



Norfolk County Council

# Short Breaks

## Family Voice Norfolk Conference

### 11<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Rob Cole - Head of Service



# What are Short Breaks?

- Short Breaks are activities for children and young people with a disability. They provide children and young people aged **5 to 17 years**, with an enjoyable break away from their parent carers, while giving their parent carers a break from their caring responsibilities.
- **Children and young people can take part in new activities**, make friends, learn new skills, become more independent and have fun.
- Short Breaks give parents carers time to do the things they can't do while looking after their child, including looking after themselves. **Short Breaks can and should be positive experiences for everyone involved.**
- Short Breaks take place outside of school hours during evenings, weekends, school holidays and sometimes overnight.
- **They come in different shapes and sizes.** They range from universal activities in the community that are available to everyone, to specialist activities with trained staff and specialist equipment. They can be delivered in families' homes, at centres, or out in the community.



# Who .....

Norfolk County Council provides Short Breaks for children and young people with disabilities aged between **5 and 17**.

To be eligible, a child or young person must have a physical or mental impairment that is **substantial and has a long-term** negative effect on their ability to do normal daily tasks.

Families can contact the Short Breaks Team by telephoning: 01603 692455 or emailing: [cs.shortbreaks@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:cs.shortbreaks@norfolk.gov.uk) for **information and advice if they are unsure** if their child would be eligible based on the information above.

The Short Breaks Team may signpost families to local support services or advise on how to seek a referral into the Children's Advice and Duty Service.

[www.norfolk.gov.uk/shortbreaks](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/shortbreaks)



# How.....

- Norfolk County Council uses a Resource Allocation System (RAS) tool to determine what support a child or young person with a disability needs to achieve positive outcomes such as being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving.
- It is an evidence-based tool, that uses information from professionals working with a child or young person.
- Supported by evidence of need. The tool generates a score that determines a child or young person's Short Breaks Individual Budget. This is the pot of money allocated to them for the year to access Short Breaks.
- The Short Breaks Team works with a family to agree a plan for how they will use their Individual Budget.



# What ...

Families can choose to receive their annual Short Breaks Individual Budget in one or more of the following ways:



- **Direct Payments** – this is when the money is paid directly to families so that they can buy Short Breaks themselves, instead of Norfolk County Council arranging them. This gives families more choice, control and flexibility.
- **Commissioned Specialist Short Breaks** - these are Short Breaks with trained staff and specialist equipment. The Short Breaks Team can refer families directly to its list of commissioned Short Breaks, which often require children and young people to attend at least 12 sessions a year.
- **Overnight Short Breaks** - for children and young people that have a social work assessment and ongoing support from a social worker who will receive regular reviews and visits. Overnight Short Breaks can only be agreed by the Children with Disabilities Panel.



# Options...

## Pre-paid Card

- Families can choose to receive a pre-paid card.
- Funding up to **£1000 can be spent without listing all the activities** they wish to buy which meet. This works well for those unplanned days out such as bowling, cinema and holiday activities. Of this, **£250 can be used to buy toys and equipment.**
- **Funding above £1000 is allocated to specific activities**, but still provides families with flexibility to pay using online or chip and pin/contactless. This helps when buying annual passes or paying for termly activity fees such as swimming, karate or music lessons.

## Personal Assistant

- A family may wish to **employ a personal assistant (PA)**, who can provide 1:1 support within the family home and/or take the child or young person outdoors, including to social activities within the community.
- The child must be eligible for a **minimum Individual Budget of £1,500** per year. This is to make sure there is enough money to cover a reasonable number of regular hours each year.
- The **Direct Payment Support Service** offers support and training for families and for those who work as personal assistants or carers.

## Funding for Toys and Equipment

- Families will need one of our **pre-paid cards** to receive funding to buy toys and play equipment, including tablets and kindles.
- Funding cannot be used to pay for subscription services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime or to buy gift cards.
- In certain circumstances, it may be possible to add funding to buy items costing more than £250.



# More than just a short break.....



# Feedback & Developments ...

**We are developing our Short Breaks Strategy for Norfolk. As part of the strategy and following feedback from families we are looking to:**

- Improve access and remove barriers to universal services
- Improve Short Breaks for children and young people with complex health needs.
- Improve the transition for young people aged 14+ and their families into adulthood and Adult Social Services.
- Redesign the Local Offer Short Breaks webpages.
- Simplify the Short Breaks application process .
- Review the Resource Allocation System (RAS)
- Improve data on Short Breaks .
- Improve Short Breaks for children under 8 (where Ofsted registration is required).
- Explore transport issues in rural locations.

“Just thank you for this service being offered, having this will open more opportunities for my daughter to build her friendships and her confidence.”

“The short breaks team are a joy to deal with - always answer promptly and happy to clarify anything that you need to know. Short breaks has enabled my son to access various music sessions that we might not have been able to afford otherwise. He loves them!”





# Our 10 BIG Objectives.....

1. Parents/carers, children and young people have the opportunity to access and choose **more inclusive universal provision** across Norfolk, such as after school clubs, holiday clubs, breakfast clubs etc.
2. Parents/carers, children and young people can access a community short breaks clubs and activities offer, making friends and having their needs met **enabling good outcomes**.
3. Parent/carers are able to have a break in the knowledge that their child(ren) is **safe and well-cared for by trained staff**.
4. Providing community short breaks and respite for families at the **right point in time, reducing escalation of need and reducing chances of families reaching breaking point**.
5. Children and young people with disabilities are **supported to become more independent**, achieving positive outcomes moving into adult life, but recognising this will mean something different for every young person.
6. Parents/carers, children and **young people are communicated with effectively and feel involved in the application and review process**.
7. Giving opportunities and support to access **Personal Assistants or pre-paid cards through a Direct Payment scheme** (families are aware of the DPSS and how to contact it for advice/support and making it clear that PAs will be appropriately trained)
8. Families in need of more **intensive or specialist respite are supported to access provision that meets their needs**, which may include overnight respite.
9. Supporting **families and siblings to enjoy activities** that are fun and inclusive, providing a break for all.
10. Creating opportunities for all children and young people with a disability to **FLOURISH** in Norfolk.



# Thanks for listening...



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[www.norfolk.gov.uk/shortbreaks](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/shortbreaks)

