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# Slough Children First's Short Breaks Statement 2024

## Introduction

Slough Children First's short break statement applies to all children with disabilities and young people aged 4-19 who live in Slough.

Parents and carers with children under 4 would be encouraged to explore the local offer and services available via universal services.

This document has been designed to provide information about:

- The range of short breaks currently available in Slough
- Who can access short breaks
- How short breaks meet the needs and aspirations of children with disabilities, young people and their families in Slough.

## Legislation

In 2014, a new law came into force that has implications for short breaks.

Some children/young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN). This is a legal document that describes their educational needs and the provision and support required to help meet those needs in an educational setting.

This law is being replaced by an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan that brings together in one place the three main types of support that a child might be receiving.

If a child with an education, health and care plan is getting short breaks, then the details must be set out in the plan.

Every local authority must publish a 'local offer' setting out what support services are available to families. [View our Local Offer](#)

More information on the Children and Families Act 2014 can be found on the following link: [Children and Families Act 2014](#)



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## What is a short break?

Short breaks provide children and young people with disabilities the opportunity to have fun and take part in positive experiences and develop new skills and independence.

As part of Slough's SEND Local Offer, Slough Children First Local Offer applies to all children with disabilities and young people aged 4-19 who live in Slough. They should:

- Give your child or young person a valuable and enjoyable experience away from your daily life, which contributes to their personal, social and life skills development
- Give you a valuable break to allow you to rest or take up other interests or spend time with your other children.

Short breaks can come in different forms and type of short break will depend on your child, young person and the family.

These breaks can include:

- Leisure activities outside of the home
- Daytime care in the home or elsewhere
- Specialist activities during the evenings, weekends and school holidays.

## Definitions

The term 'child' is used as an inclusive term to refer to all 0-18 year olds with a disability.

Where the context specifically relates to older children with a disability the term 'young person' is used.

In the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'Long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months
- 'Normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.



Therefore, children and young people are eligible for a short break in Slough if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

This may include a physical or learning disability, a hearing or visual impairment. It includes children with Autism and children who may have challenging behaviour as a result of their learning disability. It also includes children who have complex health needs and who may have palliative, life limiting or life threatening condition.

## Vision

Slough Children First has a vision for our Short Break Service for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities and this is:

“To enable as many children with disabilities and young people as possible to remain living at home with support from community services to lead normal family lives and have access to universal settings or more specialist local services in accordance with their wishes.”

We are therefore committed to:

- Ensure that we listen to all children with a disability, act on their views and provide them with choices wherever possible
- Ensure that all disabled children and their families are supported to take part in and enjoy local community life and wherever possible use local childcare facilities, leisure and recreational activities
- Ensure that as parents/carers you are supported to become equal partners in making decisions about service development and priorities to enable us to work together to improve our services
- Ensure we provide you with useful information when you need it.

In Slough we aim for all professionals to work in partnership with families, children and young people following person centred principles to provide effective short breaks that meet the needs of all disabled children and their families.

## How do I find out about short breaks?

There are currently various ways to find out about short breaks:

- We will continue to advertise short breaks as widely as possible
- We will ensure that the Slough Local Offer holds the relevant information about short breaks and childcare. This can be accessed through [our Local Offer](#)
- The Slough Family Information Service – <http://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/localoffer> provides details of activities



and short breaks in targeted or universal settings. You can also contact them on 01753 476589 or [FIS@slough.gov.uk](mailto:FIS@slough.gov.uk)

- Ask another parent perhaps through contacting Special Voices or attending one of their coffee mornings. Special Voices can be contacted on 07990 693439 or [info@specialvoices.co.uk](mailto:info@specialvoices.co.uk)
- Ask a professional who is supporting you and your child and they will be able to find out for you
- Contact Commissioning on [commissioning@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk](mailto:commissioning@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk)

It is very important that you book your child's activities as early as possible to avoid disappointment and to ensure any necessary specific training can be provided.

## Range of short break provisions

As children and young people with a disability have varying needs and diverse family settings, we set out to provide a wide range of short break provision to meet those needs.

We have looked at our information about the number of children with disabilities living in Slough and we have listened to what parents/carers, young people, the voluntary sector and other professionals have told us about what short break children want and families need.

Types of short breaks in Slough include:

### Universal and targeted short breaks

- After school clubs
- Weekend clubs
- School summer holiday clubs

### Social work referral only short breaks

- Overnight stays (with an approved foster carer or in a residential unit)
- Daytime stays (with an approved foster carer or in a residential unit)
- Support in the home

We have made funding available to a range of organisations that contribute to an affordable programme of activities that offer regular short breaks across the year, with a greater number of hours provided during the summer holidays.



Some families, whose child's needs are severe, profound and have been assessed as needing a break from caring, may choose to have a direct payment instead of a service provided by us.

A direct payment enables families to arrange and pay for the type of short break support that is best for them. For example, some families use a direct payment to employ a personal assistant to give them some 'time out' from caring responsibilities.

For simplicity, fairness and ease of understanding, Slough has classified its short break provision into three categories:

### **Level 1 – Universal services**

Universal or mainstream services are opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to successfully access universal mainstream settings with or without additional support.

These are services that any child with or without a disability can access. If support is required this help may be given in the form of a support worker to provide additional care, specialist training and advice or the provision of specialist equipment.

An assessment will be undertaken by the professionals who are supporting your child and this will be presented to Slough Children First to consider.

Requests for support should be forwarded to Slough Children First, c/o Commissioning, Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 2EL.

Access to universal services such as leisure centres, libraries, playgrounds, youth clubs, children's centres, extended school clubs, holiday clubs, childcare and uniformed clubs such as scouts and guides is very important for disabled children and their families, and as many children and young people as possible should be able to use these services.

Work has been undertaken to ensure that universal services are accessible and welcoming children with disabilities and their families.

Awareness training has been accessed by some providers to help their services to be more inclusive. Access is self-referral but it is important that you talk to the provider about your child's needs so they can understand what additional support maybe required for your child to participate in and enjoy the activities.

You will need to find out if there is a place available for your child, or whether you will need to put his/her name down on a waiting list as generally it is a question of first come first served.



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There are many types of clubs and activities available at this level so to find out what is available in Slough Local Offer at [www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/localoffer](http://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/localoffer) or if you would prefer to speak to someone about services available, phone the Family Information Service on 01753 476 589.

### **Level 2 – Targeted services**

Targeted services are groups that have specialised in the provision of short breaks for children and young people with disabilities.

Children and young people accessing these services can range from those having no formal assessment, to providers' initial assessment or an Early Help Assessment.

After receiving very positive feedback about the choices and range of activities in previous years, we have allocated funding for short breaks to organisations to provide activities after school, at weekends and during the school holidays.

These organisations include:

- Arbour Vale School
- Camp Mohawk
- The Beehive Foundation
- Breakaway (residential respite home, part of Slough Children First)

As part of our agreement with these organisations they are required to provide quarterly feedback from both parents/carers and children and young people, as well as accounts and data to inform us about participation and the development of future services.

### **Level 3 – Specialist services**

Specialist services are designed for children and young people with complex levels of need and therefore require a social care and/or health assessment.





## Short Break Service Diagram

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Universal services (open to all children and young people with and without an additional need/ disability)	Targeted services (Children with additional needs / disability. Aged 4-19 years)	Specialist services
No assessment necessary unless additional provision is required	Providers (supported short breaks) or Early Help Assessment	Assessment undertaken by social care and/ or health
Children's centres, sport, youth & leisure, libraries, childcare, holiday activities Max Card	Arbour Vale School Camp Mohawk Beehive Foundation Breakaway	Direct Payments Specialist Health Services Breakaway Short Break providers by the Slough Children First Commissioning Team for care or short breaks overnight stays

## How much will the service cost?

**Level 1** – For universal services, you will pay the full rate charged by the individual service providers

**Level 2** - For targeted services, the Local Authority will have subsidised the services so that you will pay a reduced fee for the activities. Details of the charges can be found by contacting the organisation.

**Level 3** – For specialist services, families will have an assessment of need. The cost for this level will be met by Slough Children First.

Universal, targeted and specialist prices are set by the providers. Slough Children First works hard with the providers to ensure the prices are reasonable.

Families should be encouraged to use disability allowances to enable their children and young people to participate in fun and interesting activities whilst simultaneously providing a break from caring for the parents and carers.

Parents and carers of Children under 4 years of age are encouraged to use universal services which can be found on the Slough Local Offer.



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## Short break service reviews

Slough Children First is in the process of reviewing how funding is allocated; to Short break providers for future service. Our ambition is to ensure there are a broad range of services available for all to access.

At present, funding has been allocated to different providers and it is necessary to review the services offered to children and families on a regular basis. The providers are required to send us your feedback and your child's feedback every year if you have used the service. How this is achieved for our three levels is explained below.

**Level 1** – We have allocated funding to provide additional support for short breaks within the universal services based on the needs of the child and this is also open to children under 4 years of age.

**Level 2** – The providers for targeted services have been commissioned by Slough Children First and these services will be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure they are still meeting the needs of children and young people of ages 4-19 years and providing best value for money. Your feedback and feedback from your child about services you have used is very important to us.

**Level 3** – If you receive specialist short breaks this will be regularly reviewed and is subject to change based on presenting needs. A recommendation may be made that needs can be met by a Level 2 service.





## Information and contact details for targeted services

Organisation	Activities	Email address	Phone number
Arbour Vale School	Various activities including dance, drama, media clubs, trips to Thames Valley Adventure Playground, Tenpin bowling.	<a href="mailto:deangray@arbourvale.slough.sch.uk">deangray@arbourvale.slough.sch.uk</a>	01753 515 566
Camp Mohawk	Indoor and outdoor activities including a sensory room, soft play and adventure playground.	<a href="mailto:info@campmohawk.org.uk">info@campmohawk.org.uk</a>	0118 940 4045
Beehive Foundation	Various activities and play schemes.	<a href="mailto:sandrapbeehive@gmail.com">sandrapbeehive@gmail.com</a>	01753 539 062
Breakaway	Indoor and outdoor activities at the respite home including a sensory room and outdoor play equipment.  Additional activities take place outside of the home throughout the year including day trips in the summer holidays.	<a href="mailto:Ranbir.Sidhu@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk">Ranbir.Sidhu@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk</a>	01753 825 365

## Information for parents/ carers – your questions answered

### How do I know my child's needs will be met?

The service provider will be expected to ensure that your child is included in all the activities on offer at the setting.



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This will be subject to undertaking any risk assessments and where necessary arranging for suitable additional support, equipment and/or training specific to your child's needs.

Please contact the short break providers directly for targeted services/ to find out about cost and availability of their short breaks.

For further information, contact the Slough Family Information Service on 01753 476589 and/or visit [www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/localoffer](http://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/localoffer)

### **Can my child have urgent access to a short break?**

Urgent access to the short break service may be necessary in some instances and this will be through the child's social worker or specialist nurse or the service for children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Where necessary, urgent care can be arranged making best use of current providers including in-house services in accordance with the child's needs and the presenting situation.

### **Is transport available?**

It is the parents/carers responsibility to provide transport, however as transport can be difficult for some families, we have worked closely with 'Out and About,' our community transport provider, to assist with transport arrangements.

Information about access can be found via their website <https://www.sloughcommunitytransport.com/outings-and-events> or by telephone on 01753 691 131.