

Appendix 1 EQIA Short Breaks Day Activities

Analysis of Evidence for Short Breaks Day Activity Services

As there is no readily available population data for disabled children in Kent, we have used the disabled children's register¹ as a baseline for understanding the needs of the children to ensure we are meeting our legal duty regarding sufficiency. We are unable to use census data as this is categorised 0-25 with no way of separating out those up to the age of 18, and the census is self-reported and therefore may not be reliable to use as population data.

While consideration was given to using caseload data from the Strengthening Independence Service, it was determined to be unsuitable for comparison. This is because eligibility for the Short Breaks Day Activity service includes children and young people with a range of needs classified as moderate and having a disability as defined within the Equality Act 2010, whereas the Strengthening Independence Service is limited to individuals with permanent or long-term disabilities that fall within the severe or profound categories. As a result, the datasets are not directly comparable as many children accessing the Short Breaks Day Activities will not be open to the Strengthening Independence Service.

By comparing this data to the data from current Short Breaks Day Activity providers from April 2024 to March 2025, we can understand if current supply is meeting demand and/or where there are any gaps that we need to address to ensure we are meeting the needs of the eligible children. This will then be used to inform the requirements for the new commissioning process for April 2026 to March 2028.

There is a caveat to this data in that the disabled children's register is not mandatory for families to sign up to, and data entry fields are not compulsory so not all information is completed by all families. It should also be noted that it is difficult to ascertain if any lines on the register are duplicates from the same child due to the way data is reported.

Overall numbers

After cleansing the data from the disabled children's register and removing any young people over 18, there are 5,504 children on the register and from April 2024 to March 2025, Short Breaks Day Activities reached 2,175 children. If all of those who attended are on the register, that would be a reach of approximately 40%. Taken together with the fact that registering is voluntary and therefore not all families are on the register, this demonstrates that it is not possible to offer a Short Break Day Activity Service to all families within the current budget.

Age

¹ Disabled Children Register

The age range with the highest number on the register is 9-15 and this is also where the most children are attending Short Breaks Day Activities, so this would indicate there is currently no significant gap in provision for certain age groups.

Gender

69% of children on the register are male and 31% female, however when looking at actual attendance 59% are male and 40% female (1% unknown) which could indicate that the sessions appeal more to females, or that females are more likely to engage in this type of activity. From April 2024 to March 2025 1,292 males attended a Short Breaks Day Activity and 857 females.

Language

For 98% of those on the register, English is the first language, and 0.85% are either non-verbal or use some form of sign language. This would indicate that an inability to speak another language is not a significant barrier to attendance at current sessions.

Ethnicity

When taking into account those who did not wish to disclose their ethnicity or where this is not known, the percentages of those attending are largely in line with the percentages from the register; therefore, there are no large discrepancies indicating gaps in provision.

Type of Need/Disability

Those who attended a Short Breaks Day Activity session do not have their primary disability listed, but rather all need types that they have, and the categories used are different to those from the register, so a direct comparison is not possible. Taking general themes, the highest need on both data sets is autism. Following this, it is difficult to distinguish. Attendance is good for those with hearing and/or sight impairment compared to the lower numbers on the register, which could be due to having Kent Association for the Blind and Kent Deaf Children's Society delivering sessions.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

52% of the children on the register have an EHCPs while 39% of those who attended a Short Breaks Day Activity session in this period had an EHCP. While this is slightly lower than the population data, this could be explained by Short Breaks Day Activities being used more by disabled children with lower levels of support needs, whereas those with EHCPs may require more specialised support such as Direct Payments or Care and Support in the Home.