

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



Waltham Forest

Since 1 April 2011 local authorities have had to provide breaks from caring for parents or carers of disabled children and young people. (The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulation April 2011). This is so that parents and carers feel supported to carry on caring for their child at home.

Local Authorities must also write a statement about their short breaks which explains:

- Who can use the service?
- How you can access a short break?
- How the service meets your child's needs?
- What is available?

Lots of different people have helped to write this statement including parents, disabled young people and professionals and it will be updated every year. If you would like to read a more detailed version of the statement please refer to the main document.

WHAT IS A SHORT BREAK?

A short break is a service that will allow a child or young person with a disability to have a fun and active break from their family or carer which will also give the carer a break from their caring responsibilities. It usually last from a few hours during the day, in the evening, overnight, at weekends, or school holiday daytime activities.

WHO CAN HAVE A SHORT BREAK?

A short break is for families living in Waltham Forest who have a disabled child or young person aged 0–18. Please refer to the levels of short break support detailed in the London Borough of Waltham Forest Short Breaks Service Statement document.





HOW DO YOU GET A SHORT BREAK?

Universal Services

There are a large number of short break services that a disabled child can access without a referral or assessment. We understand that not all children and young people need or want to attend play schemes or activities specifically designed for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs. Some children and young people would prefer to attend activities with their friends from school or local area, or with their siblings.

These activities are 'universal services' can be found at children's centres, swimming pools, leisure centres, youth groups, parks, playgrounds and community centres and providers have a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments to enable disabled children to access these activities. Wherever possible these opportunities should be used as a first point of call.

Details of available services can be found:

- in the Family Information Directory
www.walthamforest.gov.uk/cypd
- By contacting Early Help **www.walthamforest.gov.uk/earlyhelp**
- on the Local Offer website in the 'Places to go, things to do' section.

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.

www.walthamforest.gov.uk/localoffer

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 and that they don’t mind paying if it helps their child and family; if they can afford this.

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 giving families the independence and choice to make their own decisions is important and we wish to support parents to have more freedom to do this and achieve the resilience they want and need. It is our aim in co-producing this statement to ensure that services respond to what our families tell us they want and need and in particular to help families to become stronger and more confident in finding solutions and having the same opportunities as other families in Waltham Forest.

WHAT IF MY CHILD NEEDS SPECIALIST SERVICES?

If you feel your child needs more support due to their complex needs then you can apply for more specialist short breaks that the local authority has commissioned. You can do this in a number of ways

1. Referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

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

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 appropriate service.

1. Self-referral :

There is a form that can be downloaded at www.walthamforest.gov.uk/cypd and follow the link to the Disability Zone, or you can get one from the Short Break Coordinator on 020 8496 3515.

Complete the form and send this directly to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub address on the form.

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 details the level of DLA that has been allocated to your child/young person) or a letter from the consultant detailing your child/young person’s diagnosis.





Please write as much information as you can so that an appropriate decision can be made.

If you need further advice and help with this you can also contact the Short Break Coordinator. Tel: 0208 496 3515 or email: anthony.connole@walthamforest.gov.uk

HOW ARE YOUR CHILD'S NEEDS ASSESSED?

We think it is important to share out the short breaks in a fair way. Some families will need more support than others because of their needs and circumstances. Therefore if more information is needed then an assessment will be carried out for either:

- An initial or core assessment carried out by a Social Worker
- An Early Help Assessment carried out by an Early Help Officer

The outcome of the assessment and the recommendation from the worker, including the views of the family and child will be presented to the Short Breaks Panel for a decision.

WHAT HAPPENS AT PANEL?

The panel meets monthly to assess new referrals and also to review the packages that have already been offered to families. Applications are presented and then a decision is made based on the child's needs, and the family may be offered a package of hours. Most packages last a year but may be shorter depending on when you apply.

After the panel a letter will then be sent to the family telling them of the decision.

If you have been allocated 'hours' then you will need to look through the list of providers, decide which ones would be suitable for your child and then contact the providers directly.

You can use as many providers as you like as long as you do not use more hours than you have been given. Parents should be aware that any unused hours may be reduced or removed.

For example in one year a child can use 25 hours ELHAP Adventure playground, 35 hours at Waltham Forest Asian Mothers' Group, 10 hours at The Limes, 30 hours at Resources for Autism etc. or the child/young person can use all 100 hours with the one organisation if they so wish.

If you have not been allocated hours the letter will state why and where you can look for services.



WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

A variety of short breaks are available including:

- Weekend or overnight residential short breaks
- Holiday play schemes
- After school provision
- Adventure play
- Buddying and befriending
- Disability specific services (for the visually, hearing and mobility impaired)

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to events and activities or make arrangements for this to happen; the borough **will not** provide transport for you.

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.

WHAT IF I WANT TO USE DIRECT PAYMENTS?

The aim of a Direct Payment is to give more flexibility in how services are provided.

If you receive Direct Payments for your child then you cannot also have a package of hours to use for accessing the borough's commissioned services.

You are able to access the services in the short break directory but you must use your direct payments to pay for that service.

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
Website: www.reachingouteast.org.uk/direct



WHAT IF MY CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE?

Sometimes family circumstances change suddenly or urgent new needs arise. If so, it may be possible to change your short breaks provision, but this will need to be reassessed. To do this you will need to contact either:

- Your social worker.
- The Early Help service if your case has been allocated to them.
- The Short Breaks Coordinator.

Your case can then be re-assessed and presented at the short break panel for further consideration.

In some cases, if it is deemed appropriate an 'out of panel' decision will be made, but this will need to be agreed at the next Short Term Breaks Panel.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I'M NOT HAPPY WITH THE PANEL'S DECISION OR THE SHORT BREAKS PROCESS?

The first step is to talk to the Short Breaks Co-ordinator or your Social Worker/Early Help Officer to share your concerns to try to resolve the matter.

If you feel the assessment did not adequately 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.

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



PLEASE TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

We would like to hear your views on short break services and will be holding regular consultation events and open meetings throughout the year. If you would like to come to one of these sessions, then please contact us.

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.

WHO CAN HELP/FURTHER INFORMATION

Main Contacts and Links:

www.walthamforest.gov.uk/index/care/childrenandfamilies.htm

London Borough of Waltham Forest Short Breaks Coordinator
Juniper House
221 Hoe Street
Walthamstow
E17 9PH

Tel: 020 8496 3515

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

London Borough of Waltham Forest – Children and Families’ Services,
Referral and Assessment Services, Juniper House,
221 Hoe Street, Walthamstow, London E17 9PH. 0208 496 1266

Early Help Service 020 8496 3511

www.walthamforest.gov.uk/earlyhelp

Waltham Forest Parent Forum (support for parents and carers).
Office at: 92 Leyton Green Road, Leyton, London E10 6DA

Website: **www.walthamforestparentforum.com**

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**

Tel: 0208 519 6369

www.reachingouteast.org.uk

