

Tower Hamlets Short Breaks Statement



Short Breaks Guide

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

0207 364 1450

This statement is for families living in
Tower Hamlets who have a disabled child or
young person aged 5-18 years

Introduction

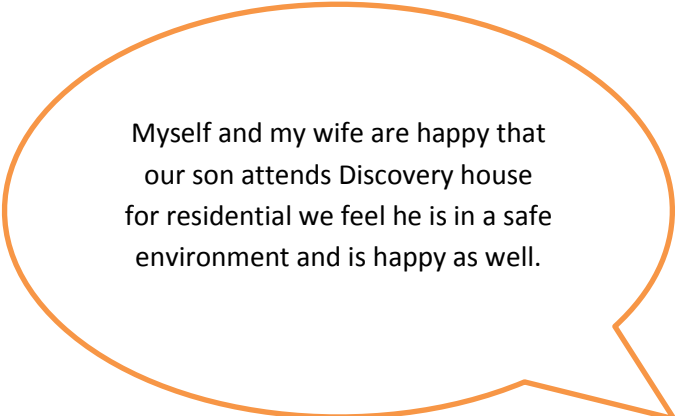
This short breaks statement is for families who have a disabled child or young person aged 5-18 living within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to inform them of Tower Hamlets short breaks offer and how services can be accessed.

Short breaks are just one of the key services offered to families so that parents/carers can have a break from their caring responsibilities and for children and young people to engage in fun and positive activities to improve outcomes.


Tower Hamlets works in partnership with a number of local providers as well as other voluntary sector organisations and schools to deliver a comprehensive short breaks offer. We also work closely with the NHS to ensure that children and young people with complex health needs are able to access services.

In particular, the short breaks statement provides an overview of the following:

- **The range of short break services that are currently available within Tower Hamlets**
- **The eligibility criteria**
- **Short breaks provisions**
- **Consultation with children, young people and their families**
- **Where to get a copy of this statement**



Myself and my wife are happy that our son attends Discovery house for residential we feel he is in a safe environment and is happy as well.



I am very happy with the service. The befriender always arrives on time and gives her feedback after every session

What is a Short Break?

Short breaks enable disabled children and young people to access the kind of activities that are open to non-disabled children, so that they can lead ordinary lives. They help them have fun, try new activities, gain independence and make friends.

Short breaks are one of the services most commonly requested by parents of disabled children. These services also offer parents and carers the much-needed break that they need from their additional 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) sets out what local authorities should do to meet their duties in relation to the provision of short breaks. Services for children and young people with a disability are also developed in the context of other related Acts such as the Children Act 2004, the Equality Act 2010, the newly formed Children and Families Act 2014 and the recent Carers Act of 2014.

Services for children and young people with a disability are also developed in the context of other related Acts such as:

- The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000,
- The Children Act 2004
- The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practise 2014

How can I access a short break?

Short breaks are available to children and young people with a range of needs and include support provided in universal settings, through targeted support and for those with the most complex needs, specialist services.

The range of services available across the different levels of need and how to access these is described below:



Universal services

Tower Hamlets believes that disabled children and young people should be able to access universal services, experience fun and enjoy themselves with friends just the same as other children and young people. We also continue to explore new ideas for developing our range of short breaks including specialist and non-specialist services in universal settings.

Universal plus

The Inclusion Officer works with families and service providers to help children and young people with disabilities access a range of fun and positive activities at inclusive universal settings, such as youth clubs and sports centres. By promoting inclusion, we are supporting our young people to enjoy the company and friendships of their non-disabled peers, as well as increase their confidence, life skills and independence in the community. To access support from the Inclusion Officer, you need to complete the self-referral form, and select the Inclusion Service form the list of options.

Children and young people with a lower level of need such as those with mild-moderate learning difficulties or a visual or hearing loss are not eligible to receive a specialist short break as they are eligible to take up a short break in a universal setting. This also includes children and young people with:

- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) without severe global development delay
- High functioning autism;
- A physical disability only, such as cerebral palsy.

Children aged 5 years old and under will be supported into age appropriate settings such as nurseries and children's centres. The boroughs' Early Years team are able to provide you with further information regarding the services provided. 020 7364 5006 option 2 (Early Help Hub – Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)

Targeted and specialist short breaks

Eligibility criteria

Those young people who are unable to access universal services with or without support must meet the following eligibility criteria to access short breaks.

- Must live in Tower Hamlets
- Be aged between 5 and 18 years old
- Come under category A or B:

A: Children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and severe learning difficulties with medium to high needs.

B: Children and young people with complex health needs including those with physical and/or learning disabilities and those with associated sensory impairments. Complex health needs includes children and young people with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

Local Offer (core short break services)

Tower Hamlets Local Offer is that children and young people can access one short break from the targeted short break offer through our self-referral process. (see how to apply for a short break below)

Short Breaks Available

The following short breaks are available in Tower Hamlets

- Specialist Holiday play schemes
- Befriending Service
- Specialist after school club

- Specialist Saturday clubs for young people with ASD
- Overnight respite
- Direct Payments

In addition, some of the borough's schools offer after school clubs for children and young people.

Direct Payments

A direct payment is another way of promoting choice as this allows parents or carers of a disabled child or young person to access a short break or other support service independently of the Council. Direct payments are where the family is allocated a budget that they can use to purchase their own short break. For example, the funding can be used to directly employ a support worker who will accompany their child to access activities in the community. Families will need to have an assessment from children's social care before they are allocated their direct payment.

There is a direct payment support service which will help families throughout the entire process of setting up direct payments. This includes support with the recruitment process and completing all necessary paperwork. We strongly recommend that all direct payment workers are checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Consultation

Tower Hamlets will engage all relevant partners and parents/carers when commissioning and reviewing our short break services.

We will hold a number of information sharing, consultation and participation events. At these events, we will ask disabled young people and their families what they want us to consider when planning and commissioning short break services.

We also work with our Parent/Carer Forum, who provides feedback to Tower Hamlets.

Disabled young people and their parents continue to play a key role in the shaping and development of services. The more common themes that have emerged during the consultations are as follows

- having a choice of short break activities
- knowing disabled children's needs will be met by appropriately trained staff
- opportunities to take part in inclusive activities with non-disabled children

- provision of opportunities for disabled children and young people to develop friendships and socialise
- short break services that support disabled children with complex needs

Through PAC (parent and carer group), parents can engage with providers and have a say in how services are delivered. PAC provides regular information and advice sessions on a number of topics relating to disabled children and their parents/carers.

The organisation also hosts support groups and delivers events for parents and families. There are a range of other parent and carer support groups across the borough that focus on children with specific needs or particular areas of advice such as benefits advice. The contact for the Parents Advice Centre is 020 7364 6489.

How to apply for a specialist short break?

Families can access specialist short breaks through the self-referral process. You can contact the short break coordinator on 0207 364 1450 and ask for a self –referral document.

We aim to promote choice and independence in the provision of our short breaks. The self-referral process assists with this as children and families are able to select their preferred short break.

The age criteria for each of the specialist short breaks may differ. However the overall age in which children can access a short break is aged 5 years or over.

We recognise however that children and families require different levels of support and so those requiring more than one short break or overnight specialist services can request this via a Social Care Single Care Assessment.

Families requesting direct payments as their short break will also need to undergo a social care assessment.

Once completed, the self-referral should be returned to the Short Breaks Co-ordinator once completed. Support with the completion of the self-referral is also available through the Co-ordinator along with help with accessing services. The self-referral can be downloaded from the Tower Hamlets website www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/childrenwithdisabilities or a hard copy obtained by contacting the Co-ordinator on 020 7364 1450. Self-referrals can be submitted electronically to short.breaks@towerhamlets.gov.uk .

What is the process of the social care assessment – how does this work for families?

To request an assessment or access more than one specialist short break, contact the Children with Disabilities Team on 020 7364 2724, or speak to a Social Worker or Lead Professional. The assessment carried out will take into account your child's development and the circumstances of your family. It will also consider family and environmental factors such as where you live or your wider social networks of support, carer's needs and other things that have an impact on how your child's needs are met.

Alternatively, a request for an assessment can be made by completing the self-referral which gives you the option to make a request for your child to be assessed for more than one provision, overnight short break or direct payments.

Can I get support with transport arrangements?

Tower Hamlets promotes and encourages independence and can provide independent travel training where appropriate. In most cases, we expect parent/carers to take responsibility for travel arrangements to and from the chosen short break activity.

The mobility element of DLA is to help assist in the transportation of children with disability. Where this is not possible, Tower Hamlets may be able to arrange transport to and from short breaks activities based on the lowest cost option. All requests made for transport assistance will be considered by the children with disabilities team, based on individual needs and circumstance.

Safeguarding

If you are concerned about a child or young person in the borough, or if you wish to report an incident of abuse or neglect, please contact Tower Hamlets Mash team on **0207 364 5606/5601**.

Copies of the Short break Statement

Copies of the short breaks statement can be found on the Tower Hamlets website. www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

If you would like hard copy of the short break statement, then please contact the short break coordinator on 0207 364 1450.

Review of this Statement

We will continue to use on-going consultation with our children/ young people and their families to update and improve our services so we can ensure our Short Breaks provision continues to reflect the needs of children and young people and their families living in Tower Hamlets.

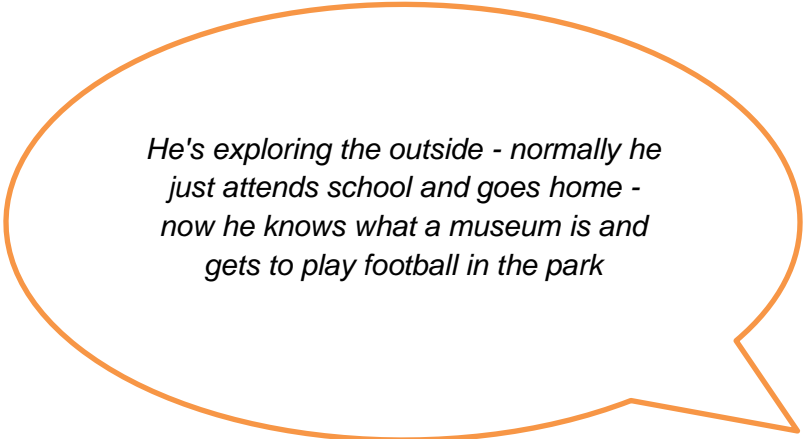
This Statement will be reviewed annually and we welcome feedback from parent/carers of disabled children. Our contact details are:

Short Breaks Coordinator

**Children's Integrated Commissioning/ Children with Disabilities Team
Youth and Commissioning
5th Floor, Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
London,
E14 2BG**

Tel: 0207 364 1450

Email: shortbreaks@towerhamlets.gov.uk



He's exploring the outside - normally he just attends school and goes home - now he knows what a museum is and gets to play football in the park