

NORTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL

SHORT BREAKS STATEMENT

MAY 2018

1. Introduction

This statement is for parents and carers living in North Tyneside who have a child or young person with special educational needs and /or a disability (SEND). It provides information about the short break services in North Tyneside and describes:

- The types of short breaks available
- Who can receive short breaks
- How to access services.

The local authority is required by law to provide a range of short breaks to meet the needs of disabled children, young people and their parents/carers and to produce a short breaks statement. This is set out in the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 (or Short Breaks Regulations 2011). These regulations require the local authority to:

- ensure that, when making short break provision, they have regard to the needs of different types of carers, not just those who would be unable to continue to provide care without a break;
- provide a range of short breaks, as appropriate, during the day, night at weekends and during the school holidays; and
- provide parents with a short breaks services statement detailing the range of available breaks and any eligibility criteria attached to them.

The aim is for all families with disabled children in North Tyneside to be able to live ordinary family lives as a matter of course. Central to achieving this is having a menu of short breaks provision, developed in partnership with families, to meet the needs of disabled children and young people. This Short Breaks Statement was developed in partnership with parents and carers through North Tyneside Parent Carer Forum.

2. What are short breaks?

Short breaks benefit children and young people with SEND and their families. Children and young people are offered enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers to enhance their personal and social development, while parents, carers and families are provided either with a valuable break from their caring responsibilities, or help accessing activities and events with the young person.

Short breaks can occur at different times – during the day or evening, overnight or at weekends. They can span a few hours or last a number of days. Short break support can be offered in various locations e.g. the family home, in community facilities or in a residential setting. The amount of time and services available depend on the needs of each child or young person. Short breaks have the benefit of:

- Promoting the well-being of children, young people and their families
- Helping young people and their families to prepare for adulthood.
- Tackling social isolation
- Developing friendship networks and community participation
- Promoting personal development
- Providing access to leisure facilities

Parents and carers are encouraged and expected to transport their children to and from short breaks services and activities.

The diagram below shows the range of short breaks services available, from universal services available to everyone to specialist building-based respite care for children with the highest levels of need.

Short Breaks Services



3. Short Break Services in North Tyneside

A wide range of universal short breaks services are available in North Tyneside. All parents and carers can obtain the North Tyneside Ease card which provides easy access to libraries and leisure centres, plus discounts. One card offers:

- membership of North Tyneside Council's leisure centres and libraries
- special discounted rates at leisure centres for classes, swimming, gym visits and Contours memberships
- specially selected retail discounts and offers

Families can access these services themselves and there is no need for an assessment.

Good quality childcare can help parents and carers to balance work and family life and give a child a good head-start in learning. North Tyneside has a broad range of nursery provision with providers who offer full and part-time care and education for children aged 0-5 years.

Where more individualised and specialist services are needed they are provided by organisations experienced in working with disabled children. They ensure that each child gets the level of staff support they need to have a safe and enjoyable experience. Examples of the types of individualised and specialist short breaks services are:

- Family and individual one to one support in the home and in the community, for example:
 - providing a sitting service
 - helping with a child's personal care or complex health needs
 - providing an 'extra pair of hands' on shopping trips or
 - accompanying a child to a social activity.
- Holiday schemes such as the specialist holiday scheme for children with autism
- Out of school clubs which offer social and group activities outside of usual school hours

Specialist overnight short breaks help to keep families together by offering children a break, or a regular series of breaks, from the family environment. This can help prevent family breakdown or a child being placed in foster care. For children to be offered respite care there may have been some family crisis or emergency, such as a family illness, or the parents may be finding their child's behaviour particularly difficult to manage or they may be struggling to cope with their caring responsibilities. Specialist overnight short breaks can be within a residential or foster placement or, for children with life-limiting conditions, with a specialist palliative care provider. Specialist building-based / overnight respite care is one way of providing a short break. Respite care can therefore be one part of an integrated and co-ordinated approach to meeting the needs of the family.

4. What parents say about Short Breaks

One parent who uses a play scheme in the holidays says:

'My son uses a school based play scheme in the school holidays. The staff and environment are familiar which make it easier for him to relax and enjoy himself. He has the opportunity to socialise with children of different ages as well as some of his classmates. It is expensive at £40 for 6 hours, but worth it as childcare option for complex children are hard to find.'

Another parent gets support from her own mum to give a break:

‘ Wednesdays my mum collects my youngest two children from school, takes them to her house for tea and then to Brownies.’

Many parents choose to use a direct payment:

‘ We use direct payments to pay for a personal assistant to take our daughter to activities during school holidays.’

5. Where to find information about services and how to access them

Parents and carers can find information about Ease Cards, childcare, specialist providers and the whole range of services and support for children and young people with a special educational need or disability at the [North Tyneside Local Offer Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\)](#).

6. Who can be eligible for specialist services?

For children with higher levels of need, who may require specialist services, an assessment is required before a short break is provided. This assessment is carried out by a social worker and it carefully considers the needs of the child and family. It considers at the family’s circumstances and whether a short break would have a positive impact on the family. The type of short break that someone may be eligible to receive depends on the assessed needs of the particular child, the needs of the parent or carer and their family circumstances.

Children and young people may be eligible for specialist services 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 Asperger's Syndrome, children who have challenging behaviour as a result of their learning disability and children who have complex health needs or a palliative, life-limiting or life-threatening condition.

The following criteria are considered in assessing the need for parents and carers to access specialist short break services so they can have a break from their caring role:

- The needs of other siblings in the family and the impact on them of having a brother or sister with SEND.
- The level of resilience of the main care givers and what support they require to maintain this.
- The resources available in the immediate family, the extended family and their wider social network.
- The employment situation of parents and carers and the impact on their caring role.

The needs of the child or young person are considered including:

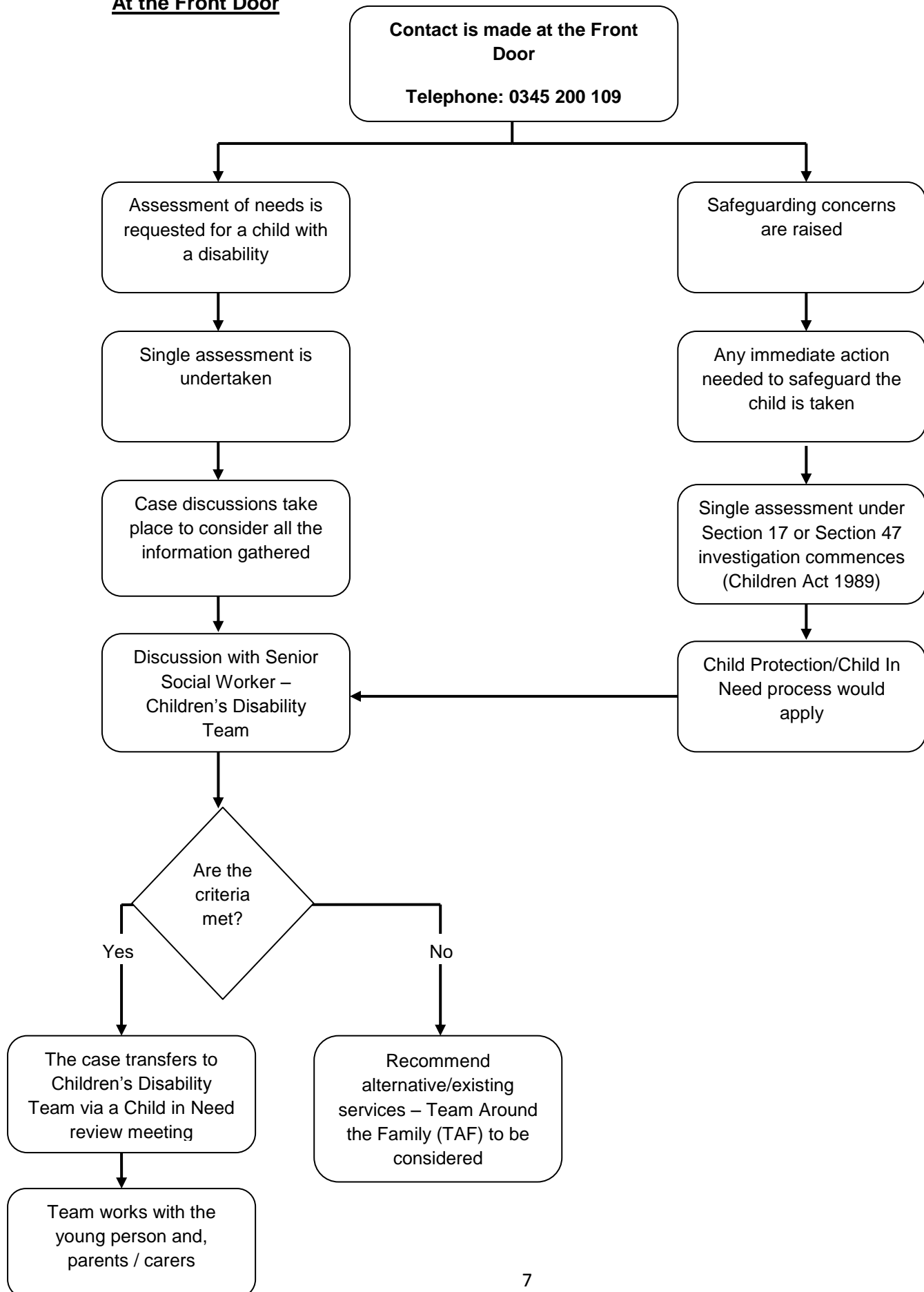
- Personal care needs – The level of personal care needs of the child or young person are reviewed to determine whether short break provision is needed to allow parents and carers a break from this role.
- Mobility and level of physical independence – The mobility and level of physical independence are considered to allow parents and carers who need it to have a break from supporting children with mobility or physical support needs.
- Eating and drinking – The level of independence of the child or young person to feed themselves and drink are considered.
- Health care needs – Health care needs are reviewed and where appropriate NHS Continuing Care funding can form part of the short break support. Children and young people may receive Continuing Care funding if they have needs arising from disability, accident or illness that can't be met by existing universal or specialist services alone.
- Emotional wellbeing – Emotional wellbeing is as important as physical health and consideration is given to the extent to which the child or young person feels good about themselves and believes that their life is going well. The level of support they may need to manage their emotional well-being/anxiety is also considered.
- Mental health - The needs of children and young people who have a mental health concern are taken into account when considering whether short break support is appropriate.
- Communication – The extent to which the child or young person can communicate verbally and their reliance on others to interpret their needs is considered.
- Cognitive ability – Factors considered include the level of cognitive understanding, ability to consider verbal instructions and the level of support and encouragement required to allow the child or young person to participate in activities.
- Behaviour – The nature, level and impact on the child, other children and adults of any challenging behaviour is taken into account in determining the nature of any support required.

When an assessment identifies that specialist services are needed the social worker from the Children's Disability Team, will remain involved with the family and will undertake regular home visits and 'Child in Need' reviews. The reviews ensure that the short breaks provision continues to be effective in meeting needs and achieving outcomes and that the care plan responds to the changing needs of the child and family by adjusting the level and nature of support provided.

7. Requesting an assessment for short breaks support

The Front Door Service provides access to all services for children and families in North Tyneside. An assessment for short breaks support can be requested by contacting the Duty Social Worker of the Children's Disability Team at the Front Door Service, Tel 0345 2000 109. The flow chart below shows the process followed when a request for an assessment is made.

Social Work Assessment
At the Front Door



8. Guiding principles

These principles guide the delivery and development of short breaks support in North Tyneside:

- Providing positive experiences for children by promoting friendships and by encouraging social activities, new experiences and supportive relationships with carers.
- Ensuring that provision is available on a planned and regular basis and at the times when families and children need breaks, including at evenings, weekends and during school holidays, and be able to respond to urgent care requirements.
- Delivering a reliable service, so that carers can plan around the breaks provided, and being responsive to the needs of the carer to enable a break from their caring role.
- Providing culturally appropriate provision that meets the racial, cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children and their families.
- Providing information to parents and carers about the provision on offer, eligibility criteria, assessment and review processes and routes to access the service.
- Working collaboratively with parents and carers through the North Tyneside Parent Carer Forum to ensure the views and needs of parents and carers are listened to, gathered and acted upon.
- Regularly reviewing the needs and care packages of each child accessing specialist support and adjusting the care plan and the nature and level of support in line with changing needs.

9. Personal Budgets and Direct Payments

A personal budget is a pot of funding given to individuals to meet their assessed needs. It can either be taken as a direct payment giving the parent or carer the option to either choose how their care needs are met and by whom, or alternatively, leaving the Local Authority with the responsibility to buy the services on their behalf. Families can also choose a combination of the two approaches.

A direct payment may make up part or all of a care plan and can be used as part of a personal budget. There is no fixed menu for direct payments. Some families use direct payments to employ someone to help out at home, while others have bought overnight short breaks for their child.