

# London Borough of Waltham Forest Short Breaks Service Statement 2016 – 2018



Waltham Forest

## FOREWORD

### **Cllr Mark Rusling, Waltham Forest Council's Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:**

Here in Waltham Forest we are absolutely committed to supporting families with disabled children. We want to ensure that children and young people are safe, happy and well in our community, and that they and their families have equal access to inclusive and life-enhancing opportunities.

Working with and talking to local parents and families to develop and improve the services available has been a key part in establishing the current offer of support in Waltham Forest. We want to make it as clear as possible to residents what kind of support there is and how they can access it.

As a result, we believe local families using these services will be able to enjoy greater independence – managing when and how they use opportunities for their benefit.

I'm proud that we have been able to write this document with involvement from families, service users and partner organisations, and fully intend to make sure these strong relationships continue to flourish in the weeks, months and years ahead.

### **Linzi Roberts-Egan, Deputy Chief Executive of Waltham Forest Council and Director for Families:**

This short break statement sets out the Council's commitment to offer high quality short breaks and respite to families with a disabled child. This document goes beyond meeting our statutory obligations as it will help families to manage themselves to become more independent and resilient without our unnecessary intervention.

I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the parents, carers, children and young people who have contributed their thoughts and views to help us produce this document, which sets out our commitment to offer high quality short breaks and respite to families with a disabled child.

Their input played a key role in shaping the short break service eligibility criteria, ensuring local people in need of support understand the kind of help they can receive, how to navigate services and particularly where they can go to get support without the need for an assessment.

Co-produced alongside the Waltham Forest Parent Forum, the document aims to bring together what you need to know about the short break support available in the borough.

We hope the following information will be a useful resource for anyone wanting to find out about the services that are available to help ensure the wellbeing of your family.





*"It is nice to finally have a document that looks as if it has been produced in collaboration with families."*



### **Children and young people who use Short Breaks services:**

On behalf of the Short Breaks Service the Voice and Influence Team met with a small group of young people who use Short breaks services.

Young people value their short breaks and commented about their experiences of them:

'I have been able to do things that would not have been possible if I had not been using 92 Leyton Green Road '

'Things that we like doing and would like to carry on doing such as exercise, hopping, running, dance, playing outside, using the garden at 92 Leyton Green Road, going to the park, Hoovering and going to McDonald's'

'There needs to be more meetings with disabled children'

'The council should use the knowledge and ideas of disabled children in Waltham Forest'

We thank the young people involved for their comments and we commit to consulting with them even more widely for the next update of the short breaks statement.

### **Carol Prideaux, Parent Participation Director Waltham Forest Parent Forum:**

'It is nice to finally have a document that looks as if it has been produced in collaboration with families'. *(quote from a local parent.*

It is with pleasure that I introduce Waltham Forest's Short Breaks Statement.

I hope you will find this report both informative and interesting and that it will give you a greater understanding of the process for getting short breaks for your child and your family. As a parent of a child with complex needs I understand how important short breaks are to families. Having a document that clearly shows what to do makes the task of getting services less of a struggle.

This is the first document parents have been fully involved in; working in partnership with professionals, from start to finish. We hope it is the first of many opportunities we will have to work together to develop services in the borough.

We would like to thank all the parents and professionals who participated in the production of the final document. Without you, this would not have been possible.

Please confirm if this needs to stay in.

This is the full length, detailed version of Waltham Forest short breaks statement We have produced a 'Parent/Carer Guide to Short Breaks services'. This is a shorter and simplified version of this document and you can access this on the website.

## WHAT IS THE SHORT BREAKS STATEMENT?

Waltham Forest Short Breaks statement gives parents and carers of disabled children and young people aged 0–18 living in the borough, information about short breaks and how to access them.

We define disability in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 as:

"Having a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities."

This statement gives you information about:

- What is available?
- Who can use the service?
- How to access services?
- How short breaks meets the needs of disabled children and young people and their families?

*"The short breaks allocation has been a real life saver for me and for my son. He loves the time he spends with his befriender and he is able to do things he would otherwise be unable to do. It also gives me the chance to do things I would struggle to do if he were with me, and I get a break to see my friends."*

## WHY DO WE HAVE A SHORT BREAKS STATEMENT?

The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulation (April 2011) require a local authority 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.' Local authorities are also required to publish a statement about short breaks. This statement is Waltham Forest Council's response to both these requirements.

**Please click [here](#) to go to the legislation information.**

This statement has been developed in partnership with the Waltham Forest Parents Forum, parents and carers, the local authority, local health services, and schools.





## THE VISION

The Vision for children and young people in Waltham Forest was produced with parents, children, young people and professionals. The vision sets out hopes and wishes for a full and happy life and covers the following:

- Living great lives
- Support when we need it
- A cleaner, healthier, greener Waltham Forest
- Safe, accessible communities that we are part of

## WHAT IS A SHORT BREAK?

Short breaks provide a chance for disabled children to spend time away from their carers, 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.

A short break can last from a few hours to a few days, evening, overnight, weekend, and school holiday daytime activities.

It can take place in your own home, at a carer's home or in a number of other settings, for example:

- Overnight residential short breaks (this means your child stays away from home for a short while and you get a night time break)
- Short breaks with Foster Carers
- Holiday play schemes
- After school clubs and sessions
- Adventure play
- Buddying and befriending
- Disability specific services (for the visually, hearing and mobility impaired)
- Support to access inclusive mainstream services

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, requires local authorities to provide short break services that will help and support parents and carers who look after a disabled child or children.

This means that the Council has to provide parents (who are entitled to this) with a break from caring and children and young people with services for this.

*"A sense of integration and making new friends; every child is different but being in a safe environment where they are given a chance to make contacts, friends and feeling understood and accepted makes a huge difference for 'special' children."*



## **IN WALTHAM FOREST WE AIM TO:**

- Improve the health and wellbeing of disabled children, young people, their brothers and sisters and parent/carers.
- Build up independence to help children/young people to develop their social and life skills and have choice.
- Support disabled children to do new things, have fun, make new friends and do things without parents/carers.
- Support carers to have a break from caring and strengthen the family's ability to cope; reducing stress and preventing family breakdown.
- Boost community acceptance of disabled children and young people as being equal and essential members of society.
- Increase the availability and choice of activities and services for disabled children.
- Make it easier for families to access short breaks and universal services according to their needs.
- Help families to seek advice and information e.g. Family Information Service.
- Support universal services i.e. Leisure centres, clubs etc. to include and support disabled children and young people in their services.
- Give families the information that they need about the services on offer.
- Work together with disabled children and their families, to make sure we are meeting their needs and to see how we can improve what we offer.
- Check and monitor that service providers are offering a good quality service which helps disabled children to achieve positive results.
- Offer training and development opportunities to increase skills in meeting the needs of disabled children, young people and families.



*"This is a great service, but sometimes hard to access if you have other siblings to look after. Maybe they could go too?"*

## WHAT IS THE ELIGIBILITY FOR A SHORT BREAK?

All parents and children need to have a break and need to know what services they can have according to their level of need.

Our eligibility for services is based on the need to be fair and open, treating everyone equally. We are committed to making sure disabled children and young people are healthy and well (see aims above) and preventing family crisis by providing the right level of support at the right time.

## WHAT ARE UNIVERSAL SERVICES?

All disabled children and young people should be able to access activities and opportunities which are happening in the local area. These can provide disabled children with the same positive results and improvements in their lives as a short break locally. These opportunities can be found at children's centres, swimming pools, leisure centres, youth groups, parks, playgrounds and community centres. Wherever possible these opportunities should be used first. These services must follow the Equalities Act 2010 to make reasonable changes and not to treat a disabled person unfairly.

Some are free to use whilst others charge. A reduced cost may be available for families on low incomes. However, not all universal services will be suitable for everyone. It is advisable to contact the provider to discuss your needs and what they can offer.

Details of available universal services can be found in the Family Information Directory [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/cypd](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/cypd) or by contacting the Early Help Service.



## SHORT BREAKS SERVICES IN WALTHAM FOREST

There are 4 levels of short breaks support, as detailed below. Children are eligible for all Universal services.

Universal	Targeted	Complex	Acute
What is it?			
<p>These services are open to everyone and no assessment is required.</p> <p><b>Examples of services:</b>                      Children's centre                      Nursery                      Holiday play scheme                      After school club</p>	<p>These services are for a child who requires support for their health or development to stay at a manageable level and to prevent stress in the family.</p> <p>Early Help Short Break                      Services are targeted support for children and young people provided by the Early Help Service.</p> <p>You can still access Universal services.</p> <p><b>Examples of services:</b>                      Leisure clubs and activities, Holiday and/or specialist playschemes.                      Support from specialist outreach services helping you to use Universal activities.</p>	<p>These services are for a child who may be vulnerable and at risk of their health or development suffering.</p> <p>Your child has a lead professional i.e. a social worker or someone else who is offering additional support to you / your child.</p> <p>You can still access Universal and Early Help services if these are appropriate.</p> <p><b>Examples of services:</b>                      Overnight Short Breaks                      Your child may be able to stay overnight to give you and your family a break from caring.                      Domiciliary Care This is support for your child's personal care needs.                      Direct Payments may be applicable/preferable.</p>	<p>These services are for a child who may be extremely vulnerable and at immediate risk of their health or development suffering.</p> <p>Your child may currently be living in residential care or be at risk of being placed into residential care.</p> <p>Your child has a lead professional/social worker and a significant package of support in place which may include other services.</p> <p><b>Examples of services:</b>                      Overnight Short Breaks                      Your child may be able to stay overnight to give you and your family a break from caring.                      Domiciliary Care. This is support for your child's personal care needs.                      Direct Payments may be applicable/preferable.</p>
Your child's needs			
<p>Your child needs limited support and may be unable to join in with some community activities and benefit from additional social /leisure activities.</p>	<p>Your child may need a manageable level of support and not being able to join in with community activities would affect their development and cause social isolation.</p> <p>Your child may be receiving Special Educational Needs support and may be known to service providers i.e. Early Help Services.</p>	<p>Your child's disability affects them in a way that they need regular support from social and health care services.</p> <p>Your child is attending a special school or a specialist provision in a mainstream school and is registered with SEN support services with an Education Health Care plan or statement in place.</p> <p>Your child has had or needs a Continuing Healthcare Assessment from Health and support may be in place.</p>	<p>Your child's care and/or medical needs are related to their disability and they need high levels of lifetime specialist support from social and health care services.</p> <p>Your child is attending a special or residential school and is registered with SEN support services with an Education Health Care plan or statement in place.</p> <p>Your child has had or needs a Continuing Healthcare Assessment from Health and support may be in place.</p> <p>Your child is allocated to the Safeguarding Team or any other social work team.</p>



Universal	Targeted	Complex	Acute
Parent and family's needs			
<p>You and your family can manage your child's needs and can access services in the community.</p> <p>Your child's needs may be having a limited impact on you and your family's personal or social life.</p>	<p>You need to care for other children or family members and if you were unable to do this it would place them at risk.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The child's needs are affecting parent's personal or social lives.</p> <p>You may need to have a Carers Assessment to see what other support is needed.</p>	<p>Your child's needs are met but their physical or mental health or your ability to manage their challenging behaviour may suffer if they do not receive additional support.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>There is a risk of family breakdown AND you need support to continue to provide care to your disabled child and other children in the family.</p> <p>You may need to have a Carers Assessment to see what other support is needed.</p>	<p>Your child's essential needs are not being met and their physical or mental health may suffer if they do not receive additional support.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>There is a risk of family breakdown AND you need support to continue to provide care to your disabled child and other children in the family.</p> <p>You may have already had a Carers Assessment and may be receiving additional support.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>You may need to have a Carers Assessment to see what other support is needed.</p>
How can I access this?			
<p>You can access support directly for this.</p> <p>Information for all the organisations who supply universal services can be found at <b>www.walthamforest.gov.uk/cypd</b> under the heading for Universal Services and the Local Offer.</p> <p>You will need to check with individual providers about whether the activity is still running, and for more information about dates, times and costs.</p>	<p>An Early Help Assessment will be undertaken to look at the needs of your child/family and what Short Breaks support you can get.</p> <p>You can call the Single Front Door on 020 8496 2310 Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm.</p> <p><b>www.walthamforest.gov.uk/mash-professionals</b></p> <p>OR</p> <p>You can complete and send the Short Break Self-Referral form to the Single Front Door and this will be sent to the Early Help Service for assessment.</p> <p><b>MASHrequests</b> <b>walthamforest.gov.uk</b></p>	<p>You will need to have an assessment by a Social Worker or other health professional assessment.</p> <p>Referrals can be to the Single Front Door on 020 8496 2310 Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm.</p> <p><b>www.walthamforest.gov.uk/mash-professionals</b></p> <p>And ask for an assessment.</p>	<p>You will need to have an assessment by a Social Worker or other health professional assessment.</p> <p>Referrals can be made to the Single Front Door on 020 8496 2310 Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm.</p> <p><b>www.walthamforest.gov.uk/mash-professionals</b></p> <p>And ask for an assessment.</p>

*"My short breaks have been helpful, my son has grown up and it gives me time with my daughter and husband. It's great."*

## WHAT IS THE LOCAL OFFER?

The local offer is a guide to all the services that are available for children and young people in Waltham Forest with special educational needs and/or disabilities aged from birth to 25.

We developed our Local Offer with you (parents, carers, and children and young people with SEN and disabilities) to meet your needs. Now you can find all the information and advice you need about SEN and disability services in one place, quickly and easily.

More information on the Waltham Forest Local Offer can be found at **[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/localoffer)**

## WHAT ARE SEND SERVICES?

Children learn at different speeds and in different ways. Teachers take this into account when they organise children's lessons. But some children still find it much harder to learn than others of the same age and may need extra help. This may be because they have difficulties with:

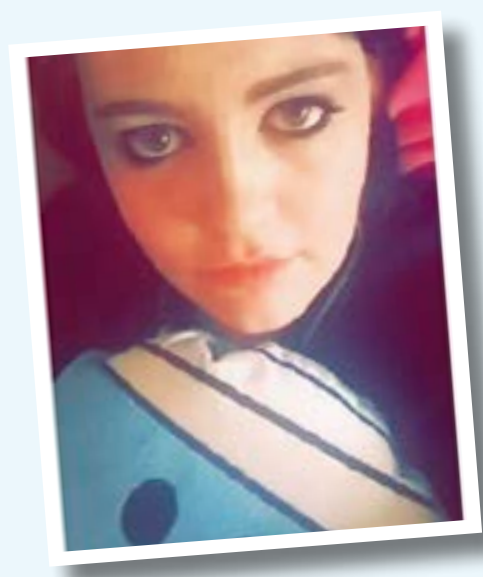
- Reading, writing, number work or understanding information
- Expressing themselves or understanding what is being said to them
- Organising themselves
- Understanding and following rules and routines
- Making friends or relating to adults
- A medical condition
- A sensory need such as a difficulty with seeing or hearing
- These children are said to have special educational needs

In 2014 the government produced the Children and Families Act 2014 which states that everyone involved in supporting or helping disabled children and their families need to work more closely together.

This also included a new approach to children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEN); that focus on the views, feelings and wishes of the young person up to the age of 25.

This does not change other responsibilities on the Council i.e. to make sure children are safe and well etc. Education, health and social care services are expected to work closely together to jointly produce an education, health and care plan (EHC) for the child / young person.

This is the link to information about SEN: **<https://goo.gl/OY5DBH>**



## CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OLD

It is expected that most disabled children under 5 will access mainstream services (available to everyone), including Children's Centre provision. Only those with high level needs, or where there are special circumstances, will need to be offered short breaks beyond the Local Offer and this will require an assessment.

This is the link for children's centres in Waltham Forest:

**[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/childrens-centres](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/childrens-centres)**



## HOW CAN I GET A SHORT BREAK?

You can access a short break in the following ways:

1. Through the Local Offer and universal services
2. Referral to the Single Front Door into Early Help and Children's Social Care
3. Complete a self-referral form and send this to the Single Front Door

### 1. LOCAL OFFER AND UNIVERSAL SERVICES

No social work assessment is required to access any of these services. Services are available from the service provider directly and you may be asked to provide evidence of your child's disability or how their condition affects them. You may also have to pay or contribute towards the cost of the service, please check with the providers. They will work with you to provide for your child's individual needs, they will ensure that they get to know your child and the support that they need to take part in the activity, giving you peace of mind that your child is in safe hands. If the provider is unable to provide support then the Short Breaks Coordinator can help you look for more suitable providers, from within the Short Breaks Directory which can be found at: **[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/localoffer)**

Details of available universal services can be found in the Family Information Directory **[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/fis](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/fis)**

Or by contacting the Early Help Service

**[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/earlyhelp](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/earlyhelp)**

The Family Information Service provide information, advice and guidance on childcare and support services for families and details of available universal services. Their contact details are available at **[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/fis](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/fis)**





## 2. REFERRAL TO THE 'SINGLE FRONT DOOR' INTO EARLY HELP AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE, THE MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH)

We want to make getting short breaks easy for parents and carers, so all requests now go to one place, we call this the 'Single Front Door'.

Parents/young person can request a service by calling the Referral and Assessment Service in the Single Front Door on 020 8496 2310 Mon–Fri 9am–5pm.

This is part of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub also known as the MASH. All referrals for services are placed through the single front door in order to ensure that families receive the right help at the right time.

You can find out more about this service:

**[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/mash-professionals](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/mash-professionals)**

You will be asked to provide information and details about your disabled child and your circumstances in order for an initial decision to be made about which service would best suit your needs. We recommend that parents give as much information as possible about the child's condition and how it impacts on the family so this will assist in you being referred to the right service.

Professionals (doctors, nurses, teachers etc.) should contact the Waltham Forest MASH at:

Waltham Forest Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub  
221 Hoe Street,  
Walthamstow  
London E17 9PH

Phone: 020 8496 2310  
(Mon–Thurs, 9am–5.15pm and Fri, 9am–5pm)

Mob: 020 8496 3000 (out of hours)

Fax: 020 8496 2313

Email: **[MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk)**

For further information please see the guidance notes at

**[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/making-a-good-referral](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/making-a-good-referral)**

*"A service where I can spend family time and help my son get out more as I suffer chronic fatigue and cannot always take him out."*

### 3. COMPLETE A SELF-REFERRAL FORM

The form can be downloaded at [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/localoffer) and follow the link to the Disability Zone or by contacting the Short Break Coordinator at Waltham Forest (**please click here to go to contact details**)

Parents/carers can complete the form and send this directly to MASH Hub (Single Front Door) **MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk**

Or you can send it directly to the Short Break Coordinator who will send it to the MASH unit (**please click here to go to contact details**)

Please ensure that the form is signed by a parent or guardian and that you send a copy of your child's DLA letter (which tells you what level of Disability Living Allowance has been given to your child/young person) or a letter from the Consultant detailing your child/young person's diagnosis.

If you need further advice and help with this you can also contact the Short Break Coordinator:

Tel – 0208 496 3515

E-mail – **anthony.connole@walthamforest.gov.uk**

### HOW ARE NEEDS ASSESSED?

After your referral is received a decision will be made in the single front door if more information is required and if any assessment may need to be carried out. This will look in detail at the needs of the disabled child and carers, as well as things in your family life that may affect the other children or the carer's ability to care.

One of the following assessments will be undertaken depending upon the needs of the disabled child and the family. You will be advised of which assessment is right for you and how long this may take:

- A Child and Family single assessment carried out by a Social Worker  
**www.walthamforest.gov.uk/CAF-referral**
- An Early Help Assessment carried out by an Early Help Officer  
**www.walthamforest.gov.uk/earlyhelp**

The result of the assessment and the recommendation from the worker, taking into account the views of the family and child will be presented to the Short Breaks Panel for a decision.

Overnight short breaks are mainly for children and families with high support needs and can only be considered by the Short Breaks Panel once a Child and Family Assessment has been completed.



*"Keeping our sitter is very important to us. Having respite where we feel safe in the knowledge he is well cared for."*

## WHAT IS THE SHORT BREAKS PANEL?

The Panel is made up from managers from different services and a representative from the Parent Forum and is chaired by a senior member of staff. The panel will ensure that the amount of short breaks hours and support is based on assessed need and will meet the needs of the child or young person. The panel meets monthly to assess new referrals and also to regularly review what individual families receive.

No short breaks hours can be provided until the request has been presented to the Short Break Panel unless the Social Work or Early Help Assessment results in a recommendation that the needs of the child can be met through universal services.

When the Panel have agreed the number of short breaks hours and any other support that is needed, the family can mix and match services from the directory which suits them best. All the specialist short breaks services available in Waltham Forest can be found online at **[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/cypd](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/cypd)**. A printed version is available; please contact the Short Break Co-ordinator if you would like a copy (**please click here to go to contact details**)

The short break package you may receive is usually Short Break hours or Direct Payments.

However overnight Short Breaks at the council's specialist provision at Leyton Green Road will only be provided after a social work assessment of your child's needs and family circumstances.

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE PANEL DECISION?

After panel you will be contacted by the Short Break Co-ordinator to confirm the outcome of the panel decision. If you have been allocated a short break you will then need to look at the providers list, decide which ones you would like to use and contact them directly to make arrangements (see section below.)

## HOW CAN I USE MY SHORT BREAK ALLOCATION?

We are trying to give families more flexibility within the choice of short breaks available and recognise that you will be best placed to make the decisions about this.

If a child or young person has been given a short breaks package they can use the short break hours with any of the services that Waltham Forest has a contract with to provide services, (we refer to these as commissioned services). You can use these at weekends, weekdays or during the school holidays, as long as there is availability. You can mix and match services from the Short Break providers which best suits your needs and wishes.

Short Breaks are provided for one year at a time and run from April to March of the following year, this is in line with our financial year. If you apply during the year i.e. in September and the Panel agree to provide you with short breaks hours you will only receive these until 31st March of the following year when your allocation will be reviewed.







For example if a child or young person is allocated 100 hours of Short Breaks the hours can be used in the following manner; 25 hours at ELHAP, 15 hours at Waltham Forest Asian Mothers' Group, 10 hours at The Limes, 10 hours at Scope, 40 hours at KIDS etc. or the child/young person can use all 100 hours with the one organisation if they so wish.

In some cases there may also be a daily/weekly charge to attend an activity. Check with the provider for details.

If child/young person uses up all of their hours before the end of the financial year they will not be able to access the services until April of the following year. Therefore it is very important to carefully plan how you use your hours. Parents should be aware that any unused hours may be reduced or removed.

It is the **responsibility of the parents** to keep track of the hours that their child uses each year and the allocation cannot be increased or hours of service extended once this has been used up unless this is agreed by the Short Breaks Panel or there is an urgent, unavoidable change in a family's situation.

## WHAT IF MY CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE?

We understand that family circumstances can change suddenly or urgent new needs arise. If this happens you need to tell us as soon as possible as we may need to review your short breaks package.

To do this you will need to contact either:

- Your child's allocated social worker
- The Early Help service if your case has been allocated to them:  
**EarlyHelp@walthamforest.gov.uk**
- The Short Breaks Co-ordinator:  
**anthony.connole@walthamforest.gov.uk**

## HOW ARE WE MEETING THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES?

We are aiming to ensure that we meet the needs of families not only by ensuring that a good range of formal short breaks are provided, but by doing so in conjunction with the wider "Local offer". Parents told us that many of them and their children want more access to inclusive activities with other children. They also clearly said that they want access to more choice of times and duration of activities.

We hope that this statement opens up those options and sets the provision of specialist short breaks in the context of being built on freer access to Universal and some Targeted services, but also will lead to the development of better ways of supporting more children to access universal provision where that is appropriate to their needs and wishes.

We understand that it is not just about giving families a break, although that is very important. It is also about providing services which are clear about who can receive them and is fair in making sure that the right services are given to the people that need them most. It is our aim in co-producing this statement to ensure that services respond to what our families tell us they want and need.

*"Our child needs to be fully supported in water but he loves it and it is one of the few things he can access."*



## WHAT IS A DIRECT PAYMENT AND HOW CAN I ACCESS THIS?

The aim of a Direct Payment is to give more flexibility in how services are provided to people/families who are assessed as needing social services support. The Direct Payment is a sum of money that is paid to the family of a child/young person with a disability so the parents can buy Short Breaks and is an alternative to using the service providers that the local authority has a contract with to provide services (commissioned services). Therefore, you either receive a direct payment or a short break allocation but not BOTH.

By giving money instead of social care services people have greater choice and control over their lives, and are able to make their own decisions about how their care is provided.

An assessment will need to be undertaken and the case will have to be presented to the Short Break panel before the Direct Payment service is agreed.

Before receiving the Direct Payments the parents will be taken through the process by an organisation called Reaching Out East. Waltham Forest have arranged for them to oversee the Direct Payment process.

If you need information or help about direct payments you can contact Reaching Out East:

Reaching Out East, Direct Payments Team  
The North Hub  
58 Hall Lane  
London, E4 8EU  
Tel: 0208 519 6369

E-mail: [directpayments@reachingouteast.org.uk](mailto:directpayments@reachingouteast.org.uk)  
[www.reachingouteast.org.uk/direct](http://www.reachingouteast.org.uk/direct)



## TRANSPORT AND SHORT BREAKS.

We are unable to provide transport to access short breaks. Some providers may provide transport for its service users at an extra cost. You will need to check with the providers individually to see if this is a service they provide.

Your child may be able to have a Freedom Pass which is for people with disabilities and gives reduced cost or free travel on most public transport in London. For further details see **[www.freedompass.org](http://www.freedompass.org)**

Alternatively, if your child is severely disabled and cannot travel on public transport you may be able to receive Dial A Ride, Taxicard or Capital Call cheaper travel, for more information see **[www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround)**

## HOW DO I GET A CARER ASSESSMENT?

You will need to speak to your social worker or any other lead professional about this. If you do not have a professional working you and your family you can apply through the Single Front Door **[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/mash-professionals](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/mash-professionals)**

## WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR MY CHILD IN THE TRANSITION TO ADULT SERVICES?

If your child is receiving a short breaks service they will receive a Transition Assessment when they are aged 17 – 17½ to see if they are eligible for assistance from Adult Social Care based on the national eligibility criteria.

The Transition Assessment will be carried out by the Transition Team who will help young people and their parent's transition into adult social care services from the age of 18 onwards.

If a Transition Assessment is needed before they reach their 18th birthday, Adult Social Care will carry this out based on their needs and the national eligibility criteria.

For further information please contact the Transitions Team on 0208 496 1948.

We are based at Willow House, 869 Forest Road, E17 4HU.

*"Holidays are tough  
re my part time job  
& dad's full time  
job...finding decent,  
experienced enough &  
reliable respite carers  
is often challenging...  
we are currently about  
to use overnight respite  
which will hopefully be  
bliss!"*



*"My son loves being with friends and people in general and having a choice of being included in extra-activities can only help to his development as well as his understanding."*



## WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM UNHAPPY WITH THE DECISION OR THE PROCESS?

The first step is to talk to the Short Breaks Co-ordinator or your Social Worker / Early Help Officer to share your concerns and together try to resolve the matter. If you feel the assessment did not fully cover your family's circumstances or your circumstances have changed you can discuss this further with them and ask them to address this. All families can of course request an assessment or re-assessment at any time and you will need to comply with this process.

If you wish to make a complaint or a suggestion this is covered in the complaints procedure on the London Borough of Waltham Forest website [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/complaints)

## REVIEWS AND CONSULTATIONS

We recognise and understand that circumstances change over time and that families' and children's view and needs also change and develop. For this reason, it is vital that services are regularly reviewed. This will also help to ensure that services are provided to families with fairness. We want to make sure that our Short Break services focus on improving outcomes and life opportunities through working together with parents, children and young people, our providers and partners.

For this to happen, we will:

- Continue to ask children, young people and their families for their views on services provided, and how we can improve them.
- Continue to ask service providers to support us in representing children and young people, so that their views are heard and that they receive high quality services which meet their needs and expectations
- Continue to meet with service providers and ask them for specific information i.e. data to make sure their services make a positive difference to families and that they focus on achieving positive results for all children and young people who use their services.
- Consult with parents and carers through the Waltham Forest Parents' Forum and other organisations in the borough.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

We recognise the importance of having well trained staff. The courses we offer are designed to raise skills and awareness about disability. As a result, staff gain in confidence and skill in dealing with the needs of disabled children/young people.

We plan to continue to develop and offer training opportunities to our Short Break providers and other community based groups and clubs.

## SHAPING SHORT BREAKS SERVICES FOR THE FUTURE:

The feedback from the consultation and the results of the co-production events have recommended a number of areas to be further developed. We will continue to work in partnership with children, young people, families and services to act upon the recommendations and improve the short breaks we offer.



### OUR PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPING SHORT BREAKS:

1. Increase confidence amongst disabled children and their families to use universal services by improving what is on offer; making it easily available and being able to receive it.
2. Support Universal services to have a strong policy to include children with disabilities in the services they offer.
3. Make sure that what we expect as positive results (outcomes) that make a difference to children's and families lives are linked to the plans we have in place for them i.e. Education, Health and Care Plans.
4. The re-commissioning process for Short Breaks services needs to identify what positive results we want for disabled children / young people and how service providers will make these happen.
5. Jointly develop a plan to support parents to cope and manage challenging behaviour more confidently and with better results.
6. Continue to meet and consult with parents, children, schools and stakeholders to expand the Local Offer with more services for children with disabilities.



## A GUIDE TO LEGISLATION (THE LAW):

### DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1995

[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/DDA-1995](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/DDA-1995)

### SECTION 25 OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS ACT 2008

[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/s25cyp-act1995](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/s25cyp-act1995)

This requires Local Authorities to provide services to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children to continue to do so, or to do so more effectively, by giving them breaks from caring.

### EQUALITIES ACT 2010

[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/ea2010](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/ea2010)

This is a legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

### THE BREAKS FOR CARERS OF DISABLED CHILDREN REGULATIONS 2011

[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/Breaks-CDC-reg2011](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/Breaks-CDC-reg2011)

These require Local Authorities to provide, as appropriate, a range of;

- Day care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere.
- Overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere.
- Educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes.
- Assistance to carers in the evening, weekends and school holidays.

### THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT 2014

[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/CFAct2014](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/CFAct2014)

Part 3 refers to children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities.

## PLEASE TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

We would like to hear your views and opinions on short break services and we value your feedback. We will be holding consultation events and open meetings with parents, children and young people throughout the year and will keep you informed of these.

The next formal review of this statement will begin after November 2016 in order to be published in time for 2017/18.

We welcome comments at any time and will undertake to keep them in time for the next consultation. Please contact the Short Breaks Co-ordinator.



## WHO CAN HELP/FURTHER INFORMATION

Main Contacts and Links:

**[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/localoffer)**

London Borough of Waltham Forest Short Breaks Co ordinator

Tony Connole

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Juniper House 221 Hoe Street

Walthamstow E17 9PH

Tel: 020 8496 3515

E-mail: **[anthony.connole@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:anthony.connole@walthamforest.gov.uk)**

Waltham Forest Parent Forum (support for parents and carers). Office at:

92 Leyton Green Road,

Leyton,

London E10 6DA

**[www.walthamforestparentforum.com](http://www.walthamforestparentforum.com)**

London Borough of Waltham Forest – Children and Families' Services,

Referral and Assessment Services, Juniper House, 221 Hoe Street,

Walthamstow, London E17 9PH. 020 8496 1266

E-mail: **[MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk)**

**[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/pages/servicechild/mash-professionals.aspx](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/pages/servicechild/mash-professionals.aspx)**

Early Help Service 020 8496 3511

E-mail: **[EarlyHelp@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:EarlyHelp@walthamforest.gov.uk)**

Direct Payments Advice

Reaching Out East

The Direct Payments Team

The North Hub

58 Hall Lane

London E4 8EU

E-mail: **[directpayments@reachingouteast.org.uk](mailto:directpayments@reachingouteast.org.uk)**

Tel: 0208 519 6369

**[www.reachingouteast.org.uk](http://www.reachingouteast.org.uk)**