



ISLINGTON

FEBRUARY 15, 2024

Personal Budget and Direct Payments

OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE 2024

ISLINGTON DISABLED CHILDREN'S SERVICE

LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON

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Section 1. Personal Budget and Direct Payments Guidance

Overview - Different Types of Support

Eligible families can access a Personal Budget in 4 different ways:

1. Notional (commissioned services)
2. Managed Account
3. Direct Payment
4. A combination of the above

The decision as to which is the best option for the family will be dependent on individual family circumstances.

1. **Notional Budgets** are often through commissioned services. The Disabled Children's Service have a framework agreement of providers who can provide 1-1 and short breaks (after-school, weekend, and holiday provision), with agreed hourly rates.

These can be accessed by directly approaching the providers with the individual requirements of the family and working with them to agree an appropriate support package.

These providers often come with a more expensive hourly rate, but they do not require the family to manage their own funds, and these providers are quality assured, and contract managed through commissioning.

2. **Managed accounts** are an option for families, who would like to recruit their own support worker, or who may have someone in mind, but who don't want to fully manage the money themselves. Families that have direct payments but have history of mismanaging funds could be changed to a managed account. They can also be used by families, who want to use an agency, but have a direct relationship with the agency themselves. In these circumstances, families do not have to use the Islington framework.

In these circumstances, if not using an agency, the family will still be the employer of the support worker and will be responsible for all that entails.

Please note, if the family decide to use an agency and does not use the framework, then those providers will not be quality assured, and contract managed by commissioning.

3. **Direct Payments** are where the family manage the money themselves. If families choose to do this, then they must be fully aware of the risks and responsibilities of doing this. They can still use a payroll company with this option (and indeed it is advised).

Support Planners (SP) and Social Work (SW) Assessments

Support Planners (SP) are based in the Disabled Childrens Social Work Team and are responsible for undertaking person centred support planning with families following an assessment by a Social Worker (SW), or a Children in Need (CIN) review providing brokerage (sourcing and putting services in place) and supporting families to implement their plan. It is expected that Personal Budget (PB) Support Plans are finalised within 20 working days from the completion of a Children and Family Assessment or Review.

It's essential that SWs and FSRPs provide parents with a copy of the SAQ guidance and factsheets for parents and ensure they fully explain the SAQ assessments process to families, so they understand how levels of need are identified under this assessment framework. A copy of children and family assessment and SAQ should first be sent to line managers to review before these are sent to a family at the 40 working day assessment timescale. Its important families have 5 days to review and provide feedback on the assessment and SAQ before a manager authorises the assessment within 45 working days.

The expectation is for a SP to be allocated as early as possible during the SW assessment to enable the family and SP to build a relationship. The allocated SW should alert the Direct Payments Manager and the OM as soon as it becomes clear that additional support is required and threshold for a Personal Budget is met.

Support Planners and Family Support and Reviewing Practitioners role in Support Planning

Family Support and Reviewing Practitioners (FSRP) who support families where social work support is no longer required, but there is a personal budget in place are also responsible for undertaking support planning with families following a review of a personal budget support plan.

Prior to the support planning the SP or FSRP will read the most recent Social Work Assessment. All teams aim to work in person centred way to ensure Children and families are at the centre of the support planning process, building on family strengths.

The aim of support planning is to identify suitable activities, services, and provisions to achieve agreed outcomes and meet the Child's and family's support needs (as identified by the SW). It is expected for all provisions/activities/services to be good value for money. Where possible the use of mainstream provision is encouraged with additional support if needed.

The expectation is to provide the family with choices of activities, services and provisions and set up taster sessions where required. Support Planners will use person centred planning resources in this process. It is the Support Planners responsibility to ensure plans fully reflect the needs of the child and family as outlined in the assessment i.e. if holiday periods are especially challenging for the family, then more support should be included in the plan for those

particular times. The plan needs to clearly show how identified services will achieve desired outcomes.

The budget is indicative only. It may be that not all the budget is required to meet needs identified in the assessment. Occasionally more funding may be required due to complexity of a child's needs or if there is a need for a very specialist provision. In this case the need for a plan to be over budget needs to be evidenced in the assessment/plan and a rationale provided to the Education, Health and Care Management Board (EHCMB); in the referral and decision form and the Quality Assurance (QA) checklist, which quality assures the paperwork to the board.

During the first meeting the Support Planner will explain options for support available. Where families want direct payments the Support Planner will direct them to the resources available which explains the family's responsibilities with regards to Direct Payments.

If the family do not want a Direct Payment, the Support Planner will discuss available commissioned services with the family.

If the family decide on a Direct Payment, the Support Planner will discuss the Direct Payment Agreement, Pre-Paid Cards, and Financial Monitoring arrangements.

The Support Planners and family agree on a Support Plan to be presented to EHCMB.

Reviewing and Updating Plans

Support Plans are reviewed at a minimum annually, although can be more often as directed by EHCMB. This may be done by the Social Worker if the child is still held by DCT, or by the FSRP if the family have been stepped down to the Family Support and Reviewing Team.

The SW Co-ordinator in FRST will track when Annual Reviews are due and trigger a reminder to the FSRP holding the case.

If the family are held by the reviewing team, the first step is to hold an annual CIN review meeting with the family and the professional network.

The aim of this meeting is to look at:

1. What has gone well?
2. What has not gone well?
3. Where the child is progressing in relation to the agreed outcomes.

It is essential that during the CIN review process every effort should be made to ascertain the views and wishes of the disabled child. This may require observing the child in different environments (home, school or play-scheme), using their preferred form of communication and consulting with key people in their lives. The CIN Review also captures the parents/carer's ability and capacity to manage their child's personal budget, direct payment arrangement employment responsibilities and are adhering to the requirements for monitoring a PB as set out by the council.

Following this meeting, the FSRP will agree new outcomes and goals with the family and young person (if appropriate). They will enter these into a new support plan and will update the provision/services to meet these new goals as appropriate. This must be done in a person-centred way, again building on family strengths.

CIN plans should contain SMART goals and if the CYP is aged 14+ the Progression to Adulthood outcomes should also be included.

The same principles as mentioned earlier regarding the indicative budget also apply here as when it is a new plan.

It will also be discussed with the family options of receiving support and if they have been receiving Direct Payments, and monitoring that has taken place. The family may choose to change from Direct Payments to Commissioned services (or vice versa) and this can also be discussed with the family.

If the family choose to move to Direct Payments at this point, they should be directed to the Direct Payment resources and the FSRP will discuss their responsibilities.

Children and Family Assessment and updating SAQs.

- Ideally C&F assessments and SAQs for CWD, who access a personal budget, should be updated every 3 years or:
- If then a CYP transfers at key stages within their education i.e. progression from primary to secondary school.
- or the disability needs of the Child/Young Person change significantly.
- or there is a significant change in family circumstances, which affects the family's ability to care for their CWD or meet their disability needs.

Review C&F Assessments and Review SAQs

Undertaken by the FSRT should be:

- Proportionate to the CWD needs
- Focus on the impact of the disability upon the CYP
- Include a carer's assessment and sibling's needs
- Include a review and analysis of whether the current Indicative Budget and Support Plan meets the CYP needs and include an evidenced based rationale for any increase in IB or support
- Feedback from the professional network across Health, Education and Social Care should also be included, which can be obtained via the child's EHC Plan and EHC Review
- If there are parental capacity and safeguarding concerns or high risks identified within the FSRT review /C&F Assessment, then there should be consideration given to step the CYP up to DCT for a more comprehensive SW Assessment

If there are any disagreements between parents and practitioners regarding the final SAQ assessment indicative budget scoring levels of need, then the SAQ disagreement guidance should be followed, as outlined in the 'SUPPORTED ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (SAQ) PRACTICE GUIDANCE'.

Transfer of cases from DCT to FSRT:

When Social Work involvement is completed on cases, these will be transferred to FSRT. The Support Planner will transfer the case to the FRSP. There will be clear communication of any outstanding tasks with a timeline of completion.

Section 2. Activities and Parental Contributions

Activities and Parental Contributions within Personal Budget CIN Plans

The cost of extra-curricular activities varies and as a general rule it is expected that parents fund these activities, as any parent would do.

In the general population there is an expectation that all children undertake activities, which are funded by their parents. Therefore, there is an expectation that parents of CWD would fund activities for their child just like parents of non-disabled children, however we do acknowledge that some CWD may require specialist activities to meet some specific disability needs and outcomes, therefore we would consider a contribution towards these costs via the use of a personal budget.

Always consider the possibility of accessing universal services, with a support worker, if necessary, rather than specialist services as the default option.

Funding for any specialist activities that applies specifically to CWD agreed as part of the PB should be agreed for a time limited period only, so that it can be reviewed against the desired outcomes for the Child.

All activities / costs should represent good value for money.

All decisions regarding personal budget contributions to activities within personal budgets will be made by the EHCMB based on individual CWD needs and their family's needs, so there is no blanket approach.

It's an expectation that families will also make good use of their DLA benefit for their Disabled Child to meet some costs of activities for their child, however we acknowledge that DLA is not a means tested benefit and should not be included within a personal budget.

It's important that the content of personal budgets is agreed with parents prior to presentation at the EHCMB, however if this is not possible or there are extended negotiations causing delay in plan being agreed, then plan should be submitted with a note of the parent's disagreements.

Education, Health and Care Management Board (EHCMB) - Authorisation of Support Plans

- Prior to a Support Plan going to EHCMB for approval families should be in agreement with the plan. It's important that the content of personal budgets is agreed with parents prior to presentation at the EHCMB, however if this is not possible or there are extended negotiations causing delay in plan being agreed, then plan should be submitted with a note of the parent's disagreements.
- A discussion with the service provider about the suitability of the activity to meet the Child's needs and goals and the availability of spaces and costs is essential.
- Any new activities should ideally have been tried or visited by the family to ensure that is what they want.
- Families should, when the plan includes them employing someone, be very clear about the process, roles, and responsibilities that this entails, and have a clear plan for putting this in place.
- Any commissioned services must be agreed with the relevant organisation, including agreed hours, tasks, and potential start dates.
- Ask family to sign the Direct Payments agreement and pre-paid card agreement, if relevant.
- Family holidays will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances, subject to completion of a holiday request form and where the holidays meet the outcomes identified by the plan.
- In some cases, parental contributions for activities or support will be identified and negotiated with families based on needs within the plan.
- In DCT final support plans are agreed in supervision between the allocated Support Planner, Social Worker, PM or DTM.
- In the FSRT they will be agreed between the FSRP, DTM and DCS Operational Manager (OM). All costings on completed plans must be checked by the Financial Monitoring Officer before the plan is submitted to EHCMB.
- The SW or FSRP drafts the EHCMB referral form on LCS or EHM, completes the form and forwards to their DTM or PM.
- The PMs in DCT or the DTMs in FSRT adds the manager's comments and forwards the form to the OM.
- The OM will check the EHCMB referral form content and will then complete the ECHMB QA checklist section of the form before EHCMB meeting to ensure that the review paperwork has been completed and all options have been explored including:
 1. Agreeing the assessment captures current situation of the child considering if local offer has been used before additional support is required.
 2. Assessment is strength-based and considers what support the family can provide.
 3. The SAQ is in line with the indicative budget and the PB does not exceed the indicative budget.
 4. Proposed service links to the outcomes.

In most cases the total cost of the plan should be less than the indicative budget. Where the proposed plan exceeds the IB this must be raised with the Head of Service before presenting to EHCMB. If an IB does not meet the needs of the child and family; a reassessment should be offered. Any increase to the IB should be proportionate to the increase in needs and changes should be clearly evidenced through the assessment and board referral.

The DCS OM will submit the following paperwork to EHCMB Administrator by 5pm on the Thursday prior to board (late referrals will not be submitted to EHCMB):

- Referral and decision form completed by the SW or FSRP (if stepped down after assessment) and comments added by a PM/DTM and OM
 - C&F Assessment / CIN Review
 - Risk Assessment
 - CIN / support plan QA checklist
- For cases held in DCT and FSRT the OM will present cases to EHCMB for approval.

Education, Health and Care Management Board (EHCMB) – Outcome process

The EHCMB Administrator will upload completed referral and decisions forms to LCS within 48 hours of the meeting. The EHCMB Administrator will send copies of the referral and decision form to both the allocated workers. It is the responsibility of the FSRP or Support Planner to inform the family of the board decisions. Parents can request a copy of the referral and decision form.

If amendments are required to the plan, these will be completed by the allocated worker for the plan. All budget amendments will be completed by the allocated Support Planner or FSRP. If the plan needs to return to the EHCMB, this should be submitted to the next available meeting wherever possible. The process for authorising plans is as outlined above.

Finance Process

Setting up payments process:

1. Payment's request (Direct Payment Form) on LCS completed by Family Support and Reviewing Practitioner or Support Planner/Social Worker.
Only complete this form if there is a signed-off/authorised EHC Management Board Referral and Decision form.
2. Send to the BSU Finance work tray. Quality assurance of the payment request against the Support Plan is completed by the Finance and Monitoring Officer – they will authorise the form and add comments around any existing payments.
3. Once authorised, it will go back into the same work tray. The Payments Officer (BSU Payments Team) then makes the payment.

4. This goes back into the work tray again – the Admin and Finance Officer checks the Payment Request with PRF spreadsheet. This generates a letter for the parents drafted by the DPT and will need to be completed for periodic and one-off payments.
5. The Admin and Finance Officer needs to sign and send the letter to the parents – then scan the letter, upload to LCS and store on documents.
6. Before every pay run:
7. Payments Officer will send proposal pay run to DP Manager.
8. DP Manager checks all new payments are on the pay run and that any payments due to stop have ended and confirm to the BSU that all /is ok by email.
9. BSU emails CYP Finance to request authorisation.

Support Plans - Implementation

Once a Support Plan has been agreed by EHCMB, the Support Planner or FSRP will support the family to set up all of the agreed services/activities, as required. DP Team will advise the Short Break Providers of any new plans agreed for their service.

A copy of the support plan should also be copied by email to Pupil Services (for information only) short.breaks@islington.gov.uk

The allocated FSRP or Social Worker check at 3 months that the family are happy with the support and if using direct payments that arrangements are being managed appropriately. At this stage the Direct Payments Team will complete the 3-month financial monitoring.

Support Plans should not be changed between annual reviews unless there is clear rationale for this (an activity is no longer available, or there has been a significant change in need or family circumstances).

Variations or requested changes to CIN Support Plans and PBs

During the Covid pandemic there has been a need to support families to make variations to their CIN Support Plans and PBs and this is usually in situation where the identified provision in the plan is no longer available for the CWD to access.

If a variation on a plan is required, the outcome and cost should remain the same and only the provision should change.

If the variation results in an increase in cost of a provision or the needs/outcomes change, then the plan would need to be resubmitted to EHCMB.

If a variation is requested by a family, then the SP or FSRP should complete a 'PB Variation Request Form' on LCS or EHM.

PB Variation Request Forms should be sent to the OM for QA and then OM will forward the form to the DPT work tray on LCS or EHM and DPT authorises the form.

Family will then be informed by SP or FSRP of change in Support Plan. Agency should be emailed by the SP or FSRP with change in provision and the DPT copied into the email.

If family has a DP, it will be their responsibility to inform DP worker and Payroll Company of change in working pattern/hours. SP or FSRP will also email Payroll Company and inform DP Team about the change in payments.

Support Plans – Monitoring of Direct Payments

There must be a 3-month review completed on every new Support Plan by the Family Support and Reviewing Practitioner or the Social Worker/Support Planner. This review should consider:

1. Is the family accessing their services? If not, why not?
2. Is there any additional support the family needs to access the agreed services?
3. Should we consider agency support in the interim?

If the family haven't recruited a support worker in 3 months, then they will be moved onto commissioned services.

The FSRP/Support Planner will email the Finance and Monitoring Officer with a short summary of the welfare check.

The Finance and Monitoring Officer, in addition, will then check:

1. Has there been any mismanagement of funds?
2. Is the expenditure in line with the Support Plan?
3. Start the DP Finance Monitoring Risk Assessment on LCS and send to the BSU Direct Payments Team tray.
4. This is picked up by the DP Manager and they will complete the Managers Review.
5. Any required actions followed up with the appropriate team member.
6. If that includes underspend (e.g. due to not recruiting a support worker) then this will be reclaimed from the pre-paid card account. Consideration will be given for plans that have increased spend in holidays and invoices that are paid quarterly/not yet received.

After 9 months, a CIN Review will be triggered (if required).

Invoicing – Payment Process

Any invoices including Crisis Support Invoices coming in:

1. The Admin and Finance Officer receives invoices on Alusta
 - a. The expectation is that providers will put the child's name on the invoice
2. Checks the invoice has been sent to the right budget code
 - a. If not, send to the right budget holder
3. Checks invoice against plan on LCS and sends to DP Manager for sign off
4. Invoices should be addressed to:

Direct Payments Team

London Borough of Islington

Lough Road Children Centre
61 – 71 Lough Road
London
N7 8BZ

Invoicing – Payment of invoices received via email

If the provider sends invoice by email, the invoice should be directly emailed to islington.P2P@p2p.basware.com in PDF format include **Buyer ID: LBI0647M** to be processed by DP Team.

1. If invoices are directly received by the DCT or the FSRT for section 17 crisis requests invoices should be checked by the Social Work Coordinators against the Section 17 Crisis request forms on LCS or EHM and then emailed to islington.P2P@p2p.basware.com.
2. If any section 17 crisis request invoices are received by DCT or the FSRT on the [Alusta system](#) then these should be forwarded to the DPT Manager on Alusta to be coded to EU100 NE86 and authorisation.

Mismanagement of Funds

If there has been mismanagement of funds, this must be discussed with the Direct Payments Manager, the relevant Deputy Team Manager/Practice Manager and depending on where the case is held, the Social Worker.

Prior to discussing with the family, the Finance Monitoring Officer should check that there has not been a mistake with any invoices linked to the support package.

The Family Support and Reviewing Practitioner or the Social Worker (with support of the Support Planner) must talk to the family to highlight the concerns and reiterate the policy around what money can and cannot be spent on.

Monthly monitoring will continue in these circumstances – if misspending of funding continues, then the family will be contacted to explain that this is not acceptable, that the Local Authority will reclaim the funding, and the family will be moved over to a managed account or notional budget.

The Support Planner must keep the relevant Social Worker informed of any discussions that take place with the family if they are not present.

Direct Payment's Team – Preparation for CIN reviews

The DP Team will upload any finance monitoring information to the child's file on LCS. The Social Worker or FSRP should look at this prior to completing the CIN review.

The Support Planner will not routinely attend CIN reviews; they may attend if there are complex plans/issues (exceptional circumstances).

Direct Payments Employment Support

Recruitment of Workers for Families:

Families will manage their own recruitment.

Resources are available through the DP Team to help families with the recruitment and employment of DP workers.

Employment Support

FSRPs and Support Planners will talk to families regarding DBS checks. Islington expects for all people working with children to have satisfactorily completed an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.

It will need to be recorded clearly on the child's file if the family have said that they do not want to have DBS checks completed for their DP workers. DBS checks are free of charge to all families.

If family request a DBS check SP/FSRP should email HR Safeguarding Officer for DBS Link or [use this link](#):

- Click the orange screen
- Organisation Ref: HRDIRECTPAYMENTS
- Organisation Code: leave blank

The HR Safeguarding Officer should be sent all the following ID by email:

- Passport (with relevant visa) or Driving Licence
- Proof of National Insurance number
- Proof of current address

Where there are employment issues with DP workers, the expectation is that families seek advice from the [ACAS website](#) in the first instance or telephone 0808 109 7319.

The FSRP or Social Worker (with support of the Support Planner) will support with any issues families are experiencing with their chosen payroll provider, if the family is unable to resolve

this themselves. The FSRP or the Social Worker will then speak to the DP Team if they are unable to resolve the issue.

The DP Advisor will support with any more complex employment issues that families are unable to resolve, however, this should be a last resort.

Direct Payment's Team and Personal Health Budgets (PHB)

The Continuing Care Team (CCT) will present a request for a Personal Health Budget (PHB) to the Education, Health Care Management Board (EHCMB) following completion of the Nursing Needs Assessment, which identified eligibility and need for a PHB. Once it has been agreed that a PHB is suitable, the family will decide if they want to receive this as a direct payment. The Family will then work with their CCT Nurse to agree particulars of the budget (ie: employ staff directly/buy services directly/use an agency). The final PHB will need to be agreed and signed off by the Children's Commissioning Manager (CCM) for Islington's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

If the child does not have a Social Worker/FSRP, the CCM will submit the final approved PHB together with the child's Personal Health Plan to the Direct Payments Team email lrctdirectpayments@islington.gov.uk. The Direct Payments Team will ensure that the PHB is administered correctly as per the above protocols. The child will be set up on EHM and any documents related to the administration of the PHB will be uploaded to the child's EHM record.

Education, Health and Care Management Board (EHCMB)

Practice Guidance 1 – Holidays

Social Care Application for funding towards the cost of a holiday for children with SEND under section 17 (CA 1989) using a Personal Budget.

A contribution towards the costs of a holiday by Children's Social Care for children will only be considered for agreement where it can be demonstrated that it would support the delivery of the Disability Needs and Outcomes for a child and the Parent Carer. These outcomes would be identified through a social care children and family assessment and documented within the Child in Need or Child Protection Plan.

The cost of the contribution may not be any higher than it would cost the Local Authority to deliver these outcomes locally using other means such as the costs of funding a Support Worker or Personal Assistant pro rata during the proposed family holiday date period within the CWD's current CIN Support Plan and Personal Budget. In other words, if a child being supported to have short breaks during the summer holiday would cost the LA £300 then the amount contributed towards meeting the same outcomes by way of a holiday may not exceed £300. Holiday requests can only be requested for a maximum contribution of £500 per child within the family and can only be requested for CWD who have a Personal Budget.

This guidance is provided to assist Social Workers, Support Planners and Family Support and Reviewing Practitioners and can be used in discussion with parents. It aims to clarify the eligibility criteria that will be used to consider cases. In Islington the Education Health and Care Management Board consider such requests and have the authority to approve them. The Panel can be consulted in advance of any formal application being made where a social worker believes there is evidence to support a reason to deviate from the eligibility criteria below. If the panel agrees to such provision outside of the usual criteria, this would be as an 'exceptional agreement'. The principle set out in the first paragraph above may however not be deviated from regarding the requirement that any provision agreed must demonstrate that it would support the delivery of outcomes for the child.

Eligibility criteria for section 17 funding towards the cost of a holiday

There are 3 kinds of circumstances in which social care could agree to offer financial support to a child with SEND going on a holiday. The assessed situation of the family and the holiday proposal must include one or more of the following criteria:

- A) **So that the main carer gets a complete break in caring.** This would allow the funding normally used to provide the main carer with a break in caring in school holiday times when not going on holiday to pay towards a break in caring through the provision of a holiday, for example if the child would normally have an overnight short break during this time or attend a play scheme the funding for that could go towards the cost of the child going on holiday to be cared for by others.
- B) **So that the main carer gets a break and/or support in caring for a child whilst on holiday.** This would apply where the main carer is also going on the same holiday, so that the child can access activities whilst abroad that would offer the parent a break in caring or share the demand in caring with other relatives or support workers etc. in replacement of what they would have been doing if they had remained at home. In this example the funding normally used to access short breaks in holiday times could be substituted towards costs to be incurred whilst on holiday and spent there instead with the parent having a break in caring during those activities – this could also be to enable the main carer to pay for another relative to join in so that they can all go and it alleviates some pressure on the parent.
- C) **To meet very specific disability related costs of the holiday.** In this situation the cost of the holiday for a family is prohibitive because of the complex needs of a child. For example, the child is wheelchair dependent and the room they need to book costs more or they need more than 1 room because they are taking a support carer or they need to hire a much larger vehicle to travel around. It is likely that the child would already be receiving some form of social care budget at home to accessing short breaks or support a parent in caring at home for the child, so this requires clarity about the difference in cost between the standard cost of this holiday which the parents would pay and then what the additional expense elements are that are linked to the child's disability and how they could substitute care services from their section 17 social care budget allocated to holiday times to put towards the family holiday instead.

Evidence Required by EHCMB

1. Current C&F assessment and Section 17 CIN Support Plan showing break down of provision and cost of support normally allocated during holiday times in the UK.
2. Information about the proposed holiday, all the costs of the holiday and those elements of the cost that the parent is asking Section 17 to fund in substitution of the resources allocated on the support plan and how that will meet the outcomes that are identified in the support plan.
3. Confirmation from parents that Islington Council will not be held liable for any other costs that a holiday might incur, including the cost of cancellations, damage incurred whilst on holiday, medical costs etc.
4. Confirmation that the parents will provide receipts to evidence the expenditure on the elements the Council agreed to fund and agreement to refund any funding allocated that was not utilised.

Holiday Application form (EHCMB)

Example below. The Practitioner completes the form on the child's file on LCS.

Education Health and Care Management Board (EHCMB)

Social Care Application for funding towards the cost of a holiday for children with SEND under section 17 (CA 1989) using a Personal Budget

Name of child:	D.O.B:
Name of Parent:	
LCS Number:	
Name of referrer:	

Criteria for application (at least one must apply)

Main carer gets a complete break in caring	<input type="checkbox"/>
Main carer gets a break and/or support in caring for a child whilst on holiday	<input type="checkbox"/>
To meet very specific related costs of the holiday	<input type="checkbox"/>
Request for an exceptional agreement	

Evidence submitted

Current assessment and section 17 support plan	Y <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>
Information about proposed holiday	Y <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>
Parent signed declarations	Y <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>

Detail of usual assessed holiday support	
Cost:	£

Detail of proposed holiday	
Cost:	£
Contribution requested from S.17:	£

How holiday supports delivery of outcomes for child:

Manager's comment:**Declaration from Parent**

I understand that costs, if agreed, will be funded in substitution of holiday support allocated in my child's support plan.

I understand Islington Council will not be liable for any other costs incurred whilst on holiday.

I agree to provide receipts to evidence agreed expenditure and to refund any unused money.

Signature of Parent

Date

Signature of Social Worker

Date

Signature of Deputy Team Manager

Date

New Requests - Overnight Short Break Care and ONSB Placements for CWD

Step by Step Guide to commissioning Overnight Short Break Placement provision:

1. The C&F Assessment evidence the need for overnight respite care and evidence that the CWD is experiencing a severe disturbed sleep condition, which has been diagnosed and assessed by a Clinician and the CWD has undergone a sleep assessment and is prescribed a sleep medication (Action: SW).
2. Placement Request and Specification Form (LCS based form) is drafted as part of the documentation for the Education Health and Care Management Board (EHCMB) (see sections listed below) - BUT NOT YET submitted to Placements Team. (Action: SW).
3. EHCMB referral form and EHCMB QA form is submitted to EHCMB who will consider the request and if they agree that overnight respite care is needed, the case is referred via email to Head of Service for approval to commission. (Action: Co-Chair of EHCMB).
4. If agreed, Head of Service authorises the Placement Specification form on LCS with the recommendation for X (child) to be provided with ONSBs and a suitable fostering placement to be sourced (Action: Head of Service, within 5 days).
5. SW completes the Placement Spec Form and then submits to the Placements Team (Action: SW).
6. Placements Team consider whether child's needs can be met in a fostering family setting. CIN Head of Service permission must be sought by the Placements Team before approaching residential provision (where in-house fostering or IFA provision cannot meet need, we would ask consortium first too). (Action Placement Officer).
7. Residential provision for ONSBs requires Head of Service approval, so if it was not already assessed as needed then it will need separate approval again by HOS.

Section 3. Requesting Section 17 Crisis Packages Practice Guidance

Introduction

From time-to-time emergency situations arise in families and usually families are able to cope from within their own or local community resources.

Occasionally however emergencies are such that families cannot manage from within their existing support networks or using the current levels of support agreed for their child.

In these circumstances it may be necessary for children's social care to offer a crisis support package for a short time or until a full assessment can be completed and if appropriate a longer-term support package can be put in place. The situation in question must be assessed as an emergency and the funding must be strictly time limited. The budget for crisis section 17 payments is held by the OM who must approve the payment. Any extension must be subject to review and authorisation by OM. If it is felt a package will be required for more than 3 weeks, consideration must be given to submitting an interim plan to EHCMB for approval.

Examples of such crisis situations may include:

- A parent suddenly admitted to hospital leaving no-one to care for a child/ren.
- Sudden parental ill health where parent cannot provide care required and child/ren are put at risk.
- An urgent safeguarding situation where there is risk of significant harm and / or risk of family breakdown if additional support is not provided.
- A sudden and severe deterioration in a disabled child's condition and a significant increase in care needs, which may result in a parent being unable to cope and the child may need to be accommodated.
- An urgent need for support to be put in place before the conclusion of an assessment and a support plan can be agreed for example due to the complexity of a child's needs or family situation.

Crisis package authorisation process

Application for a crisis package can be made by either DCT or FSRT.

To apply for a crisis package, a crisis section 17 request form must be completed on LCS or EHM by the allocated Social Worker or Family Support and Reviewing Practitioner and supported by their line manager. The form must detail all the reasons why a crisis payment is required, why alternative options are not appropriate, full costs and timescale and the risks if the support was not provided.

Authorisations for crisis packages are made by the OM who forwards the form to the DPT Manager on LCS or EHM who authorises the form.

Authorisations for crisis packages where there is over £5K crisis spend on a family in the same financial year requires service manager approval.

Authorisations for crisis packages over a £10K crisis spend on a family in the same financial year needs Head of Service approval.

Details of all crisis packages should be entered on the DCS crisis package monitoring spreadsheet by the OM and reviewed 3 monthly by the OM, DCS head of service (HOS) and Finance Business Support Officer.

Crisis payment process

All crisis payments should be coded to the DCT budget code EU100 NE86 and invoices must be forwarded to the DPT Manager for payment on LCS or EHM who will authorise the form on behalf of the DCT OM.

Setting up support

The Direct Payment Team informs the provider via email that the provision is crisis support and that invoices must be sent to the Direct Payments Team and not to the Short Breaks Service.

Where support is via a direct payment arrangement set up by the Direct Payments Team, payments must also be coded to EU100 NE86.

Interim ONSB 'backfill' Funding Request

In situations where a CWD cannot access their allocated ONSBs provider or an ONSB placement has not been sourced yet a Parent/Carer can as an alternative option access some ONSB placement 'backfill' funding of £198.00 per night in line with their current ONSB allocation, which is usually provided pro rata over a 12-month period.

ONSB backfill funds can be used flexibly to fund a direct payment carer or personal assistant or commissioned agency to care for a CWD at home or in the community (over night or daytime hours) to ensure the Parent Carer and family still access a carer's break and the CWD still accesses a short break from their family.

For example, if a CWD who has 2 ONSBs allocated per month could access £396.00 per month funding that could be used flexibly to employ a DP worker or PA.

The Social Worker, Support Planner or Family Support and Reviewing Practitioner should complete an Interim ONSB Funding Request form on LCS or EHM, which must be QA'd and checked by the OM, who will forward the request to the DPT work tray on LCS or EHM so they are aware of any interim invoices or additional Direct Payment funding agreements. The DPT manager will authorise the form on LCS or EHM on behalf of the OM.

The Budget code EU100 NE86 should be utilised when completing an ONSB backfill request form.

ONSBs that have not been utilised by a CWD cannot be banked and utilised more than beyond a 3-month period. Any ONSBs that have not been used or taken beyond more than 3 months cannot be reimbursed to the family.

Rodney Gray

DCS Head of Service & Designated Social Care officer for SEND (DSCO)

15/02/2024

Abbreviations and acronyms

ACAS	The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service
BSU	Business Support Unit
C&F	Child / ren and Family
CA 1989	Children's Act 1989
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CCM	Children's Commissioning Manager
CCT	Continuing Care Team
CIN	Children in Need
CWD	Child /ren with disabilities
CYP	Child or Young Person
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service (previously known as CRB)
DCT	Disabled Children's Team
DP	Direct Payment/s
DPT	Direct Payments Team
DTM	(Social work) Deputy Team Manager
EHC	Education and Healthcare
EHCMB	Education, Health and Care Management Board
EHM	Early Help Module (Early Help social care recording system)
FRSP	Family Support and Reviewing Practitioner
FRST	Family Support and Reviewing Team
HOS	Head of Service (Social Care)
HR	Human Resource/s
IB	Indicative budget
ID	Identity document/s
IFA	In-house Fostering agreement
K (i.e. £5k or £10k)	Thousand pounds Sterling
LA	Local Authority
LCS	Liquidlogic Children's Services (social care recording system)
OBSB	Overnight Short Breaks
PB	Personal Budget
PM	Practice Manager
PED	Personal Education Budget
PHB	Personal Health Budget
PO	Payments Officer
PRF	Payment Request Form
PTM	Payments Team Manager
QA	Quality Assurance
SAQ	Self-Assessment Questionnaire
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SMART	Specific Measurable Achievable Relatable Time-based goals
SP	Support Planner / s
SW	Social Work / er
OM	(Social work) Operational Manager

