

Annex A

Full Service Offer

A short breaks service should:

- be based on an assessment of need, taking into account the voice of disabled children, young people and their families;
- offer a significantly greater volume of short break provision set against a 2007-08 baseline, and which reflects the additional funding levels available from Government;
- use fair, understandable and transparent eligibility criteria that enable short breaks to be used as a preventative service and which do not restrict provision to those threatened by family breakdown or other points of crisis;
- offer a wide range of local short break provision, tailored to families needs and including:
 - a) support for disabled children and young people in accessing activities in universal settings, delivered through the following:
 - the support of a befriending, sitting or sessional service;
 - measures that build the skills of universal service providers;
 - measures specific to severely disabled children that are undertaken to meet their physical access requirements in universal settings. These would build on and exceed DDA compliance and ensure that the most disabled are not disadvantaged.
 - b) overnight breaks, with care available in both the child's own home and elsewhere.
 - c) significant breaks during the day, with care available in the child's own home and elsewhere:
- provide positive experiences for children by promoting friendships and by encouraging social activities, new experiences and supportive relationships with carers;

- provide culturally appropriate provision that meets the racial, cultural, linguistic and religious needs of disabled children and their families;
- ensure that provision is available on a planned and regular basis and at the times when families and young people, need breaks - this should include evenings, weekends and holiday provision, and have the capacity to respond to urgent care requirements;
- provide age appropriate provision which ensures the following groups are not disadvantaged in accessing short breaks:
 - children and young people with ASD¹. These are likely to have other impairments, such as severe learning disabilities or have behaviour, which is challenging. Not all children on the Autistic Spectrum will require specialist additional short break services
 - children and young people with complex health needs which includes those with disability and life limiting conditions who have reached the palliative care stage of their life cycle as well as other and young people with complex health needs as well as other impairments – physical, cognitive or sensory impairments.²
 - children and young people aged 11+ with moving and handling needs that will require equipment and adaptations. These children are likely to have physical impairments, and many of them will also have cognitive impairments and / or sensory impairments;

¹ An autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a lifelong developmental disability characterised by difficulties in three areas: social communication, social interaction and social imagination, sometimes known as the triad of impairments. Children with ASD and accompanying severe learning disabilities have often missed out on short breaks.

² These children require support, often including clinical and / or invasive procedures in order to maintain their optimum health on either a regular basis or in an emergency. Some of these children may be dependent on technology e.g. ventilation; tube feeding, dialysis. The need for advanced planning and preparation for technology dependent children cannot be under-estimated. To ensure the short break provision is provided safely it is crucial that this provision is developed in partnership between local authorities and PCT's. A significant requirement is the need to train sufficient staff to ensure they are competent to deliver safe care. The training implications for these staff are significant.

- children and young people where challenging behaviour is associated with other impairments (e.g. severe learning disability). Children in this group will display behaviour which challenges services or behaviour which causes injury to themselves or others;
 - young people 14+. The young people who fall into this group are young people who are severely disabled and require services that are appropriate to their age.
- utilise the service provider that offers the best possible combination of skills and experience to deliver services of the highest possible quality to meet individual needs at the most efficient cost;
 - promote information about available provision to the public, including details of eligibility and routes to accessing the service.