siblings
- **NC Adventures-Outdoor Days** provides 4 separate Outdoor Activity Days to 18 children and young people aged 8-18 years who have high functioning autism and challenging behaviour.

- **Petts Wood Playgroup** provides a summer scheme for 15 children aged 0-5 years old with complex disabilities.
- **NC Adventures-Buttermilk Barn Cookery School** provides 3 Cookery Courses of 6 Sessions for 8 young people aged 13-16 years who have High Functioning Autism /Aspergers.
- **Bromley Family Link** provides a Youth Club for 28 young people aged 13-18 years who have complex learning/physical/health needs one evening a week and some weekends.
- **Play Safe and Relax** provides fun days for children with ASD aged 2-10 years and pampering sessions for their parent and carers. There are 10 times 2 hour sessions provided to 7 children and their parents at each session.
- **Maypole Project** provides 'Fun Days' for 20 children and young people aged 1-18 years with complex health needs and their siblings during school holidays.

### **Service users views on some of these services**

*'My daughter is non verbal but her body language expressed sheer delight'*  
(Bromley Mencap Holiday Club)

*'A big thank you for arranging and organising a wonderful family day out at affordable prices'*  
(Bromley Mencap Holiday Club)

*'Takes the stress out of travelling on public transport and everybody understands and does not judge'*  
(Bromley Mencap Holiday Club)

*'Its so nice to have a Saturday off-enables me to spend time with my older child and husband and is always something I look forward to especially during school holidays'*  
(Bromley Mencap Childminding)

*'Our childminder is excellent-we couldn't be without her'*  
(Bromley Mencap\_Childminding)

*'There was something for all children, great resources, so much choice'*  
(Kids Crew Fun Days)

*'Lovely to give the children the opportunity to visit Father Christmas and so many things for the children to enjoy even more than summer!'*

(Kids Crew Fun Days)

*'More days like this when we can leave children and know they are well looked after and their interests are catered for'*

(Kids Crew Fun Days)

*'The activities are excellent. C has enjoyed himself. All the staff have been wonderful and helpful'*

(Caspa Summer Scheme)

*'Its really wonderful to get M away from the computer and television and out interacting with other young people-the youngsters who are helping to run it seem just right-lively ,jokey and easy going. It's also priceless to know that he is going somewhere where he'll be understood'*

(Caspa Summer Scheme)

*'My child finds getting involved extremely hard. He finds social situations very difficult and I was amazed at how certain members of staff have worked together and managed to engage my child in activities that he has never wanted to get involved with before'*

(Caspa Summer Scheme)

*'Felt very welcome and cannot ask for anything better'*

(Play Safe and Relax)

*'The massage brought a lot of tensions out of my body and it was a good treat. My children will also love to come back again'*

(Play Safe and Relax)

*'It was brilliant-very relaxing for all of us and the children had a great time'*

(Play Safe and Relax)

*'The day was very well staffed, they made our son feel warm and welcome; he really enjoyed himself'*

(Parent of child accessing Maypole Project)

*'The service provided is vital to our family. The respite days organised are very important to our little boy with special needs and his 3yr.old sister. She knows she is not alone and can play with other siblings'*

(Parent of children attending Maypole Project for disabled children and their siblings)

*'It could not go unnoticed how much the children were enjoying themselves, how inspiring the supporters and Miss B were ,yet the care and safety of the children was exemplary'*

(N C Adventures Outdoor Days)

*'My son was full of golden opinions on that day and relishes to attend another adventure day'*

(NC Adventures Outdoor Days)

*'Wonderful playgroup and the staff are very attentive to my child's needs'*

(Parent of a child accessing Petts Wood Holiday Scheme)

### **Local Offer Services**

The Local Offer is the minimum level of short break support that is offered to all eligible children and their families.

In March 2011, the Disabled Children's Team introduced the Local Offer as a means to providing short breaks to families without the need for additional assessment from the team. This has made the access to short breaks more efficient for families.

Some disabled children and young people who have been referred for a social work assessment may also be granted services at Local Offer level depending on needs.

Regular reviews for children and young people receiving Local Offer services will be conducted by the scheme provider who will provide a brief update on how the child is achieving/enjoying their short break. The scheme providers have also agreed to complete an updated CAF assessment where needs may have changed and additional support is recommended. Only families who receive Direct Payments at Local Offer level will continue to have a review completed by the Disabled Children's Team.

### **Eligibility and Access**

Disabled children and young people are eligible for the Local Offer if they meet the remit of the Disabled Children's Social Work and Short Break Team. These are 'disabled children and young people where the disability has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the child/young person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

Parents and children and young people are able to choose one from the following menu of Short Break Services within the Local Offer:

- **Direct Payments - £1000 per annum**  
Direct Payments are provided to families in lieu of the Local Authority coordinating a short break service on their behalf. Families are also able to use this flexibly to 'buy' their short break service from an inclusive setting or by employing a worker as agreed in the care plan. The payments are paid monthly or quarterly as agreed with the family. Support is available to assist families to set up their service.
- **Holiday and Saturday Club Provision - 18 days per annum**  
Families are able to request their preferred dates to attend the scheme. This service is currently provided at the Riverside Schools in Orpington and Beckenham. Activity days run each Saturday in term time and on selected weekdays during school holiday periods. The sessions run from 10am-4pm each day. Children have access to a range of activities and facilities on the site as well as occasional outings. (This is the only short break service provided by the Disabled Children's Team that does not require a CAF or social work assessment).

- **Mencap Childminding - 100 hours per annum**  
Bromley Mencap and Bromley Early Years and Childcare jointly fund this service. It provides a 'Childminding Network' of approved childminders within the London Borough of Bromley. They offer trained and registered childminders for children with learning disabilities and additional needs, up to 16 years of age. Bromley Mencap 'Network Plus' childminders can support children with more severe and complex needs on a one to one basis.
- **Mencap Buddying - 100 hours per annum (14 years+)**  
Mencap Buddying is a scheme available for young people age 14-18 years old. Young people are matched with Mencap trained workers to provide short break opportunities in the community. This scheme is not appropriate for young people with complex needs or challenging behaviour.
- **Outreach - 100 hours per annum**  
The Outreach service provides support from trained workers who are matched to individual children to take them out to enjoy community based activities. The arrangement can provide 1 to1 support or small group activities for like minded children.

(It is hoped that a home sitting service will be added to this menu of Short Break Services within the Local Offer at the end of the commissioning process during 2011).

### **Service users views on Local Offer concept and from some of those using it.**

The implementation of services at what is now identified as the 'Local Offer' level has been a relatively new initiative. We have ensured that consultation with Bromley Parent Voice has taken place, and the views of parents considered. At present we have 81 children and their families (as of 17<sup>th</sup> June 2011) who are benefiting from services at the Local Offer level. New service users have been particularly welcoming of it.

*'I have found the experience positive and was grateful for the choice of a short break service to meet the needs of my son'*

*'It is great to be offered 18 days at Riverside and for Bromley to fund these for me'*

*'Each room had a plan of the day's activities but it wasn't too rigid or rushed'*  
(Riverside Holiday and Weekend Clubs - observations of Young Advisers)

*'Children and Young People were trusted and given freedom to make their own choices within the day's plan'*  
(Riverside Holiday and Weekend Clubs - observations of Young Advisers)

*'Each child or young person has a named member of staff working with them'*  
(Riverside Holiday and Weekend Clubs- observations of Young Advisers)

*D aged 10yrs said 'I loved it, there's been great activities'*

(Riverside Holiday and Weekend Clubs-observations of Young Advisers)

*N aged 13yrs said 'its been fabulous'*

(Riverside Holiday and Weekend Clubs-observations of Young Advisers)

*B aged 6yrs said 'We had a hilarious time in art when we fell around and made a mess with paint'*

(Riverside Holiday and Weekend Clubs-observations of Young Advisers)

The decision to move the Riverside Holiday and Weekend scheme from a 'self referral' service to a Local Offer service caused some anxieties among some of the parents and carers who had been receiving services under the previous system. Every opportunity has been taken to explain the need for this rather costly specialist resource to be part of the Local Offer menu of services, and we hope that the other newly commissioned 'targeted' services which have replaced Riverside schemes in the 'self referral' menu, will have offered reassurance.

We will be evaluating outcomes and views of the summer provision during September 2011.

### **Additional Specialist Short Break Service**

Some families may need additional specialist short breaks beyond the Local Offer level. It is expected that all children requesting short breaks at this level will have had a CAF assessment completed and may have already tried out Short Breaks at the Local Offer level.

### **Eligibility and Access**

Disabled children and young people meet the remit of the Disabled Children's Social Work and Short Break Team. These are disabled children and young people where the disability has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the child/young person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

To receive Short Break Services at this level, it is necessary for a social work Initial or Core Assessment to be carried out by the Disabled Children's Social Work Team. The Eligibility Criteria document (Appendix 2) is used in conjunction with the written assessment of needs.

This assessment will look in detail at the needs of the disabled child and carers, as well as aspects of family life that may be impacting on the needs of other children or the carer's ability to care. This will include consideration of:

- the severity of a child's needs and how it impacts on family life
- if there is more than one disabled child in the family
- other caring responsibilities within the family
- parental health/disability issues impacting on parenting capacity
- isolation and lack of extended social networks
- concerns about a child or young person's safety
- adopted or other 'looked after' children

The Eligibility Criteria document is used in conjunction with the written assessment of needs to help determine the service that can be provided at the Additional Specialist level.

Managers will decide on the exact level provided based on the needs assessment and recommendation from the worker and incorporating views of the family and child. Services provided at this level may be provided on a time limited basis and are also therefore subject to regular reviews.

It is possible that families may receive support from more than one service at this level.

The following services are included in the menu of Additional Specialist Short Break Services:

- **Direct Payments**

Direct Payments are provided to families in lieu of the Local Authority coordinating a Short Break Service on their behalf. Families are also able to use this flexibly to 'buy' their Short Break Service from an inclusive setting or by employing a worker as agreed in the care plan. The payments are paid monthly or quarterly as agreed with the family. Support is available to assist families to set up/arrange their service.

- **Holiday and Saturday Club Provision**  
Families are able to request their preferred dates to attend the scheme. This service is currently provided at the Riverside Schools in Orpington and Beckenham. Activity days run each Saturday in term time and on selected weekdays during school holiday periods. The sessions run from 10am-4pm each day. Children have access to a range of activities and facilities on the site as well as occasional outings. (This is the only short break service provided by the Disabled Children's Team that does not require a CAF or social work assessment).
- **Mencap Childminding**  
Bromley Mencap provides a 'Childminding Network' of approved childminders within the London Borough of Bromley. They offer trained and registered childminders for children with learning disabilities and additional needs, up to 16 years of age. Bromley Mencap 'Network Plus' childminders can support children with more severe and complex needs on a one to one basis.
- **Mencap Buddying (14 years+)**  
Mencap Buddying is a scheme available for young people age 14-18 years old. Young people are matched with Mencap trained workers to provide short break opportunities in the community. This scheme is not appropriate for young people with complex needs or challenging behaviour.
- **Outreach**  
The Outreach service provides support from trained workers who are matched to individual children to take them out to enjoy community based activities. The arrangement can provide 1:1 support or small group activities for like minded children.
- **Family Based Overnight Short Breaks**  
Family Based Overnight Short Breaks are overnight breaks that are provided by a foster carer in the foster carer's home. Children and young people must have a need for overnight care in order to be eligible for overnight family based short breaks.
- **Home Sitting Service**  
Provided in partnership with Bromley Healthcare Provider Service, mainly to children with palliative care needs and very complex health needs that may involve high levels of personal care or nursing interventions throughout a 24hr period. This includes fully ventilated children.
- **Hollybank Short Break Residential Unit (overnight provision)**  
Hollybank is a Short Break residential centre jointly funded by the London Borough of Bromley and NHS Bromley. It was set up to provide short breaks to children and young people with either complex medical needs or autism and/or learning disability with challenging behaviour.

(At this level there is the facility for 'mix and match' packages of support that may involve more than one service being provided).

### **Emergency Bed Facility at Hollybank Short Break Unit**

This recent development is a welcome addition within our Short Break Services. A small amount of capital expenditure from AHDC funding enabled us to adapt and equip Hollybank to provide this resource.

Although this service sits outside of our planned short break services, it offers great reassurances to parent/carers of disabled children in our borough who may find themselves in a crisis, and where their child is in need of emergency care. See report on this facility and its criteria for use on the following web link: <http://www.bromleyhealthcare.org.uk>

### **Service Users Views and Comments on Specialist Short Break Services**

*'I cannot stress what an important role model the outreach worker is for L.- he is unfailingly calm and kind, he is also great at setting boundaries for L.'*

( L B Bromley Outreach Service)

*'we would like the mix and match of services to be more flexible'*

(Parent User of Direct Payments and Riverside)

*'L. loves going to Hollybank,it is a big highlight in in his life and ours'*

(Parent of child attending Hollybank)

*'J looks forward to his visits to Hollybank and is really happy there'*

(Parent of child attending Hollybank)

*'Going very well. Our daughter loves it. Her buddies are super girls. Whole set up from original introduction evening all well thought through'*

(Parent of young person accessing Buddying Scheme)

*'The effects of the Buddying Scheme have been greater than just having someone to accompany our son out and about. He has greater confidence and even rings his buddy of his own accord to make arrangements or have a chat. Fantastic scheme'*

(Parent of young person accessing Buddying Scheme)

*'Family based respite is great, I have control of when the nights are, I see the carer regularly, I am very happy with S going there ,I do not have to worry and feel very relaxed about the arrangement'*

(Parent of child accessing Family based overnight Short Breaks)

*Hollybank is a place where I can be me,*

*It's a place where I feel free.*

*It's a place where I laugh a lot,*

*It's a place where I don't feel like a tiny dot.*

*It's a place I love to be.*

*It's a place I'm going to miss when I leave.*

*There is no way of explaining how this place makes me feel except: Happy, Excited, Part of something bigger than me.*

*When I leave school I want to work somewhere exactly like this.*

(Young person accessing Hollybank Short Break Centre)

## **Transition**

In Bromley our aim is that Short Break Services provided to young people between the ages of 16-18 years provide not just fun and enjoyment, but also offer the opportunity for increasing young peoples independence skills. This is done by working in partnership with Adult Services, Schools and local Further Education Colleges to promote Short Break activities that involve community skills trips and include independent travel, life skills training such as cookery, budgeting etc.

## **Personalised Budgets**

During 2010 we worked in partnership with Adult and Community Services (ACS) in Bromley, Voluntary Sector Partners and Paradigm Consultancy on a small project to introduce personalised budgets to some disabled children and young people. The young people were given the opportunity to receive their Short Break Services via a personalised budget and self-directed support. This project had successful outcomes for the young people and was also well received by their parents and carers.

*'It has been so exciting seeing J. open doors for herself'*  
(Parent of young person accessing a personal budget')

*'This holiday has spelt out independence for me'*  
(Young person who accessed a personal budget')

Part of the plan for new Short Break developments during 2011/12 is to further develop the opportunity for Personalised Budgets to be offered to some more young people going through transition. We hope that short breaks provided in this way may more easily facilitate the transfer from children's to adult services. (This would only be done at the young persons choice).

## **Gaps in Service still to be addressed**

We are aware that we have not yet been able to increase the Family Based overnight provision as requested by parents and carers in previous consultation. Plans for this were made in partnership with Bromley's in-house Fostering Service, but competing priorities within the Family Placement Team prevented the desired progress in this area. There are now plans in place for a soon to be appointed Specialist Fostering Placement Officer to be seconded from the Family Placement Team into the Specialist Support and Disability Service. We anticipate that this will enable the Placement Officer to work in partnership with others to recruit and train more specialist foster carers to provide short break care for disabled children.

With Bromley being geographically the largest of all the London boroughs there is still a need for us to find a more cost effective solution to transport issues that impact on Short Break Service users. We have encouraged commissioned services to consider the use of venues across the borough that will create greater equity of access for the local communities within the borough.

## **Conclusion on Bromley's Short Break Services**

London Borough of Bromley in partnership with Bromley PCT (Bromley Healthcare 2011) has had a long history of providing short breaks to some of its disabled children and their carers. As previously stated this was most predominately provided as overnight short breaks in specialist residential units within the borough. With the changing emphasis from the previous reliance on overnight residential breaks to increased day, holiday, weekend, outreach services, etc. We are meeting the needs of many more of our disabled children, and receiving very positive feedback from them.

We are fortunate to have also been able to retain our local residential unit at Hollybank by our continued partnership working with Bromley Healthcare Providers. We continue to review how Hollybank can best be developed to meet the needs of those children and families requiring overnight breaks with a high level of specialist care requirements.

The introduction of a Local Offer model with easy access via assessment at CAF level only has been welcomed by new service users. We presented the Local Offer model to the Steering Group of Bromley Parent Voice and at a Parent Voice Conference and have welcomed their feedback. By developing our Short Break Services in this way we are endeavouring to provide the parents and carers of disabled children and young people with a real choice around how they achieve breaks from their caring role, and at the same time ensuring that disabled children and young people access their short breaks in environments that children can relate to and have enjoyable social and leisure experiences in community based settings.

The outcomes of the Short Break Transformation Programme in Bromley, as started within the Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme, and now continued with the support of the Early Intervention Grant Funding are showing that the life chances of disabled children and their parent and carers are considerably enhanced by good quality Short Break Services. Short breaks support and enable disabled children to remain being cared for within their birth families and to live in their local community. Such services also provide the opportunity for non-disabled members of the community to gain a greater understanding of the needs of disabled children and young adults. In Bromley we believe this contributes to an environment in our borough where inclusion can be seen as the norm and where attitudes of tolerance and understanding of differences can be enhanced.

**Jane Ching**

**Lead for Disabled Children's Social Work and Short Break Services**

**Specialist Support and Disability Service**

**The London Borough of Bromley**

**6<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

# Jargon Buster

- **Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) Short Break Transformation Programme** - Launched in May 2007, the transformation programme for disabled children's services. A commitment confirmed in the NHS operating framework and in the Children's Plan, both locally and nationally. AHDC was supported by substantial funding and measures designed to make the system work more effectively. The AHDC programme aims were to deliver: access and empowerment for disabled children and their families; responsive services and timely support; improved service quality and capacity.
- **Bromley's Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee** – for Children and Young People in Bromley.
- **Common Assessment Framework (CAF)** - Common Assessment Framework - shared assessment tool for use across all services for children. It aims to help identification of children with additional needs and promote co-ordinated service provisions.
- **Eligibility Criteria** - The Eligibility Criteria document is used in conjunction with the written assessment of needs to help determine the service that can be provided at the Additional Specialist level.
- **Extended Services Provider** – provider of after school clubs, breakfast clubs and out of school activities throughout the year.
- **Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD)**
- **Local Offer Services** - In order to meet statutory duty, the Local Offer being offered to disabled children and young people eligible for a specialist short break. This offer provides a choice for parents and carers from a range of different services.
- **Merlin Passes** – Leisure provider for 'family day outs'.
- **Targeted Services** - Short Break services via self-referral and providers application only.
- **Universal Services** - Universal services are those services provided to all children, young people and their families, such as Children and Family Centres, youth clubs, extended school activities and child care. Universal services may either be part of inclusive mainstream services, or specialist services and are available to all children and young people and their families.

# Appendices

## 1. Questionnaire and accompanying summary of statement

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

### Special Educational Needs and Disability Services

The London Borough of Bromley  
Children and Young People Services  
Civic Centre  
Stockwell Close  
Bromley  
BR1 3UH

Tel: 020 8464 3333

[www.bromley.gov.uk](http://www.bromley.gov.uk)

Produced by the Specialist Support and Disability Services

**The Bromley Children and Young People Partnership is a partnership of the following organisation.**

Bromley College of Further and Higher Education | Bromley Mytime | Bromley Safeguarding Children Board  
Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum | Connexions South London Sub Regional Unit  
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership | Jobcentre Plus | London Borough of Bromley  
London Probation Trust | Metropolitan Police Service (Bromley) | NHS Bromley  
Orpington College | Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust | Primary and Special Schools  
Secondary Schools | South London Healthcare NHS Trust