

Short breaks update

June 2024



This document provides a summary update to the discussion points which emerged from the meeting between parent carers and Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) on May 1st 2024.

What we heard:

- Not enough short breaks for children with complex needs.
- Not enough long days to enable parents to work.
- Families uncertain of the current provider's experience of meeting needs.
- Uncertainty regarding provision of 1:1 / 2:1 support.
- Communication between BHCC and families is poor.

What have we done since?

Please see the attached "You said, we did" for a comprehensive breakdown, but as a summary:

Summer offer

- Down's Syndrome Development Trust. 7 x one day camps over the summer holidays for 10 children aged from 8 years old with complex needs who do not have Down's Syndrome. Hill Park has offered their site over the summer holidays to support this provision of short breaks for children with complex needs.
- BHCC in-house provision Tudor House and Drove Road. Each venue will offer 3 days a week for August for up to 5 children (numbers will flex based on the need of the children and young people). This offer will be extended to families who don't currently use the services.
- All sessions are between 3 – 8 hours with some HAF offers for SEND children up to 9 hours.
- Commitment to pay if your PA can do more hours to accompany your child to a short break session or do more hours over the summer holidays. If you have a surplus in your account, please contact your social worker to discuss how this will be managed.
- On-going conversations with mainstream school's holiday clubs to support children with additional needs to access mainstream holiday clubs with their friends if they attend that school.
- We have engaged Bleep 360 alongside Happiest at Home to provide 1:1 support to ensure that there is enough capacity to enable Short Break Providers to meet complex needs.
- Responding to feedback from providers BHCC have organised and paid for training covering positive behavioural support, autism, communication and medical needs.

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- List from special schools and social workers of families most in need across the summer to ensure that there are equal opportunities for families.
- Received Expression of Interest from local TAs and VPAs to support DR/TH with staffing their offer.
- Stay and play and getting to know you sessions with Short Break providers ahead of the holidays to build trust for the families and children and young people who wish to attend.
- The SEND Short Breaks offer has linked with HAF to identify providers who can support children and young people with SEND as part of their offer.

Communication

- Working with PaCC and SEND us a Break it has been agreed that we will host monthly face to face meetings with families, covering a range of topics as we move forward through the year. This will give a greater opportunity for engagement and updates. Please see the details for the next meeting at the end of this document.
- The agenda and notes from the meetings will be shared with a wide range of parent carer organisations in order to extend the reach across our local community.
- PaCC have agreed to create a page on their website which will host communications / updates from the parent carer meetings.
- Short break email address created (Short.Breaks@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk) to enable families to get in contact with Katie or Jacqui to raise questions and share any concerns.
- Development of Eequ platform taking into consideration feedback from the Easter sessions.
- A more comprehensive communication strategy to follow.
- Digital offer being developed. Which will take on-board the development and maintenance of the Local Offer to ensure families have access to the latest information and to support with accessing the right support at the right time. This will include a communications element to act as a first port of call for families to see what the Local Authority is working on and be able to feedback.

Direct Payment (DP) and Personal Assistant (PA) update

Please see attached statement from Lorraine Hughes, Head of Service for Specialist Community Disability Team, but in summary:

- Commitment to pay if your PA can do more hours to accompany your child to a short break session or do more hours over the summer holidays. If you have a

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surplus in your account, please contact your social worker to discuss how this will be managed.

- Commitment to pay for mainstream support through Inclusion Funding.
- Investigation of online DBS checks and on-boarding for PAs to speed up the process for families.
- Assuming the PA has committed to the DBS update service then PAs can start immediately whilst BHCC DBS is being processed.
- Task and finish group established across Amaze, PaCC, Social Care and Commissioning to develop our PA offer for families in Brighton and Hove. This will review recruitment opportunities, employment, training and ensuring stability for families.

For further information on any of the above please contact:

Short Breaks

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PaCC

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Next Parent Carer Meeting: Monday 10th June 2024. 11:30am – 1:30pm. Friends Meeting House, Ship Street, Brighton BN1 1AF or [via Teams link \(click here\)](#).