**Short breaks application form – guidance notes**

This guide was prepared to ensure anyone referring a child to short breaks panel has a clarity around information required by the panel to accurately assess needs and allocation of appropriate provision for short breaks and respite. In this guide you will find information on how to complete each of the questions.

Should anything be left unexplained, please contact our short breaks service at shortbreaks@walthamforest.gov.uk or on 0208 496 3515 with your enquiries.

**Personal details:**

Please complete this section paying attention to spelling of the name, providing accurate and up to date contact details including address, contact numbers and email address.

**Needs and disability:**

Please mark appropriate box and use a free text box if you felt you need to provide more information or the information you want to provide is not listed.

Why are we asking if your child is in receipt of DLA (Disability Living Allowance)?

It helps the panel to establish the level of need for your child.

Why do we need to know about other professionals involved in your child’s care?

In some cases, we might feel that the information provided in the form is not sufficient and might wish to contact other professionals for their input into decision making to ensure you and your child are supported appropriately.

**Other members of the family:**

Please let us know what other members form a part of your household. Please include their full details, date of birth and if they also have any additional needs, difficulties, or disabilities.

When we are assessing needs of the child, we are looking holistically at the whole family unit and this information helps us to assess wider needs as well as support mechanisms within the family.

**Does your child sleep well?**

Please tell us if your child has difficulty sleeping as we may be able to offer services who can help with that. Sleep and sleep hygiene is a crucial factor in one’s functioning and might have an impact on other areas of day-to-day functioning.

**Daily care:**

Please provide details of your child’s personal care requirements in relation to their condition, illness special needs or disabilities.

**Behaviours?**

In this section we want you to tell us about specific behaviour your child might display in relation to their Special Needs or disability. This section helps the panel assess what types of services would be more appropriate not only to help manage these behaviours but to also help you and your child with managing them and ensuring your child can achieve good outcomes.

**Current services in use:**

In this section we want you to tell us what other services your child is making use of already so we can assess how we can fill in the gaps or provide alternatives to what is already in place.

**Impact**

Please tell us how you, your child and your family would benefit from short breaks and what outcomes are you hoping they could achieve/

**Supporting evidence – why do we need it?**

The more information we have about your child, the easier is for the panel to assess their needs and make appropriate decision about their allocation. Please provide the panel with any evidence you feel might support your application including medical reports, medical letters and assessments, school reports or school SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) support plans, any professional assessments.

**Assessment questions**

**BE EQUAL**

Please put a score (1 - 4) under criteria that in your view match your child’s needs best. Your answers will provide points for each of the questions. In a free text box for this question please provide panel with evidence of support required.

1. **To be fit and healthy – definitions of support**
* **No additional support:** When the child has no particular health issues. They get common illnesses, and they recover well. They generally keep good physical health. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When the child has not particular health issues. They get common illnesses, and they recover well. They keep good physical health. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** When the child requires assistance with their health every day. As a result of impaired mobility, posture and balance the child needs frequent support from an adult through the day (for example peg feeding, help to go to the toilet, to change their position etc.) The procedures to stay healthy take up some time in the child’s day which gets in the way of other activities the child needs to do. The child requires assistance from people who have had guidance and training to meet their health care needs. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** When the child needs support always and often will require more than one person to assist them because of their complex physical health needs. Some of this care will be with people who have specialist health care skills. The child uses equipment essential to their wellbeing or where the procedures that are required to maintain the child’s physical health require such care that they can only be delivered extremely slowly. These procedures take several hours each day, and this has a significant impact on the child’s opportunities. (Score 4)
1. **To be Relaxed and Happy (Emotional Wellbeing)**
* **No additional support:** When the child is generally happy and relaxed. A child experiences the ‘difficulties’ of childhood but does not have prolonged worries for which they need support. The child, with help from parents, can cope with unfamiliar places while experiencing just the usual nervousness most children have when trying out a new place. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When the child is frequently distressed because of issues with their mental wellbeing, medical condition, pain management or mood swings. The child has a frequent sense of stress and anxiety. They need some reassurance, support, and supervision on a regular basis to manage their feelings and to feel relaxed. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** When the child’s stress and anxiety continually affect their wellbeing and their behaviour can be challenging. A key issue for adults who support the child is planning how to respond to their anxiety. The child needs the help of a psychologist or psychiatrist to work towards feeling relaxed and happy. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** When the child’s mental wellbeing needs are complex. Their anxiety and stress are so high that they have extreme challenging behaviour because of emotional distress which needs to be managed. To ensure that there is not a risk, of injury to them self or others, because of their anxiety and stress they need the supervision of two adults continually to make sure everyone is safe. The child needs support from specialist services working to a structured behaviour management plan. (Score 4)
1. **To Be Able to Travel Safely and Use Public Transport for Children over the Age of 11 (Independence Skills)**
* **No additional support:** When the child can safely use public transport or the family car with the support of their family and has an awareness of road safety. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When the child does not currently have road safety skills but can learn these skills. Or The child may need reassurance on their journey but with an adult being next to them they are able to use public transport and travel in a car. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** When the child has no sense of road safety or traffic awareness and cannot therefore play outside without being constantly supervised. Or The child needs intensive or physical support to prevent them from becoming very distressed or harming themselves when on a journey. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional Support:** When the child cannot use public transport because either it is not accessible to them or the experience of using it would be too stressful for them or those providing support. They therefore need to use transport that has been adapted to their needs or to travel with two adults to keep them safe in the vehicle. (Score 4)
1. **To Be Able to Communicate Well (Communication Skills)**
* **No additional support:** When a child is a strong communicator through their first choice of communication and they can make clear their needs, wants, and wishes they need no support in achieving this outcome. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When a child can explain some of their needs and wants but you need to check regularly that they have understood what they are saying. They may only pick out key words and their understanding of complex sentences may be impaired. If you are talking with the child, you need to check that they have understood what you are saying and are able to act on what has been asked of them. Or A child who has a hearing impairment which makes it difficult for them to hear consistently what is being said to them. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** When because of a child‘s learning disability it is difficult to understand the child’s communication consistently and/or they have challenging support needs because of their frustration with communicating. They need 1:1 support to make their views known. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** A child finds it difficult to express their needs and wants and who needs intensive support. This would usually include children who communicate with technological aids, but it requires professional support to be clear that their views have been correctly interpreted. This could also include children who do not use any form of recognised language like speech, signing or technology and whose communication is interpreted mainly through their behaviour and their speech partners are not confident that they have interpreted their communication correctly. (Score 4)

**TO ACHIEVE**

Please put a score (1 – 4) under criteria that in your view match your child’s needs best. Your answers with provide points for each of the questions. In a free text box for this question please provide panel with evidence of support required.

1. **To Join in With Activities with Other Children (from age 5+) (Social Skills)**
* **No additional support:** When a child is supported to get involved in their hobbies and leisure interests by their family and face few problems in doing so. A child can accept the guidance and support from adults leading activities most of the time and can take part in the activity with other children. The child has few fears or worries about going out and getting involved in activities with people they know well. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When a child needs shared or 1:1 support for a short period of time (in addition to the usual support provided to children within the group) to introduce them successfully into the activity. Other adults who support the activity or club require training and/or support to ensure that the child is included. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** When a child needs to be continually supported throughout the activity. For example, it is not enough for a parent to be nearby, a supporter needs to participate in the activity alongside the child, making clear what they need to do or supporting them physically. The child can only participate successfully in an activity if they have an individual worker alongside with them and who knows them well. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** When a child needs two supporters to be with them throughout the activity. The support needs to be from people who are very aware of the child’s needs and have specific skills, for example in knowing how the child communicates and/or in behavioural support. Or where a child, because of challenging behaviour, may pose a risk to themselves or others and this severely restricts the places they can visit and activities they can take part in. Or where the procedures that are required to maintain the child’s health require such care that they can only be delivered so slowly that they take several hours each day, and this has a significant impact on the child’s ability to engage in activities. (Score 4)
1. **To Learn the Skills, I need to be as Confident and Independent as I can be. (Applicable to children over 5 years) (Independence Skills)**
* **No additional support:** There is an expectation that the child will go on to develop good independent skills. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** They need prompts and reminders to stay on task to develop their independent skills. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** When the child will need constant support every day to perform purposeful tasks. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** When the child needs individualised support to develop them. This may be a child with complex health needs, a profound disability or challenging behaviour who requires 2:1 support and is at constant risk of being excluded from social activities. There is a continuing need for professional advice and guidance from occupational therapy or psychology to develop plans to support the child to maintain and develop skills or where the procedures that are required to maintain the child’s health require such care that they can only be delivered so slowly that they take several hours each day and this disrupts their everyday life and impacts on the child’s opportunities for play and learning. (Score 4)
1. **To have a Circle of Friends (Social Skills)**
* **No additional support:** When the child enjoys other children’s company and finds it easy to play with other children, meet and make friends and continue friendships. Or Some children with autism do not seek friendships and so no extra support is required if they successfully tolerate other children and have learnt how to be with other children without becoming distressed. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When the child always needs the support of their family or carers to plan and prepare to meet up with their friends. Meetings with friends only happen when adults plan them and need close supervision when they happen or hen some children with autism need constant reminders about how to cope with meeting other children they know. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** When the child will need constant support while with other children and need adults to organise their play activity. It takes a lot of effort for parents to support their child to interact with other children, keep the friendship going and provide support when they are with their friends or when a child with autism does not tolerate other children easily and requires 1:1 support when they are around other children. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** When friendships are hard to keep, and the child needs intensive support to stay connected and keep their friendships. 2:1 support is required to support meetings and activities with friends. Or Children who find it very distressing to leave their home or environments that they know well and have extremely limited contact with children their own age (Score 4)

**STAY SAFE**

Please put a score (1 - 4) under criteria that in your view match your child’s needs best. Your answers with provide points for each of the questions. In a free text box for this question please provide panel with evidence of support required.

1. **To Be Safe at Home with Immediate Family**
* **No additional support:** When the child is safe at home with their family. The young person avoids danger in the home most of the time (e.g. boiling water, plug sockets) or those dangers are now not present because of aids adaptations in the house. Parents do not need to stay all the time in the same room with the child as they are safe in their play. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** The child will try and stay safe. It takes a lot of time to explain everyday risks in the home to the child. The child struggles to remember the explanation and they need to be continually reminded about danger. Or The child can play safely but needs an adult to regularly check that they are safe if they are unsupervised in a room in the home. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** The child could reach dangers in the home and adult supervision in the same room is constantly needed to stop the child from becoming hurt or without continual supervision in the same room the child would be at risk of harm. This would include children who cannot move out of the way of danger or who, if unsupervised, would not be able to change their posture. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** When there are many concerns about the child’s safety and there is constant monitoring on a day-to-day basis by professionals to ensure the child’s safety or there is a need to monitor the child’s ability to place them self in danger even when they are continually supervised. (Score 4)
1. **To Be Safe In their Community (Please note that in this question the lots or Exceptional support levels can only be scored if there is a current constant threat from or to the child).**
* **No additional support:** When the community the child lives in is a stable neighbourhood. The caring adults in the child’s life are trusted and the child is safe in their company. The child is safe with their friends and bullying is not happening or the child’s support needs are high and because they will always have an adult nearby, they have not experienced bullying and are at a low risk of being bullied because of this additional protection. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When there are worries about the child’s safety in their community. They are occasionally bullied by other children and the family need support to bring this to an end. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** The child is facing a constant threat from their community or from adults in their social network. Or the child is distressed by persistent bullying and present support to bring it to an end is not working. The child needs very regular support to bring it to an end. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** There is a big chance the child may be seriously injured, because of severe bullying which is having a significant impact on their whole life, or because of severe exploitation or abuse by other children. Or there is a considerable risk of the child regularly injuring other people and this must be constantly managed because the child has no sense of social boundaries and/or has severe challenging behaviour. (Score 4)

**FAMILY SECTION**

Please put a score (1 - 4) under criteria that in your view match your child’s needs best. Your answers with provide points for each of the questions. In a free text box for this question please provide panel with evidence of support required.

1. **Family Life is Good and There is Time for Everyone in the Family to enjoy life and pursue the things that matter to them. (Emotional Wellbeing)**
* **No additional support:** When family life is good, the family cope well and are resilient in supporting the child’s needs. The family do not experience regular stress because of supporting their child’s needs. Parents or carers have some time regularly to pursue their own interests and to relax. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When the child’s needs result in the parent/carers regularly experiencing stress. This has a continual impact on their day-to-day wellbeing. Parents have little time to relax. Or when there are occasional difficult behaviours which sometimes place siblings at risk and siblings may experience disruption in their ability to have friends around the house or to do homework. (Score 2)
* **Significant Support:** When the parents and carers experience severe stress because of the impact of caring for the child and this is affecting their mental or physical health, and this is in turn affecting the whole family. Or the needs of the child require a lot of support and time from parents, and this leads to the other children in the family being seriously affected and this is resulting in siblings experiencing high levels of stress or tiredness. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** When parent/carers feel such high levels of stress because of the impact of caring for the child that the family is in crisis and professional support is needed to sustain the family. Or when parents/carers have their own health care needs that have exceptional impact on their ability to support their child day to day. (Score 4)
1. **Parent/Carers get a good night’s sleep. (Physical and Emotional Wellbeing)**
* **No additional support:** When the parent/carers generally sleep well, are usually not disturbed through the night, and get sufficient sleep to be able to have the energy to care for the child without feeling overtired. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When the parent/carers are up several times each week to support the child and as a result they feel overtired throughout the day. Or where the child goes to bed late or is an early riser and this leads to the parent carer feeling over tired. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** When the parent/carers are up several times throughout the night every night to support the child or the sleep pattern of the child is so erratic that this leads to the parent/carer feeling exhausted. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** When the parent/carers are feeling overwhelmed by the sleep deprivation that caring for the child entails. This is leading to an extreme level of exhaustion and stress for parents or carers and the family as a result is in crisis. (Score 4)
1. **Parents/ Carers get the Support they need from friends, neighbours and extended family which regularly provides them with Short Breaks / respite (Emotional Wellbeing)**
* **No additional support:** When the parent/carers are well supported by friends, neighbours, and their extended family. There are several people who know and love the child and are willing to help with caring for them. The parent/carer knows that there is a group of people they can turn to for help on a regular basis. (Score 1)
* **Some support:** When the parent/carers receive some support from their extended family and friends, but this is infrequent and for only short times. There are few breaks provided by family and friends for the parents or carers. (Score 2)
* **Significant support:** When the parent/carers receive no support from family and friends with the care of the child and this leads to stress and overtiredness. Although there is not a supportive network amongst extended family and friends there is support from a partner or a family member living with them. (Score 3)
* **Exceptional support:** When a parent/carer feels extremely isolated. One person is caring for the child solely without any support from family or friends. The parents or carer is under a great strain as a result, and this is having a significant impact on their health and wellbeing. (Score 4)

**Score summary table.**

Please complete the table with scores you gave for each of the questions in the application form. The panel will assess your scores and evidence provided for each of the questions when deciding about allocation of appropriate support and services within the short breaks offer.

For more information about short breaks please visit our local offer page:

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schools-education-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send/social-care-and-6>