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## Slough Children First

### Short Breaks Statement 2024-2025

#### Introduction

This Short Break statement usually applies to children and young people with disabilities aged 4-19 years who live in Slough. Children under the age of 4 years old with severe and profound complex needs can be assessed for a short break.

Parents carers of children under 4 years old are encouraged to explore [the Local Offer](#) if their child does not have profound or complex needs.

This Short Break Statement has been designed to provide information about:

- the role of short breaks
- what are Short Breaks
- the range of short breaks currently available in Slough
- Who can access short breaks
- how short breaks meet the needs and aspirations of children with disabilities, young people, and their families in Slough.

#### Role of Short Breaks

Short Breaks provide an opportunity for children and young people with disabilities to take part in fun activities whilst enabling parents/ carers to have time for themselves.

Our vision is to enable children, young people, and parent/ carers to lead fulfilling family lives and have access to universal settings or more specialist local services in accordance with their needs and choices.

We are therefore committed to:

- ensure that we listen to all children and young people with a disability, act on their views and provide them with choices.
- ensure that all children with disabilities and their families are supported to take part in and enjoy local community life promoting inclusion and access to local childcare facilities, leisure, and recreational activities.
- ensure that as parents carers you are respected and enabled to be equal partners in making decisions about service development and priorities to enable us to work together to improve our services.



- ensure we provide information in an accessible way when you need it.

In Slough we aim for all professionals to work in partnership with families, children and young people following person centred principles to provide effective short breaks that meet the needs of all children with disabilities and their families to ensure children are happy, safe, and loved and thriving.

We strive to enable children and young people to have their needs met locally and alongside their peers, included as active and valued members of their community and promoting independence.

Children and young people should receive inclusive support in line with the graduated approach and be able to access universal, and targeted services.

Short Breaks have been created because it is recognised that there is an impact on everyday life if a child has a disability. This impact is as individual as each child and every family is unique. Short Breaks are important to children, young people and families who have a child with a disability.

Our approach aims to support and strengthen the family's ability to meet their child's needs alongside the demands of family life, by promoting and enabling access to enjoyable, social, recreational and leisure activities to develop skills and experiences outside of the family home for the child or young person.

This in turn should support parent/ carers and wider family members to have a break from their caring responsibilities.

## Legislation

The legal framework underpinning short breaks is designed to ensure that these services are accessible, equitable, and responsive to the needs of the community.

Key legislation, such as the Children Act 1989, the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011, the Children and Families Act 2014 and Equality Act 2010 and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Person's act 1970 requires local authorities to provide and promote short breaks for children with disabilities and their parent carers.

Our "Short Breaks Statement," outlines the range of services available, eligibility criteria, and explains how children, young people and families can access a short break.

Every local authority must publish a 'local offer' setting out what support and services are available to families. [View our Local Offer](#)



More information on the Children and Families Act 2014 can be found on the following link: [Children and Families Act 2014](#)

## What is a short break?

Short breaks provide children and young people with disabilities the opportunity to have fun and take part in positive experiences and develop new skills and independence.

Short Breaks are part of Slough's SEND Local Offer, that applies to all children with disabilities and young people aged 0-18 who live in Slough.

Short Breaks should:

- give children and young people a valuable and enjoyable experience which contributes to their personal, social and life skills development.
- give parents/ carers a valuable break from caring to enable parent / carers to rest or take up other interests or spend time with other children or other family members.

Short breaks can come in different forms and the type of short break will depend on the child, young person's needs, and interests.

These breaks can include:

- leisure activities outside of the home
- daytime care in the home or elsewhere
- Specialist activities during the evenings, weekends, and school holidays.
- Overnight short breaks, which could be in a residential home or with a foster carer

## Definitions

The term 'child' is used as an inclusive term to refer to all children and young people who are aged between 0–18-year-olds.

Where the context specifically relates to older children with a disability the term 'young person' is used.

In the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment



- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial.
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months.
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking, and going shopping.

Therefore, children and young people are eligible for a short break in Slough if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term significant impact on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

This may include a physical or learning disability, a hearing or visual impairment. It includes children with Autism, children and young people who are Neurodiverse, and children who may have behaviour that challenges because of their learning disability.

It also includes children who have complex health needs and those with have palliative, life limiting or life-threatening condition.

## How do I find out about short breaks?

There are currently a number of ways to find out about short breaks:

- we will continue to advertise short breaks as widely as possible.
- we will ensure that the Slough Local Offer holds the relevant information about short breaks and childcare. This can be accessed through [our Local Offer](#)
- The Slough Family Information Service – <http://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/localoffer> provides details of activities and short breaks in targeted or universal settings. You can also contact them on 01753 476589 or [FIS@slough.gov.uk](mailto:FIS@slough.gov.uk)
- ask another parent perhaps through contacting Special Voices or attending one of their coffee mornings. Special Voices can be contacted on 07990 693439 or [info@specialvoices.co.uk](mailto:info@specialvoices.co.uk)
- ask a professional who is supporting you and your child, and they will be able to find out for you

## Range of short break provision



As children and young people with a disability have varying and unique needs, we aim to provide a range of short break provision to meet those needs.

We have looked at our information about the needs of children with disabilities living in Slough and we have listened to what parent carers, young people, the voluntary sector, and other professionals have told us about what type of short breaks children want, and families need.

### **Types of short breaks in Slough include:**

#### **Universal and targeted short breaks**

- After school clubs
- Weekend clubs
- School summer holiday clubs
- Some receive funding from the Local Authority to increase access for children with a disability and a more affordable programme of activities in the school holidays

We are also committed to working with children, young people and their families and carers to develop and change the support and the services we commission and provide to meet need and promote choice.

#### **Short breaks accessible after a social work assessment.**

- Support in the home
- Daytime stays with an approved foster carer or in a residential children's setting
- Overnight stays with Foster carer or Residential home
- Direct Payment

Some families, whose child's needs are severe, profound and have been assessed as needing a break from caring, may choose to have a Direct Payment instead of a service provided by Slough Children First.

A Direct Payment enables families to arrange and pay for the type of short break support that is best for them. For example, some families use a Direct Payment to employ a Personal Assistant to help with caring for their child.

For simplicity, equity and ease of understanding, Slough has classified its short break provision into three categories:

#### **Level 1 – Universal services**



Universal or mainstream services are opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to successfully access universal mainstream settings with or without additional support.

These are services that any child with or without a disability can access. If support is required this help may be given in the form of a support worker to provide additional care, specialist training and advice or the provision of specialist equipment.

Access to universal services such as leisure centres, libraries, playgrounds, youth clubs, Children's Centre's, extended school clubs, holiday clubs, childcare and uniformed clubs such as scouts and guides is very important for children with disabilities and their families, promoting an inclusive environment.

Work has been undertaken to ensure that universal services are accessible, inclusive, and welcoming for children with disabilities and their families.

Awareness training has been accessed by some providers to help their services to be more inclusive.

Access to universal short breaks is via a self-referral, however, it is important that you talk to the provider about your child's needs so they can understand what additional support may be required for your child to participate in and enjoy the activities.

There are many types of clubs and activities available at this level so to find out what is available in Slough Local Offer at <http://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/localoffer> or if you would prefer to speak to someone about services available, telephone the Family Information Service on 01753 476 589.

## **Level 2 – Targeted services**

Targeted services are groups that have specialised in the provision of short breaks for children and young people with disabilities.

Children and young people accessing these services can range from those having no formal assessment, to providers' initial assessment or an Early Help Assessment.

After receiving positive feedback about the choices and range of activities in previous years, we have allocated funding for short breaks to organisations to provide activities after school, at weekends and during the school holidays.

These organisations include:

- Arbour Vale School



- Camp Mohawk
- The Beehive Foundation

As part of our agreement with these organisations they are required to provide quarterly feedback from both parents/carers and children and young people, as data to inform us about participation and the development of future services.

### **Level 3 – Specialist services**

Specialist services are designed for children and young people with complex levels of need and therefore require a social care and/or health assessment. Slough Children First commission Short Breaks in line with the needs of our children and young people (Individualised Short Breaks), These can range from providing either support or care within the family home or in the community at any times that are required i.e. weekdays, weekends, evenings and overnight. Depending on the complexities of children and young people, the level of support required may be higher.

We also offer daytime and overnight short breaks via Breakaway our short breaks residential unit.

A social work assessment is required to access specialist short breaks services.

Requests for support should be forwarded to Slough Children First, c/o MASH team, Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 2EL.

Tel: 01753 477321





## Short Break Service Provision

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Universal services - open to all children and young people with and without an additional need/ disability	Targeted services (Children with additional needs / disability. Aged 4-19 years) however children under the age of 4 years old with severe and profound complex medical needs could be assessed for a short break.	Specialist services
No assessment necessary unless additional provision is required	Providers (supported short breaks) or Early Help Assessment	Assessment undertaken by social care and/ or health for continuing care services
Children's Centres, sport, youth & leisure, libraries, childcare, holiday activities Max Card	Arbour Vale School Camp Mohawk Beehive Foundation	Direct Payments  Domiciliary Care  Breakaway- day and overnight short breaks

## How much will the service cost?

**Level 1** – For universal services, you will pay the full rate charged by the individual service providers.

**Level 2** - For targeted services, the Local Authority will have subsidised the services so that you will pay a reduced fee for the activities. Details of the charges can be found by contacting the organisation.

**Level 3** – For specialist services, families will have an assessment of need. The cost will be met by Slough Children First.





Families should be encouraged to use any disability allowances they receive to enable their children and young people to participate in fun and interesting activities.

Parents and carers of Children under 4 years of age are encouraged to use universal services which can be found on the Slough Local Offer, however, children under the age of 4 years old with severe and profound complex medical needs can be assessed for short break.

## **Short break service reviews**

If you receive specialist short breaks this will be regularly reviewed and is subject to change based on presenting needs. This will be by a Child in Need meeting or annual review of Short Breaks provision.

### **Direct Payments**

Direct Payments are a flexible way to give parent / carers more control and greater choice in meeting need, such as employing a Personal Assistant. An assessment is carried out to assess the needs of the child / young person.

The assessment is presented to the Children with Disabilities Panel, where it is discussed, and a decision is then made with regards to the hours and duration of the request for Direct Payments.

If a Direct Payment is agreed then our Commissioning Team will explain the process, this will include the contract, bank details, the rates of payments, as well as contingency payments. (Contingency payments are paid hourly to cover ad hoc costs e.g. Personal Protective Equipment, Stationary, Insurance, and payroll fees), liability Insurance, and the option off having a managed account if preferred.

A Direct Payments welcome pack is provided to parent/ carers.

Slough Children First, will cover the cost of your liability Insurance annually, as well as any administrative fees.

Parent carers will become an employer and will need to ensure National Insurance, PAYE and taxes are paid (via a payroll company or third-party accountant).

If parents choose to be the employer, the expectation is for them to keep up to date with changes in employment law and statutory rights e.g. maternity, sickness, and annual leave which must be provided if employing a Personal Assistant.



The Commissioning team will also discuss the proposed Personal Assistant, and request documentation to be able to process an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

A Personal Assistant cannot be employed without an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate (DBS). More information about DBS can be found [here](#).

It will be the family's responsibility to find a suitable Personal Assistant, this could be a family member or friend, as long they do NOT live in the same household as the young person requiring support and fulfilling activity above and beyond caring responsibilities associated with family life.

Once the DBS has been processed and a copy has been received by Slough Children first, the Personal Assistant can then begin supporting the Young Person if there are no safeguarding concerns arising from the DBS.

Direct Payments can only be used for the purpose of support for the child / young person.

Once the Personal Assistant begins working, the parent will be required to complete and submit timesheets for the Personal Assistant weekly, which will have to be signed by both parties.

Pay slips should be distributed monthly, for the carer by the parents.

On a monthly basis parents will be required to provide returns to the Commissioning Team. This will include timesheets, a completed income & expenditure form and bank statement for the previous month.

If a Direct Payment comes to an end any excess funds will have to be returned to Slough Children's First.

## Frequently Asked Questions - Direct Payments

Frequently asked questions (FAQ)	Answers
<b>Payroll/Paying Personal assistant or another person:</b>	
<i>Can the payroll function be completed by a parent?</i>	Yes, but you cannot pay yourself.
<b>Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS):</b>	



<i>How long do checks take?</i>	DBS checks can take anywhere from 2 weeks to 6 weeks depending on how quickly the carer completes the online information and provides identification documents
<i>What level of check is needed?</i>	The level of check is Enhanced Child.
<b>Finance Payment Dates:</b>	
<i>When will I get my payments</i>	Payments are made the 1st week of the month. They are paid in advance.
<b>School Holidays:</b>	
<i>How is holiday time calculated?</i>	School Holidays is the equivalent of 13 weeks.
	Term time is the equivalent of 39 weeks.
	For the entire year 52 weeks a year.
<b>Contingency Payments:</b>	
<i>How much is the contingency allowance?</i>	The contingency payment of £2 per hour will be added to each hour of care paid.
<i>What does the contingency payment cover?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced rates of pay for Bank Holidays</li> <li>The employment of an additional Personal Assistant (while the usual PA is on holiday, off sick or such as maternity leave)</li> <li>The renewal of the Employers and Public Liability Insurance</li> <li>Employers National Insurance contributions (if applicable)</li> <li>Sundry items such as stationery, gloves etc.</li> <li>Paying an external payroll company to cover payslips and payroll duties.</li> <li>To cover any employer pension contributions if the carer meets the minimum threshold of payroll to be eligible to join.</li> <li>Basic stationery (if forms need to be printed for carer, an ink cartridge). All items must have a validated receipt.</li> <li>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).</li> <li>This money cannot be used to top up the carer hourly rate.</li> </ul>
<i>Can I spend my direct payment on anything that helps?</i>	The Direct Payment should be used for the purpose that it is intended, i.e. if you are employing a Personal Assistant to provide a short break then the payment should be spent on this.
	<b>Direct Payments cannot be used for;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>childcare for parents/ carers to attend work</li> <li>alcohol</li> <li>medicines</li> <li>cigarettes</li> <li>tobacco products including e-cigarettes and vaping</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gambling</li> <li>• anything illegal</li> <li>• food, however, if you employ a carer to support your child to attend an activity, the carer can claim reasonable expenses if you agree this with them. This would be funded from your Direct Payment.</li> <li>• routine transport</li> <li>• Long term residential/nursing care</li> <li>• household bills and utilities</li> <li>• clothes</li> <li>• aids and equipment</li> <li>• Toiletries or holiday supplies such as post cards, cameras, towels, souvenirs etc.</li> <li>• arrangements to look after your pets</li> <li>• Duty-free goods</li> </ul>
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## Child Care costs

If you need help with childcare costs, please go to;

[Help paying for childcare: Childcare you can get help paying for \('approved childcare'\) - GOV.UK](#)

## Transition

At the age of 14 years old, the Children with Disabilities Service will talk with you about whether the young person is likely to be eligible for adult services.

If your child is likely to be eligible for support from adult services, then the children with disabilities service will work with you and your child to start to plan for transition from the age of 17 years old.

## Review of the Short Breaks Statement

We have undertaken a consultation with parent carers on the short breaks offer and statement via an online survey. A small number of parent carers shared their responses with us, and based on the findings we will;

- ***Co-produce a child / young person friendly version of the Short Breaks Statement***



- ***Co-produce future versions of the Short Break Statement with parent carers***
- ***Review our approach to Direct Payments to make them more accessible and a positive choice***
- ***Review our processes to ensure that short breaks are easy to access***
- ***Produce a regular short breaks newsletter***

## **Information for parents/ carers – your questions answered**

### **How do I know my child's needs will be met?**

The service provider will be expected to ensure that your child is included in all the activities on offer at the setting.

This will be subject to undertaking any risk assessments and where necessary arranging for additional support, equipment and/or training specific to your child's needs.

Please contact the short break providers directly for targeted services/ to find out about cost and availability of their short breaks.

For further information, contact the Slough Family Information Service on 01753 476589 and/or visit <http://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/localoffer>

### **Can my child have urgent access to a short break?**

Urgent access to the short break service may be necessary in some instances and this will be through the child's Social Worker or the service for children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Where necessary, urgent support can be arranged making best use of current providers including in-house services in accordance with the child's needs and the presenting situation.

### **Is transport available?**

It is the parents/carers responsibility to provide transport, however as transport can be difficult for some families, we have worked closely with 'Out and About,' our community transport provider, to assist with transport arrangements.

Information about access can be found via their website <https://www.sloughcommunitytransport.com/outings-and-events> or by telephone on 01753 691 131.





## Information and contact details for targeted services

Organisation	Activities	Email address	Phone number
Arbour Vale School	Various activities including dance, drama, media clubs, trips to Thames Valley Adventure Playground, Tenpin bowling.	<a href="mailto:deangray@arbourvale.slough.sch.uk">deangray@arbourvale.slough.sch.uk</a>	01753 515 566
Camp Mohawk	Indoor and outdoor activities including a sensory room, soft play, and adventure playground.	<a href="mailto:info@campmohawk.org.uk">info@campmohawk.org.uk</a>	0118 940 4045
Beehive Foundation	Various activities and play schemes.	<a href="mailto:sandrapbeehive@gmail.com">sandrapbeehive@gmail.com</a>	01753 539 062
Breakaway	Indoor and outdoor activities at the respite home including a sensory room and outdoor play equipment.  Additional activities take place outside of the home throughout the year including day trips in the summer holidays.	<a href="mailto:Ranbir.Sidhu@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk">Ranbir.Sidhu@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk</a>	01753 825 365