

Children and Young People with additional needs or disabilities



Short Break Offer 2024 - 2025

For families and practitioners who support or care for a child or young person who is aged 0 to 18, who has additional needs or disability and lives in Sandwell

Our Aims & Vision

Any vision cannot be achieved by one organisation and requires everyone working together collaboratively across our Borough. Our Short Breaks Statement is a shared vision and commitment across Sandwell Children's Trust, Health, Education, Adult's Social Care and the Council.

We are committed to ensuring that we support our children, young and families to know what services and support is available to them, in their communities. We will give our children and young people a greater choice of short breaks, which are representative of the diverse SEND needs and our communities, which works best for them.

Our children, young people, parents and carers have told us that they would like a choice of a good range of activities outside school and home, that are age and ability appropriate, whilst understanding the importance of family. We have worked together to co-design our refreshed Additional Short Breaks Offer.

We are committed to delivering our vision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to enable them to:

- achieve their aspirations for a healthy and successful life through experiencing high quality.
- education and support services during their learning, growth and development stage leading
- to adulthood and meaningful employment and fulfilling relationships within the community of their choosing.
- have choice and control over decisions about their health, education, employment, care arrangements, friendships, and relationships.
- successfully participate in the community and access meaningful occupation, employment, and life-long learning opportunities.

We will utilise our strengths of our StaR Practice model, starting with **strengths**, being **trauma informed** and **relational**



Sandwell is working towards recognition as a UNICEF Child Friendly Community. Sandwell is at the heart of the West Midlands, and we have a young, diverse and rapidly growing population. We're proud of the diverse communities that bring so much to our borough. We are working with Unicef towards creating a Child Friendly Sandwell, ensuring that our children's rights are central to everything that we do.

What Does our Short Breaks Statement Do?

This sets our offer short breaks offer for our children and young people with Special Educational needs and/or a disability (SEND). This statement explains:

- What Short Breaks are for children and young people with a disability
- Sandwell's Short Breaks Offer
- What sort of breaks are available
- Who can access a Short Break
- How to access a Short Break

What is a Short Break?

Children and young people with additional need and/or a disability have the right to be supported at home and in their local communities, to have opportunities to meet and make friends, feel confident, and to thrive with a good family life.

Short breaks can give opportunities for children and young people to have a change of scene, try different experiences, have fun, and make friends. This can help with their confidence and independence. Having time away from their primary carer, can give them opportunities to explore and establish their own identity too.

A Short Break can last from a few hours to a few days, an evening, overnight, a weekend, and school holiday daytime activities, depending on the assessed need. A short break can take place in the community, in a supported setting, or in a family's own home.

Short breaks are an opportunity for parent carers to recharge their batteries, spend time with others, or pursue a particular interest. Short breaks can give families a valuable break from their caring responsibilities, helping them to spend time with other family members or have time for themselves.

Every family and situation are different, but our short breaks are for children and young people with a disability, including those with complex health needs, aged between 0-18 years living in Sandwell.

For our young adults, the Young Adult's Team is in place. The Young Adults Team (YAT) works alongside young people aged 14 to 25, and their families, carrying out outcome focused assessments. They develop support plans to meet the young adult's assessed eligible needs as defined in the Care Act 2014, to promote independence and meets identified outcomes and aspirations. To access this support either speak with your social worker or call 0121 569 2266.

We aspire that our children with additional needs and/or a disability are fully part of their communities, regardless of their level of need.

Range of Short Breaks in Sandwell

In Sandwell we recognise that not all children with a disability and their families need the same level of support and our Short Breaks offer reflects this.

Our children, young people and families have told us the importance of having a range of short breaks, from family activities where brothers, sisters, mum's or dads can all be involved, to group activities, to 1:1 support.

Universal Short Breaks



In partnership with Sandwell Parent Voices United (our Parent Carer Forum) we believe that access to universal services is important for our children and young people. Our children and young people with SEND, need as many opportunities as possible to access these services. These can include sports groups, youth clubs, cinemas, leisure centres, playgroups, libraries and playgrounds.

All universal services have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make sure that their services are accessible to children and young people with a disability, making reasonable adjustments.

Full details of different clubs and activities can be found on the [SEND Local Offer](#) website and the [Family Information Service Hub](#) . Children and young people can also find information on [Sandwell Voice](#) where children, and young people can enquire directly about, joining and using these services and any concessions available.

Universal Short Breaks are available for all children, but it is recognised some children won't be able to access because they need more support, than universal services can provide. We want to ensure all children have the opportunity and may be that an Additional or Specialist Short Break could support with a Personal Assistant (PA) going with the children to the universal activity.

Here are some of the universal activities and services which are available, including those designed specifically for children with additional needs:



Play sessions and events take place at a variety of venues across the borough.

goplaysandwell.co.uk



Delivering term time and holiday play provision in West Bromwich, Oldbury, Wednesbury & Smethwick

poweredbycan.org



Delivering term time and holiday play provision in Rowley Regis

sportingyourfutures.org



Delivering term time and holiday play provision in Tipton

groundwork.org.uk

SEND Provision in Rowley Regis that delivers a session every other Saturday during term time

creativeactivelives.org.uk

SEND Movement and Music workshops

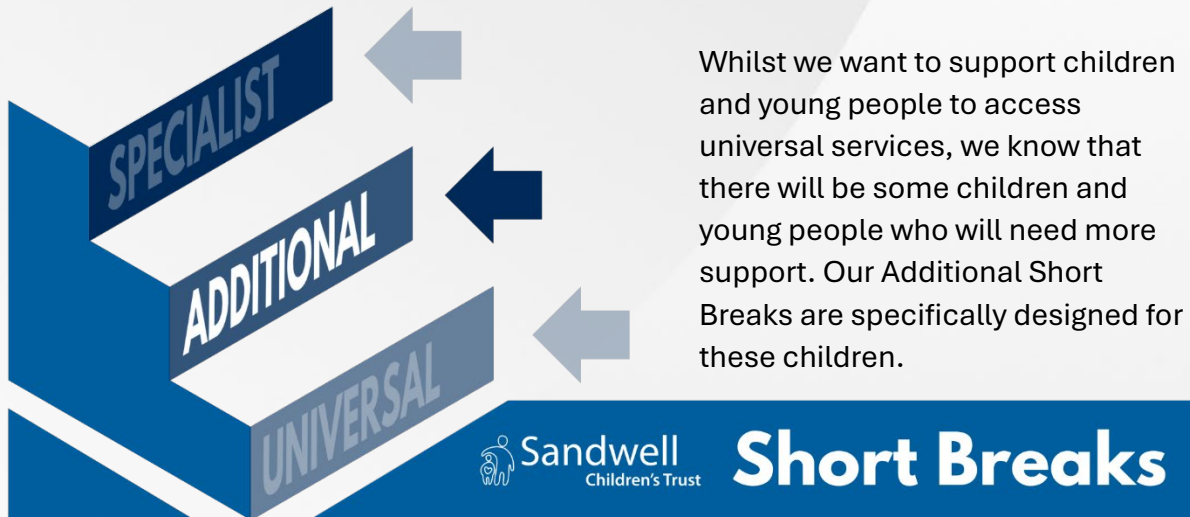
fantasticjpurneyscic@gmail.com



The Marvels Youth Club runs from Malthouse Stables in Tipton and is for young people aged between 11 and 25 years of age with learning difficulties or disabilities. The club runs a variety of activities planned with young people to develop life skills and independent living. Sessions include cooking, health and wellbeing, arts and crafts, sports and fitness and offsite visits. This is a very welcoming club with a very skilled and friendly staff team, due to the nature of this club an assessment is required to make sure our club can meet the needs of the young person.

<https://www.justyouth.org.uk/eyes/>

Additional Short Breaks



Our Community Short Breaks can support children with a variety of needs, including those who may have complex mobility difficulties, communication difficulties or those who need 1:1 support.

Our Additional Short Breaks can include:



Our Parent Carers have told us how important these services are to them and their children. We are keen to expand our offer further, including looking at using more Direct Payments in the future. See below for the future of our short breaks.

To learn more about our Additional Short Break providers please follow this link.....

To access a Additional Short Break, they are available for:

- Children and young people up to their 18th birthday
- Children and young people living in the Sandwell
- Children and young people with a disability, that prevents them from accessing universal services without additional support

And/or

- Additional needs which prevent them from accessing universal services without additional support as outlined in their EHCP

Specialist Short Breaks



Our Specialist Short Breaks are for our children with the most complex needs, whose needs cannot be met within our universal or Additional short breaks offer. Given the level of needs, these are accessed by a Social Work Assessment.

Our Specialist Short Breaks can include:

Direct Payments

Family
Based Care

Support Preparing
for Adulthood

Overnight Short Break/Respite

Personal Budgets

Personal Assistant (PA) Support

Specialist Short Breaks are available for:

- Children and young people up to their 18th birthday.
- specialist breaks are allocated for children under 5, but like most children aged under 5, its unusual to access clubs and activities without their parent or carer being with them.
- Living in the Sandwell,
- Have a severe learning disability

And/or

- Have profound multiple disabilities

And/or

- Have a severe sensory impairment

We may sometimes support children with less severe disabilities if:

- A parent carer, carer or those with parental responsibility has a disability or chronic illness,
- The impact on the family is severe,
- A sibling also has moderate or severe disabilities.

These short breaks are activities for children and young people with the most complex needs. They need to have an assessment to identify the need and plan for the type and

level of support required, in partnership with the child, young person and their family and to agree which short breaks package would best contribute to meeting these needs.

To access a Specialist Short Break:

A family, school, health or any other practitioner can contact the Integrated Front Door on 0121 569 3100 to explore this. The Front Door will listen to the family to think about the best next steps. This could be signposting to universal services, Early Help support, or a Social Work Assessment of the family's needs. If the child has a severe and/or profound disability, this assessment could be completed by the Children with Disabilities Team.

All assessments are completed with our families, and we work together to develop a plan. If the assessment identifies the need for a specialist short break, the child's practitioner will attend our multiagency panel. This is also to ensure that our decision making remains fair and consistent to ensure equitable access to our Specialist Short Breaks.

For young people over 14 there will be an emphasis on developing independence skills, as part of their preparation for adulthood (PFA)

Types of support under the specialist short break offer:

Personal Assistant (PA)

This is an individual worker who is matched as a Personal Assistants to support an individual child /young person to access activities in the community including independence skill development. There will be allocated number of hours per week or fortnight as required. *Hours cannot be banked to be used as a block.* It is recognised that school holidays may require additional hours to term time. These services do not include any charges for activities or transport costs, except if identified within the assessment, these must be funded by families.

Direct payments

Parents have told us they enjoy the flexibility of arranging and managing their own short breaks through direct payments and personal budgets funding. This means they can choose and arrange services themselves, to fit their lives. We are committed to supporting families to do this wherever possible. This funding will be reviewed at least every year to ensure it is meeting the assessed need and delivering the outcomes identified.

Joint provision or Funding between Health and Sandwell Children's Trust

Where a child has a complexity of disabilities and/or ongoing health care needs, we will work with Continuing Health Care colleagues for a joint assessment and where eligible a co-ordinated package created with you.

Personal Budgets

For those children and young people with an Education Health Care Plan, a personal budget may be requested. This is an amount of money that is identified to flexibly support an individual child or young person with their education, health and/or care needs as identified in their EHCP. It can include funds from Sandwell Children's Trust social care support, from the council's Education service, and/or health's Integrated Care Service.

Families can receive a personal budget for care needs, education needs or health needs or a mixture of all of them. Personal budgets cannot be used to pay for universal services that all children and young people can access but can help with individual support that needs to be put in place for a child or young person with SEND. Personal budgets are designed to help families and young people have more control and greater choice over how their needs are met and outcomes delivered. They will be reviewed against activity and progress towards meeting agreed outcomes.

Overnight short breaks

For some families, an overnight short break that offers short-term care, i.e. a weekend, a midweek night, a day in the school holidays, for children and young people with a disability or health condition that significantly impacts on the family, will be the right help for them.

Overnight breaks will form part of a support package based on the particular needs of individual child and their families, as identified in the Social Work Assessment. This could be via a family-based sleep over (overnight short break/respite with a specialist foster carer) or via a registered overnight short break home (children's home) or an additional carer within the family home.

Transport

Parent carers, carers or those with parental responsibility are responsible for transporting their children to and from Short Break activities, unless agreed as part of a child's Social Care assessment and plan.

Preparation for Adulthood

All children need to be prepared for adult life. For young people with a disability Short Breaks can play an essential role in developing young people's independence and confidence. Some of the short break activities are specifically designed to give disabled young people the opportunity to develop skills for future independence. These may contribute to the 'preparing for adulthood' outcomes of independent living, inclusion in the community and maintaining personal health.

Want to know more about what is available locally?

To find out more about what Sandwell's Local Offer is please see our [Local Offer](#)

Get Involved:

Sandwell Parents Voices Unite (SPVU) is our Parent Carer Forum. We encourage our Parent Carers to join.



Email: admin@spvu.org

They provide exceptional support to our parents and ensure that we are providing the best services we can. They are pivotal in the development of services for our children and young people, being independent from Sandwell Children's Trust and the Council. SPVU regularly hold coffee mornings, training events and information sessions. They are made up of volunteers and are keen to hear your views. They are also a good source of information and support.

You can also join our [disability register](#), to access regular updates and information about services available in the local area. Our register also supports us in understanding the level of needs within our communities to make sure we are planning for future services.

We value the involvement of parents, carers, children, young people, and will you're your views to inform the commissioning of new services. Our aim is to work together to find ways to better meet the needs and providing value for money to improve outcomes

for children and young people with disabilities. We will be holding annual events to hear your views.

If you would be interested in participating in any consultation groups or by offering to give specific feedback on our services, please contact us:

Contact Sandwell Children's Trust 0121 569 7867

Email: CS_Firmstep@sandwell.gov.uk

Black Country Advocacy Service: 0808 169 9954

Email: BCA.referral@childrenssociety.org.uk

Or visit [Sandwell Voice](#)

For our children and young people, Sandwell's [SHAPE](#) Programme is a Child's Voice Initiative designed to listen to children and young people in Sandwell.

The Future of Our Short Breaks:

We are aspirational in wanting to achieve the right support for our children and young people. We want to expand our offer both in universal and additional services, reaching even more children and young people. We will work alongside our parent carers, children and young people and services, to explore how we can further build on our offer further. We want to give more flexibility and control in accessing our Additional Short Breaks and want to incorporate the use of Direct Payments. We want to get this right and this will take some time. Our aim is to go live in 2027.

In the meantime, to ensure that our short breaks offer is working for our families we will continue to hold annual consultation events. Your voice matters and we want to hear this. We are also working on implementing a short breaks offer for our 18-25 year olds with SEND.

Our parent carers have also told us that the current 'first come first serve' approach to our Additional Short Breaks does not work for everyone. We are working with our partners in HAF to explore a new portal system to support fairer access. We are also working with Sandwell Parent Voices United (Parent Carer Forum), and our partners in the Council, Health and Education to make sure our Local Offer is interactive, accessible and have the right up to date information, so that all information is in one place.

Providers of Short Break services

Funding is awarded through an application and tendering process that ensures that the providers offer services and activities that meet current demand, have the necessary skills, and experience and provide value for money. They are all required to safeguard and promote children's welfare. These requirements are reflected in the contracts with providers and ensure they are met through ongoing contract monitoring.

Legal framework used in this statement

- [Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011](#)
- [Care Act 2014](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#)
- [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970](#)

Our Partners and Useful Contacts:



[Barnardo's and Family Hubs](#)



[Autism West Midlands](#)



[Council for Disabled Children](#)



[Sandwell Parent Voices United \(our Parent Carer Forum\)](#)



[Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service](#)

0121 289 2566



[Sandwell Advocacy](#)

[0121 520 8070](#)





[Sandwell Children's Trust](#)



[Sandwell Local Offer](#)



[Sandwell Young Carers](#)

[0121 525 7667](tel:01215257667)