

# Short Breaks Statement

For Parents and Carers of Children  
with a Disability or Additional Needs  
in Southampton



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## Introduction to the Short Break Statement

This document is for families living in Southampton who have a child with a disability or additional need, from birth to the end of their 18th year. This document provides:

- Information on the purpose of the Short Breaks Statement
- The current and emerging range of Short Break Services available in Southampton
- The criteria by which eligibility for services is assessed
- Information on how parents/carers, children and young people have been consulted with, to help develop a wide range of Short Break activities

**Southampton City Council listened to family views on current services and identified gaps where improvements could be made.**

### Who is responsible for the Statement?

The Short Breaks team in Southampton City Council are responsible for this statement. It will be kept under review and revised when new services become available or when there are changes to existing services.

The statement has been prepared and reviewed in consultation with parent/carers and the Southampton Parent Carer Forum. The views of children with a disability/additional need and those attending special schools or through voluntary sector organisations have also been incorporated in this Short Break Statement.

### How was the Statement prepared?

The Short Breaks Team works closely with the Southampton Parent Carer Forum, other professionals, parent/carers and young people, through parent feedback events, informal groups and surveys, to better understand changing needs and expectations. Through listening to views, it has been possible to plan new and more appropriate services to more closely meet families' needs.

All future changes to the Short Breaks service will be coproduced with parent/carers and young people.



## How will the Statement be publicised and reviewed?

The Short Breaks Statement will be circulated to parents and carers via The Buzz Network and Southampton Parent Carer Forum and circulated to all teams/organisations supporting children and young people with a disability or additional need in Southampton.

It is also published on the Southampton Local Offer website:

[Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Local Offer \(southampton.gov.uk\)](https://www.southampton.gov.uk)

## What are Short Breaks?

Short Breaks provide children and young people with disabilities or additional needs an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, engage in fun activities and enjoy time with their friends. These breaks can provide positive experiences for children and young people, by encouraging friendships, participation in social activities, new experiences and can nurture relationships with parents and carers.



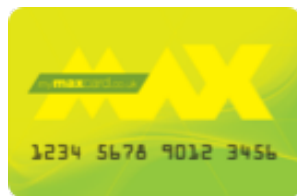

They offer parent/carers a break from their caring responsibilities and time to spend with other family members and to catch up on their daily tasks.

The short breaks programme is open to all children and young people who:

- have a disability or additional needs and may require support to participate fully in leisure or recreation activities;
- are between 0 and their 19th birthday;
- live within the Southampton City Council boundaries.

The types of Short Breaks families can access are dependent on the level of need arising from the impact of a child's disability.

There are 4 tiers of support offered through The Short Breaks Programme, as set out below:

<p><b>LOW:</b> Open to all with no eligibility criteria. Also known as Universal Services.</p>  <p>A Max Card Plus with a green background, three yellow stars, and the number 1234 5678 9012 3456.</p>	<p><b>MEDIUM:</b> Accessed by joining The Buzz Network <b>and</b> being in receipt of DLA/PIP.</p>  <p>A Max Card Plus with a green background, three yellow stars, the Southampton City Council logo, and the number 1312 4318 1003 1208.</p>	<p><b>SUBSTANTIAL:</b> Accessed through a social care assessment carried out by a social worker.</p>  <p>A Max Card with a green background, three yellow stars, and the number 1234 5678 9012 3456.</p>	<p><b>COMPLEX:</b> Accessed through a social care assessment carried out by a social worker from the Jigsaw health and social care team.</p>  <p>A Max Card with a green background, three yellow stars, and the number 1234 5678 9012 3456.</p>
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The Max Card or Max Card Plus will be issued to all children and young people registered on The Buzz Network. It gives discounts or benefits to the holder and one other person at a range of venues and organisations within Southampton and further afield.

Families can visit The Max Card website to find out which providers are signed up to the scheme and recognise The Max Card. <https://mymaxcard.co.uk/>

The table below sets out the benefits of the Max Card and the difference between the Max Card and The Max Card Plus.

Benefit	Max Card	Max Card Plus
		
Member of the Buzz Network – receive updates, E-Newsletters etc.	✓	✓
Discount to a number of restaurants – follow the link <a href="https://mymaxcard.co.uk/dine-club/">https://mymaxcard.co.uk/dine-club/</a> to find out more	✓	✓
Discounted rates for child and parent/carer at an increasing number of venues across the City	✓	✓
Discounted rates for child and parent/carer at a large number of participating venues across the country	✓	✓
Booking rights for Buzz playschemes	✗	✓
Booking rights for Buzz community activities	✗	✓

Although the MAX Card scheme suggests that children and young people, up to the age of 25 are eligible for their scheme, it is at the discretion of each Local Authority to set their parameters. In-line with our Short Breaks criteria, MAX Card and MAX Card Plus are for children and young people who are between 0 and their 19th birthday.

## How will Short Breaks improve outcomes?

Short Breaks should have a clear focus on achieving the outcomes that a child, young person and their family want.

Identification and planning to achieve outcomes should be done collectively and involve:

- The child/young person
- The parent/carers and other family members as appropriate
- Any lead professional
- Short Break providers

Outcomes should be specific and individual to the child/young person and their family, regularly monitored and built upon when achieved. Examples of outcomes are given below.

**“Having the use to solely hire the pool at Rose Road has enabled me to take my son swimming without the risk of splashing from using a public pool. The hydro pool isn’t deep and enables me to run through his physio program. It gives me the freedom to carry out suction at the side of the pool to ensure the airway remains safe.**

**I always take a confident swimmer with me as in my sons case you need a competent medically trained person at the side of the pool.”**

*Parent who uses Jigsaw Short Breaks*

**“The difference short breaks have meant to us as a family is huge. Being able to get my daughter out of the house to try new activities where she feels comfortable and supported has had a positive impact on her self-confidence.”**

*Parent who accesses Buzz Community Based Activities*

**“At our FairPlay Saturday Club and Holiday Scheme, you’re in charge! We offer a wide range of activities tailored towards children and young people with SEND as they are encouraged to make positive choices and develop through play and social opportunities.”**

*Mencap playschemes*

## What is the Low tier of support?

These are services that are provided to, or are routinely available to, all children, young people and their families in their local community.

All children and young people should be able to access opportunities which are happening within their local communities. These opportunities can be found at children’s centres, libraries, swimming pools and sports centres, youth groups, parks, playgrounds, community centres and many more. Wherever possible these are the opportunities which should be used as a first point of call.

These services have a duty under the Equalities Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments and not to treat a disabled person less favourably.

The suite of mainstream clubs and activities in and around Southampton is available on the Southampton Local Offer: [Things to do for young people with SEND \(southampton.gov.uk\)](https://www.southampton.gov.uk/things-to-do-for-young-people-with-send)

## How can I access this?

They are accessed by families directly. The Buzz Network has begun to collect together a list of accessible universal activities. This is included in the Short Breaks Activity list.

There is a growing list of activities that are part of The Max Card scheme and these are promoted on The Max Card website <https://mymaxcard.co.uk>

## What is the Medium tier of support?

These are services that are aimed at children and young people with needs that require more support than available through universal services. They may need groups or services that are specifically designed to meet their needs.

Families who are in receipt of disability living allowance but not receiving an individual package of support via services at the substantial and complex level will have access to a MAX Card Plus which offers easy access to a range of concessions or discounts negotiated across the city. This recognises that these children are able to access the majority of services available to all children.

Additionally, the MAX Card Plus will offer booking rights into subsidised activities, in and around Southampton. The short breaks programme will fund two main types of activities:

- Specialist Activities – run specifically for children and young people with moderate to complex needs.
- Support to attend mainstream activities, play schemes, clubs and groups

## How can I access these services?

Any parent or carer of children with disabilities or additional needs aged between 0 and their 19th birthday, living within the Southampton City Council boundary and in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) can apply to The Buzz Network.

## What is The Buzz Network?

The Buzz Network is a service funded by Southampton City Council and offers:

- A coordinator for advice, information and regular newsletters
- Play and activity schemes
- Community based activities
- Max Card or Max Card Plus

The Buzz Network also holds the Southampton Children's Disability Register. The purpose of the register is to enable Southampton City Council and Health Services together with voluntary organisations, to work more closely together to identify and plan services for children and young people with a disability and their parents/carers. All data is held securely. Registration is on a voluntary basis and data will not be shared with third parties without permission. Parent/carers can request that their child's name is removed from the register at any time.

Parent/carers will initially be asked to complete a short application form to assess their child's eligibility. Those signed up to The Buzz Network will automatically be sent either a Max Card or Max Card Plus with their welcome letter. The registration form can be found on The Buzz Network webpage;

[The Buzz Network \(southampton.gov.uk\)](http://southampton.gov.uk) or contacting [buzz.network@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:buzz.network@southampton.gov.uk)

The Buzz Network coordinator can provide support to complete this form and advise on any other questions about eligibility.

Contact the Buzz Network Coordinator on **023 8083 2105**

You can request a registration form by emailing [buzz.network@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:buzz.network@southampton.gov.uk)



## What is the Substantial Tier of Support?

Substantial support services are for disabled children, young people and their parent/carers who require more support than is available through Low or Medium support services.

Family's needs who are assessed to be substantial will be supported through the relevant social care team. These teams will be able to complete a short breaks assessment and if eligible the family will receive an individual package of support through a Personal Budget. This might include:

- Individual support in the home or community (e.g. outreach)
- Direct Payments - to purchase individual support in line with the personal budget and direct payment policy.
- They may also be able to access the non-assessed short break activities at a subsidised rate, purchased through direct payments.
- A mixture of more than one of these options

### How can I access this?

A referral can be made by a Parent/Carer or professionals working with the child via the Southampton Children's Resource Service team, with the consent of the child's parent. If eligible, an assessment of needs will be carried out by a social worker. This assessment will consider the impact of the child's disability on them and their parent/carer and siblings. This could result in an assessed need for additional support or respite.

#### Southampton Directory | Children's Resource Service

Telephone (office hours): **023 8083 3004**

Out of hours: **023 8023 3344**

## What is the Complex Tier of Support?

Families open to the JIGSAW Children with Disabilities Team will have an assessment of needs and if eligible will receive an individualised Short Breaks package of support through a Personal Budget. This might be through;

- Individual support in the home or community (e.g. outreach)
- Family based overnight and day care
- Residential overnight short breaks
- Direct Payments – to purchase individual support in line with the personal budget and direct payment policy.
- A mixture of more than one of these options.

They may also be able to access the non-assessed short break activities at a subsidised rate, purchased through direct payments.

### How can I access this?

A referral can be made by a Parent/Carer or professionals working with the child via the Southampton Children's Resource Service team, with the consent of the child's parent. If eligible, an assessment of needs will be carried out by a social worker. This assessment will consider the impact of the child's disability on them and their parent/carer and siblings. This could result in an assessed need for additional support or respite.

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## **Monitoring how your support is working**

Ongoing access to these services will need to be monitored through visiting the child and family on a regular basis and monitoring the impact of the services that are provided, to make sure that these continue to meet the child's needs and support them to achieve identified outcomes.

These outcomes will be discussed with the child, themselves, with their parent / carers and will also be based on the social work assessment, which will gather information about the child and family to assist in identifying the need for support. From this, a plan will be developed and further discussion will take place about whether the family would wish for the social worker to organise the support or would wish to organise this themselves through receiving regular payments into a specially set up bank account from which they can fund activities or employ a personal assistant. These are known as Direct Payments.

## **What are Direct Payments?**

Direct Payments are one way of arranging social care services for children and young people with a disability or additional needs and their family. A person with parental responsibility for a child or young person with an additional need or disability, or a young person aged 16 and over is given funds to pay for a short break, instead of using the Southampton City Council contracted services.

Direct Payments can be used in a variety of ways, for example; to employ a person (known as a personal assistant or PA) to support and care for your child overnight, in the home during the day or to support at a community activity. Or you can use Direct Payments to buy into a local service, for example a residential short breaks unit, a sitting service or after school club.

Where a Short Break is taken as a Direct Payment, there will also be the need to provide information, receipts and bank statements on a yearly basis to the Council.

## **How much do Short Break Services cost?**

Some short break services are free and others charge a fee. Parents and carers should not expect to pay more than a non-disabled child accessing a similar type of service.

If you have difficulties in accessing services because of the cost, please discuss your situation with your provider as some services may be able to offer further discounts for families in receipt of certain benefits or on a low income.

Please visit The Max Card website for the full list of offers promoted by providers or see the Short Breaks Activity List for individual providers.

## **Do Short Break Services provide transport?**

Parents are responsible for transporting their child to a short break service unless agreed as part of a care plan. However, some organisations may provide their own transport - please contact the provider directly to find out if there is a cost for this service.

## How will we measure impact?

The Short Breaks team, routinely monitor, evaluate and review commissioned services by carrying out regular visits, observations and contract meetings. As a result the team are confident that services are of good quality and safeguard disabled children. Providers of overnight short breaks and services that involve personal care are also required to be inspected by Ofsted or the Care Quality Commission (CQC); the outcome of these inspections is published online for anybody to access.

This information along with on-going feedback from parent/carers, children with a disability, from consultation events and data collection all contribute to decisions for the future and the planning of services.

**Parents and carers should not expect to pay more than a non-disabled child accessing a similar type of service**

Providers of targeted and specialist Short Break Services should be regularly reviewing the support they are providing to each child/young person including looking at whether outcomes (identified with the parent/carer and child/young person and documented) are being achieved and whether any aspects of the support need to be changed. If a child is receiving Short Breaks at the Substantial or Complex level, then the child's social worker would also carry out regular reviews of the impact of the Short Break with the child, parent / carer, provider and any other relevant professional present.

The frequency of these reviews will vary depending on the level of the child's need. The purpose of these reviews is to ensure that the child's needs are being met by the provision, and to be able to evaluate their effectiveness.

This may result in the provision being adjusted in line with any new circumstances or changes to the child and their need, or the needs or situation of their parent / carer or sibling.

## How do we consult parents and carers?

The Short Breaks team work in partnership with parents and carers of children with a disability or additional needs to ensure their views are considered throughout the planning, implementation and ongoing development of services in Southampton. In addition to regular visits to Short Breaks services allowing consultation with parents and carers, the Short Breaks team also works in partnership with Southampton Parent Carer Forum.

with



## Southampton Parent Carer Forum



We are a friendly group of parent carers who have children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities aged 0-25 years.

We support and train parent carers to enable them to have input and be involved with shaping services alongside the professionals who provide health, education, adult and social services. Our shared mission is to improve and enhance the experiences and opportunities of children and young people with additional needs by enabling parents and carers to be heard and be at the heart of decisions about development and delivery of services in Southampton.

The forum will represent the views of the collective community and not an individual voice. The role of the forum is not to advocate for individual families and will signpost to specialist services.

## How do we consult with children and young people?

Southampton City Council has worked closely with children and young people with disabilities or additional needs to ensure their views are considered throughout the planning, development and ongoing consultation regarding Short Breaks in Southampton.

Southampton City Council will continue to work with families, voluntary sector and other organisations to improve how we consult with children and young people.

## The Local Offer

Southampton City Council has a duty to publish and update a 'Local Offer' that sets out in one place information about the services that are available locally for children and young people who have Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND).

The intention of the Local Offer is to improve choice and transparency for families. It is also an important resource for professionals in understanding the range of services and provision in the local area. A further key role for the local offer is to inform the joint commissioning for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities by setting out in one single place what is available locally.

The local authority must work together with children and young people, parent/carers and with local services, including the voluntary sector and community sector, to develop their offer and keep it under review.

Local Offer link: <http://www.southampton.gov.uk/localoffer>

## How can families find out more about current Short Breaks?

More information about which Short Breaks are available in Southampton can be found on The Local Offer. You can also find all providers linked with The Max Card on their website.

The accompanying Short Breaks activity list provides details of all Short Break services, providers and activities.

Contact the Buzz Network Team:

[The Buzz Network \(southampton.gov.uk\)](https://www.southampton.gov.uk)

[buzz.network@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:buzz.network@southampton.gov.uk)

Further information:

[Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Local Offer \(southampton.gov.uk\)](https://www.southampton.gov.uk)

[www.mymaxcard.co.uk](http://www.mymaxcard.co.uk)

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