

The Children with Disabilities Short Breaks Team

The Children with Disabilities Team are separated into two services: a Statutory Team, and Short Breaks Team.

The Short Breaks team are based in the SEND team, supported by the SEND lead and where all the short break services are based. This document will explain the short break team and the role they play.

The children who are supported by the Short Breaks team are provided short breaks Under Section 17 Children Act 1989, in which case they are not Looked After Children, the 2010 Regulations do not apply and there is no requirement to appoint an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).

A Short Break/Respite enables and supports children and young people with a disability to access services to meet need, to have fun, try new activities, gain independence, and make friends. These services may also provide parents and carers with a short break from their caring responsibilities. Local authorities are required under the Children Act 1989 to provide services designed to give breaks for carers of disabled children. [The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) sets out what local authorities should do to meet their duties in relation to the provision of short breaks.

How the Short Break team is structured and the role of a Short Break Practitioner

The Milton Keynes Short Breaks team is made up of one Manager and four Short Break Practitioners. All team members aim to empower families to access support independently, but can assist with the following:

- Assessing the needs of the child/ren with disability, creating tailored respite care packages
- Setting up Direct Payments
- Attending EHCP Review Meetings with professionals/parent/carers
- Conversing with professionals on behalf of parent/carers
- Signposting to relevant support services
- Completing internal and external referrals

As part of the ongoing work a Children with Disabilities Short Breaks Practitioner would not be able to support a family with:

- Challenging housing decisions that have been made.
- Accessing Short Break **Vouchers** or gaining more Short Break **Vouchers**
- Change decisions made by Education or the Special Educational Needs Team (SEND)

It is important to note that the short breaks practitioner do not have allocated families. We work as a team allocating work to team members on a monthly basis. A Short breaks practitioner will be asking to meet the family twice a year. Once in the family home and once

at the child's EHCP review. The Short breaks plan will be reviewed annually, however can be looked at if there is a change of circumstance or need.

If your child is educated at home or a part of the Educated otherwise other than school (ETOS) then you will be visited once a term by either the short breaks practitioner or team manager

The Short Breaks team may be contacted by other professionals, if they have any worries or concerns about a child. The duty worker may give the family a call to discuss this further. If there are safeguarding concerns then this will be shared with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or the Children with Disability Statutory team managers and depending on the concern, the case could be transferred over for further assessment. This will be carried out by a Social Worker, and then a decision will be made about which team can offer the most appropriate and proportionate support.

Eligibility/Criteria for the Short Break Team?

This is the same as the Children with Disability team which in summary is-

- A child with a disability aged between 0-18 years old.
- A child has an EHCP, if the age for education, and is likely to be dependent on services for life.
- Has substantial and long lasting or permanent physical and/or learning disability.
- The child has a life limiting or life-threatening condition.
- There is significant impact of the caring role on family life, including parents and siblings.

The CWD Short Breaks team will not routinely work with:

- A child with a medical condition which is not permanent or severe.
- A child with social, emotional, and behavioural, mental health or wellbeing difficulties
- A child with ASD or ADHD, where there is significant impact on the child's developmental progress as a direct result of the ASD, or ADHD.

Further details outlining the eligibility criteria can be found on the Milton Keynes Local Offer page:- [Eligibility criteria MKCC CWDT.pdf \(mksendlocaloffer.co.uk\)](https://mksendlocaloffer.co.uk/Eligibility%20criteria%20MKCC%20CWDT.pdf)

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The Short Break Process/Assessment

How to make a referral to the short break team

If a professional has a safeguarding concern about a young person, then a referral needs to be made through [Milton Keynes Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\)](#) and the [Multi-Agency Referral Form \(MARF\)](#) will need to be filled in.

However, if there are no safeguarding concerns and there is a request for short breaks only then you can call or email us:

CWDshortbreaks@milton-keynes.gov.uk

01908 252042 (Monday to Friday, 9:30am – 1pm) Emails will be replied on the afternoon.

Referrals can be made by:

- Parents
- Carers
- Professionals

When calling the Short Breaks Team you will initially be asked the following information:

- For the family's consent for information sharing, with other agencies.
- Child's disability and the impact it has on them, carers, and family.
- Whether they are the age to have an EHCP and the child's status.
- What early years provision/school/further education provision they attend
- What support you feel is required
- Existing support from professionals, family, and friends.
- Contact information for the child, including next of kin and person making referral.
- Any other relevant information.

What happens next?

The outcome of the referral will be shared with the family and be told if this will progress to an enquiry.

If the child/young person does not meet criteria, we will signpost to the relevant services that are available, including the Local Offer Website. [Milton Keynes City Council \(mksendlocaloffer.co.uk\)](#)

Enquiry

The main purpose of the enquiry will be to establish what support may be required and establish if there are any safeguarding concerns. An enquiry form is completed by the duty worker of the Short Breaks team. As a part of this the family will be asked about the young person's needs and if they have an EHCP. The referrer will also be asked about communication, diagnosis and disability. The child's likes, dislikes, aspirations, personality, etc. to understand more about the child/young person and what support might be suitable.

There are also questions in regards to the young person's/parents wishes, if Short Breaks have been accessed before and has the Local Offer been viewed.

This is then sent for authorisation to the team manager for either a Short Breaks episode/assessment or no further action.

If no further action is decided the family will be informed and there may well be signposting to other beneficial services.

If the child or young person is accepted for an assessment, then we will arrange a time to come and visit the family to carry out a full assessment of the child and family's needs. This will include a carers and/or young carers' assessment.

Short Breaks Episode/Assessment

The assessment is child focused and will discuss the level of support need.

Information will be based on three signs of safety questions: what's working well, what are we worried about and what needs to happen. There will also be discussions regarding the impact of the caring for the young person on parents, siblings and wider family members. The worker will ask the family about their support network, social life, employment and benefits.

A decision will be made whether a Short Break Plan should be started or if the process is stopped at this point. The family will be informed of the outcome and recommendations from the worker.

The Short Breaks Plan

The process:

The plan will reflect all that was talked about in the assessment and will give time frames of when to expect the actions will be carried out.

If the Short Breaks Plan identifies that a respite care package is needed, then this will be presented to the Children with Disabilities Resources Panel for a decision to be made. The Short Breaks Practitioner will then inform the family of the outcome and begin the process of setting the care package up. This could be either: via the Direct Payment route, where the families will source their own Personal Assistant or Care Agency, or via Commissioning, where the Children with Disabilities Service will find a Care Agency directly.

The plan will be reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure that the child and family's needs are being met. The review of the plan will usually be a face-to-face meeting. If possible, the subsequent Short Breaks Plan review could be aligned with the Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) or Residential review, creating an opportunity for all professionals involved together with the child and family.

What is included in the Short Breaks Plan:

- Clear and realistic objectives;
- Ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child and views of the family.

- Consideration of options, including but not limited, to Direct Payments;
- State the nature and frequency of services,
- Outline arrangements to review the plan.
- Any services that are provided to the family of the disabled children

Parent Carers assessment:

Parent Carers have a right to have an assessment of need of their own under the [Children and Families Act 2014; section 97 of the Children & Families Act 2014](#) :

- On the appearance of need; or
- Where an assessment is requested by the parent.

Where requested, then the Local Authority must assess whether that parent has needs for support and, if so, what those needs are. The assessment must include whether it is appropriate for the parent to provide or continue to provide care for the disabled child. This will consider the parent's needs for support, other identified needs and wishes. The assessment must also acknowledge:

- The well-being of the parent carer; and
- The need to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child and any other child for whom the parent carer has parental responsibility.

Following assessment, the Local Authority must then decide;

- Whether the parent has needs for support;
- Whether the child has need for support;
- And if so whether those needs could be met (wholly or partly) by services under Children Act 1989, s17.