



Short Break Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Within the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011, there is a duty upon the local authority to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, a range of services which is enough to assist carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively by giving them a break from caring.
- 1.2. Nottinghamshire meets this duty through its Short Break Offer. The Offer has been and will continue to be co-produced with children, young people and their families.
- 1.3. This Policy applies to all children and young people in Nottinghamshire who have an identified need from an assessment via one or more of the following:
 - Children's Disability Service
 - Children's Social Care
 - Online Short Break Application Form
 - Short Break Assessment and Review - Integrated Children's Disability Service
- 1.4. This Policy should be read alongside the Authority's Short Break Statement
- 1.5. Nottinghamshire's Children and Families department requires all service areas who refer to a Short Break in their guidance and procedures, to do so in line with this policy.

A Short Break allocation should not have an adverse impact on other services which the local authority provides or arranges for disabled children and young people and, it should be compatible with the authority's efficient use of resources.

2. Short Break Statement

- 2.1. Local Authorities are required by law to produce and publish a Statement of Short Break Services for disabled children and young people and their families under the Children Act 1989 and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011.
- 2.2. Nottinghamshire's Short Break Statement is available on the Authority's Local Offer and upon request.

3. Definition of a Short Break in Nottinghamshire

- 3.1.1 Nottinghamshire Short Breaks aims to; enable children and young people with SEND to participate in positive activities which promote independence, and, to provide parents/carers a break from caring.
- 3.1.2 For the purposes of the definition above, Nottinghamshire County Council uses the Equality Act 2010 definition of Disability:

A person with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities

- 3.3. A Short Break aims to provide children and young people with SEND the opportunity to:
 - Try new activities and develop friendships
 - Access provision/service independently, and with their families
 - Develop skills towards independence

It also gives families the opportunity to:

- Have a break from their caring responsibilities
 - Spend time with other members of their family
- 3.4. Short Breaks are intended to have positive and measurable benefits for both children and young people with SEND and their families.
 - 3.5. They are personal to individual needs, and dependent on the level of need, can include day, evening, overnight, weekend or holiday activities, in the home, a residential or community setting.

4. How a Nottinghamshire Short Break is accessed

- 4.1. There are two categories of a Short Break in Nottinghamshire. They sit within Level 3 and Level 4 of the Authority's Pathway to Provision. Children and young people can move between levels of support according to their circumstances.

4.2. Targeted Service (Level 3)

Access is via an online self-assessment or a more detailed Resource Allocation System (RAS) assessment.

4.3. Specialist Services including Overnight Short Breaks (Level 4)

Access is via a social care assessment by a Children's Disability Service social worker.

5. Threshold Criteria

- 5.1.** There are defined criteria which have been co-produced with parent/carers, children and young people. Documented evidence will be required, and a score is generated by these criteria.
- 5.2.** It is these scores which determine whether a child/young person meets the threshold to receive a Nottinghamshire County Council funded short break.
- 5.3.** Criteria and scores are transparent and detailed in the Authority's Short Break Statement and on the Local Offer Short Break web page.
- 5.4.** If the Threshold for Nottinghamshire County Council funded Short Breaks has not been reached, families will be signposted via the Local Offer to provision in their local communities including Universal Services and given the opportunity to purchase provision themselves directly from a list of providers.

6. Levels of Support

6.1. Standard Offer

All eligible applicants have an opportunity to accept this level of service. This cost-effective allocation of lower-level funding for activities via a payment card aims to ensure that Nottinghamshire County Council can support as many children and young people with disabilities as possible within available Short Break resources.

6.2. If more support than the Standard Offer is requested

When more support than the Standard Offer is requested, the level of need and corresponding allocation is identified using a Resource Allocation System (RAS) assessment tool, which considers wider family circumstances and input from other professionals working with the family. An indicative score linked with the RAS is then produced which is translated into an amount of money or hours appropriate for the child/young people and family needs.

- 6.3.** The system for allocating levels of support has been co-produced with parent/s carers, children and young people. It is transparent and aims to spread Nottinghamshire's Short Break funding equitably. This is detailed in the Authority's Short Break Statement and on the Local Offer.

7. How a Short Break is delivered in Nottinghamshire

7.1. Commissioned Service

Services are arranged on the family's behalf and may be delivered by local authority internal services or an external organisation. No money changes hands. Parent/cares and young people are informed of the allocated hours available to them, and with support, identify the different ways to use the allocation to meet the assessed identified outcomes.

7.2. A Direct Payment

Parent/carers and young people are given the money to buy and manage the services themselves to meet assessed and identified outcomes. To ensure maximum use of resources available, the Direct Payment Policy details some restriction on the use of direct payments for Personal Assistants.

7.3. Personal Contributions

In addition to the Short Break allocation identified through the assessment process, parents/carers are expected to use a reasonable amount of their own resources to help meet the identified outcomes.

7.4. A Short Break can be a combination of any of the above means.

8. Review of packages

8.1. Nottinghamshire County Council funded Short Break allocations cover a period of 12 months. It is the level of package which determines how the Short Break will be reviewed.

8.2. Some packages below a certain allocation will require the family to apply annually.

8.3. Other packages will be reviewed annually or in some overnight Short Break cases, six monthly, by the Short Break Assessment and Review Team.

8.4. Children and young people who are open to Children's Social Care will have their Short Break package reviewed by a social worker from the Children's Disability Service.

9. Transport in relation to Short Break allocations

9.1. Parents/carers are responsible for transporting their child/young person to Short Break services unless agreed otherwise as part of a care plan.

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1. Disabled children and young people have the same rights to services as other children and young people and are protected from discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

11. Safeguarding Children and Young People

- 11.1.** Parents/carers have the prime responsibility for their child's health, welfare and safety and must ensure they are meeting appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements when making their own Short Break arrangements as part of a SEND Personal Budget (see Personal Budget Policy for more details).
- 11.2.** Young People over the age of 16 who are living independently of their parents should be provided with support to secure safe care when making their own Short Break arrangements as part of a SEND Personal Budget (see Personal Budget Policy for more details).

12. Policy Monitor and Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by the ICDS Short Break Assessment and Review Team.

Any required changes to this policy due to changes in legislation will be made by ICDS Short Break Assessment and Review Team and approved by Policy Committee.

The ICDS Short Break Assessment and Review Team will be responsible for the promotion of this policy across the Department.