



Introduction

Brent's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2021 – 2025 vision is that:

We want our children and young people to be able to 'Dream big, achieve well, have choice, control, and lead happy fulfilled lives.'

The local authority has a duty to produce a Short Breaks Statement of Intent so that families, carers and young people understand the services that are available and the eligibility criteria to access these services. The statement will link to the Local Offer website. <https://www.brent.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/send-local-offer/>

This Statement of Intent provides parents and carers with information about:

- The reason for a Short Breaks Statement
- What short breaks are and are not
- How to access services?

Why do we have a Short Breaks Statement of Intent?

The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulation (April 2011) requires local authorities to provide 'so far as is reasonably practicable, a range of services which is sufficient to assist carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively.' In line with this legislation, local authorities are also required to publish a statement about their short breaks offer.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/707/contents/made>

Section 25 of The Children & Young Person's Act 2008 made the provision of short breaks a statutory duty for all local authorities. From 1st April 2011, the Children's Act and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011, has required local authorities to provide short break services that will help and support parents and carers who look after a child / children with SEND.

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/194>

This means that Brent **must** provide parents and carers (who are entitled to this) with a break from caring and children and young people with short break services.

The 2015 SEND Code of Practice identifies that in order to prepare young people for adulthood Local Authorities **must** set out the support available to help children and young people with SEND in the Local Offer. This includes support for:

- Moving into adulthood
- Fully participating in the community through leisure and social activities, including:
 - Opportunities for influencing local decision-making and mainstream community facilities and local youth services
 - Volunteering opportunities and the support available to access them.

What are Short Breaks?

Short breaks provide a chance for children and young people with SEND to spend time away from those who care for them, to try out new things, have fun and make new friends. Short breaks can also provide families with a chance to have a break from their caring responsibilities and to do ordinary things together.

All children and young people with SEND should be able to access short break activities and opportunities which are happening in their local area.

A short break can take place after school, at the weekend, during school holidays or overnight. A short break can also be an activity for a few hours e.g. at a leisure centre. Some short break activities are free to use whilst others charge. A reduced cost may be available for families on low incomes.

Types of Short Break

There are three types of Short Break:

- Universal Short Breaks
- Targeted Short Breaks
- Specialist Short Breaks

Universal Short Breaks

Universal Short Break activities take place in a range of venues including family well-being centres, leisure centres, youth centres, parks, playgrounds, and community centres.

Universal short breaks activities include inclusive opportunities such as scouts, cadets etc.

Brent's Yellow Card and B Active card, available to young people on the Disability Register, offer discounts on activities including those at Brent leisure centres.

Wherever possible universal short break opportunities should be used first. These services **must** follow the Equalities Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments and not to treat a disabled person unfairly.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Not all Universal Short Breaks will be suitable for everyone. It is advisable to contact the provider to discuss your child / children's needs and what they can offer.

Universal Short Breaks are sometimes called mainstream services.

Targeted Short Breaks

Targeted Short Breaks activities also take place in a range of venues, including leisure centres. Targeted short breaks are for specific groups of children and young people e.g. dedicated swimming sessions for autistic children; a residential for young people with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or targeted youth activities for children and young people with SEND.

Specialist Short Breaks

Specialist Short Breaks are for families with children whose needs are considered to be more complex and are provided subject to an eligibility criteria. The 0 to 25 Disabled Children and Young Peoples' Service will carry out an assessment of your child / children's needs to decide what level of support they and the rest of the family might need. A Resource Allocation Tool is also used to support the assessment and to ensure the right level of support is offered to families. Brent's Short Breaks Decision Making Panel will:

- Initially only allocate one night per month for all **new** referrals, except when there are exceptional circumstances e.g. to prevent family breakdown
- Review new overnight short breaks packages after three months, then six monthly thereafter
- Review existing placements every six months depending on the current situation and in line with the Child in Need (CiN) or Short Break Plan

If children / young people do not attend their overnight short break (without notification) more than twice, they will be referred to panel for further discussion

Specialist Short Breaks include:

- An overnight stay at the Ade Adepitan Centre
- Projects delivered at the weekend and in school holidays
- Summer holiday opportunities for young people of 18 and above
- Direct payments to pay for a Personal Assistant or care at home agency to:
 - o Provide care and support
 - o Pay for an activity

Parents / carers can also request an assessment of their child / children's needs by contacting Brent Family Front Door on **020 8937 4300** or emailing family.frontdoor@brent.gov.uk

What is not a Short Break?

- Childcare (Regular and ongoing)
- Holidays (in and out of the UK)
- Support for siblings
- Emotional support
- Extra tuition
- Support for parental ill health
- Driving lessons
- Cleaning Services

Short breaks are an integral part of the wider support that we offer to children and young people with SEND. We want to provide services that are safe, interesting and rewarding and which enable them to participate fully in family and community life.

To support the process of accessing provision locally, we will:

- Provide guidance for the Voluntary Sector to support them in accessing grant funding to deliver high quality short breaks for children and young people with SEND (both universal and targeted)
- Deliver a full training programme for short break providers to ensure they are sufficiently trained to support all children and young people, irrespective of any SEND they might have
- Work with providers to develop their youth services offer
- Check and monitor the quality across short break providers
- Ensure the Local Offer is updated regularly

If you have any questions, queries or comments regarding our short break services and development for the future then please contact the Short Break's Co-ordinator on **020 8937 1413**.