

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL SHORT-BREAKS SERVICE STATEMENT 2021

SHORT BREAKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS



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VISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) IN MANCHESTER

‘Our Manchester’ sets out a long-term vision for Manchester’s future. The strategy takes a bold approach that focuses on people’s strengths and helps to unlock the potential that exists in the city. The strategy recognises the importance of creating an equitable city where everyone can contribute to and share in success.

Within this context, the Our Manchester Disability Plan sets out a vision for Manchester’s children and adults with a disability. It is Manchester’s plan to support and enable Disabled Children and Adults to fully participate in all the city’s opportunities, facilities, activities and communities.

This strategy is based on a Social Model of Disability. This states that it is not people’s conditions or impairments that disable people, but environmental and societal conventions, and that the way society is organised creates barriers and does not accommodate difference – and, therefore, disabled people.

THE INTENTION IS THAT WHEN THESE BARRIERS ARE REMOVED, MANCHESTER WILL BE A DISABLED-FRIENDLY CITY WHERE:

- Disabled Children’s aspirations are recognised and can be realised
- All areas of the city and all parts of city life are accessible
- Disabled Children and Adults can be independent and have choice and control over their lives
- Its residents are the city’s best assets and we should build on these strengths
- Everyone has the right to fulfil their own potential.



SHORT BREAKS IN MANCHESTER

WHAT IS A SHORT BREAK?

A short break gives a disabled child or young person the opportunity to have fun and try new skills. It also gives parents and carers a break from their caring role. Short-break activities are offered at weekends, evenings and during school holidays. Taking a short break can give parents and carers the time to undertake training, enjoy leisure activities and carry out day-to-day tasks, or spend time with other children.

WHAT IS A SHORT-BREAK STATEMENT?

A Short-Break Statement is a guide to the short-break services and support offered by Manchester City Council. Every local authority has to provide a statement then listen and respond to the views of parents and carers.

“Sarah talks about the play scheme for weeks afterwards. It makes such a difference to us as a family.”

Marcus, a parent.

“It’s a lifeline!”

Jen, a parent

HOW CAN SHORT BREAKS HELP ME AND MY FAMILY?

Short breaks can help your family because they help children and young people to:

- Take part in exciting activities that interest them
- Develop independence and gain more confidence
- Spend time with their friends – and make new ones
- Achieve personal goals and learn new skills.

For parents and carers they can:

- Reduce feelings of stress
- Provide the time to spend with their other children
- Help to achieve personal goals and learn new skills
- Allow time to meet and get to know other families that share similar experiences.



WHO ARE SHORT BREAKS FOR?

The Short-Breaks programme is for any disabled child or young person aged up to 18. It involves universal activities, the SEND Community Offer, and a smaller range of additional and specialist support (specifically for disabled children and young people). Because of the ongoing investment in our Universal Services, many families' short-break needs can be met through using the wide-ranging services available locally, such as youth clubs, play schemes, leisure centres etc.

All families can access our SEND Community Offer. The Community Offer is co-produced and largely designed to include the whole family. Located within universal services, the SEND Community Offer enables families to access activities alongside other SEND families to encourage peer to peer support. As well as building support networks, the Community Offer can give families the confidence to access services they might not otherwise try on their own.

Where some additional support is required, families can access additional help, usually in the form of a small budget. For children who need a lot of support, highly specialised or bespoke services are available for children and young people and their carers. Some families choose to use a Direct Payment to buy their own services, as agreed in a support plan.

Have a look at some of our short-break [case studies](#).

“The whole family have got involved (in the SEND Community Offer) and we’ve absolutely loved everything that’s been going on this summer!”

Jess, a parent



WHERE DO I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE?

To find out more about the activities available, you can search the Local Offer, subscribe to the Local Offer newsletter, or attend a Local Offer Drop-In. There may be activities available that can be accessed by your family and child without requiring any additional support from the local authority. These include the SEND Community Offer provision; open access playschemes, which are able to meet the needs of a wide range of children; relaxed sessions at the cinema, which are suitable for children with autism; and local youth clubs, which make provision for young people with SEND.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A SHORT BREAK?

You don't need to apply for any of the SEND Community Offer services. These are available to all SEND families in Manchester. Once you have looked at the local offer, if you think your child may need additional support to access a short break and your child has never had one before, you can self-refer by calling the Contact Centre on 0161 234 5001.

You will then be contacted by a member of the specialist resource team, who will usually arrange an Early Help Assessment. This is a strength-based assessment used to determine the support needed.

If your child is already in receipt of a non-specialist short break and you would like to change or review your offer, you can attend a Short Break Review Session. However, if your child has a specialist package that has been agreed with a social worker and you would like to review your support package, or if you need extra help, you should discuss this with your social worker.

For further information or an informal chat about applying for a short break, contact the Specialist Resource Team on 0161 219 2125.

WHAT IF I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH A SHORT-BREAK ACTIVITY?

If you have a problem with a short-break activity, you should raise your concerns with the provider in the first instance, and ask for a copy of their complaints policy if needed. If you remain unhappy or you need some support to address the problem, contact the Special Resource Team on 0161 219 2125 or email shortbreaks@manchester.gov.uk



OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

PARTICIPATION IN MANCHESTER

Manchester's model of participation reflects the diversity of its community and has been developed with parents & carers of children & young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

MANCHESTER PARENT CARER FORUM (MPCF)

Manchester Parent Carer Forum acts as the strategic voice of parents & carers of children and young people with SEND in Manchester

The forum is led by a steering group of parent-carer volunteers who all have children/ young people with SEND, and are committed to the principle of co-production. As well as co-chairing the Local Offer Review Board and has members that sit on the SEND Board, the Our Manchester Disability Plan Board and others. Aside from representing parent voice strategically, the forum also provides plenty of opportunities for parents/carers to directly get involved in shaping and influencing SEND services in Manchester.

You can learn more about MPCF at manchesterparentcarerforum.org.uk

MANCHESTER PARENT CHAMPIONS

The parent champion model grew from a small group of parents who wanted to develop an informal model of peer support. The main role of the parent champions is to raise awareness of the SEND Local Offer and to offer peer to peer support through their Facebook page. All parent champions receive training on the SEND Local Offer and opportunities to get involved in a wide range of coproduction activity. The Parent Champions are members of the Manchester Working Together Network.

MANCHESTER WORKING TOGETHER NETWORK (MWTN)

Led by the MPCF, the Manchester Working Together Network brings together various parent/carer support groups and SEND organisations across the city to gather parent/carer voice and ensure we get the widest possible reach. The network also enables connections to be made with specific groups, for example, BAME, Down's Syndrome, etc. The partners share information and feedback, as well draw on each other's strengths to develop the support groups individually and collectively.

You can learn more about MWTN at manchesterparentcarerforum.org.uk/manchester-working-together-network

Manchester Parent Carer Forum and the Parent Champions complement each other and offer a flexible model of participation, ensuring opportunities for participation and co-production are accessible to more parents and carers. The Manchester Working Together Network provides an opportunity for networking and support to smaller parent carer groups and ensures an even more representative voice influencing key developments.

THE CHANGE MAKERS

As part of Greater Manchester's Youth Network's youth leadership provision, they support the Changemakers in partnership with Manchester City Council. This is a group of young people aged 14–25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who meet regularly to share their views and those of their peers, influence services for other young people, and make new friends.

The Changemakers are at the heart of our efforts to influence and develop services. The group is open to more young people who wish to join and make a difference, have fun and improve services for young people with SEND. Find out more contact joseph.cain@gmyn.co.uk

CHILDCARE

All childcare services are listed on the local offer. Where a suitable service cannot be found, you can access support from The Child Care Brokerage Service, which can assist in looking for suitable provision.

TRANSPORT

Wherever possible, we want to encourage use of [public transport](#) to promote greater degrees of independence.

Transport for short breaks is not provided (other than in exceptional circumstances, when it is identified as an essential part of the support package and, usually, as part of a social work assessment). We have a dedicated section on the local offer that gives information about transport.



TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

To determine eligibility for short breaks for over-18s, an assessment will need to be carried out against national eligibility criteria. If the criteria are met, we'll work with the young adult and family to decide which services would be most beneficial, including working out how much these services will cost. If the criteria are not met, we can give information, advice and help to find services in the community, some of which may be free.

Referrals to the service can be made via the Contact Centre on 0161 234 5001, or through an existing social worker, who can refer the case via the Transition Panel.

Parents are represented on the Transition Board through the Manchester Parent Carers Forum. The purpose of the Transition Board is to develop a fit-for-purpose transition offer for the people of Manchester.

HOW HAVE SHORT BREAKS BEEN DEVELOPED?

1989

The Children Act 1989 provides a clear definition of a disabled child and the roles of their parents and carers. It also recognises the pressures placed upon carers and the need for regular breaks to enable them to continue caring.

2006

Parents inform Parliamentary hearings that the biggest cause of unhappiness is the lack of short-break provision.

2008

Consultations with parents and carers reveal that children and young people with disabilities and additional needs want greater choice in their short breaks and to be able to access local leisure facilities. Parents and carers just want a break from caring and to feel confident that services are meeting their family's needs. Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act requires local authorities to offer short-break provision, giving guidance on the types of services that should be offered. 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' is launched, focusing upon increasing and improving short-break provision.

2011

The Aiming High programme ends (March) and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations come into effect, making it a legal duty for local authorities to provide short breaks (April). On 1 October 2011, a short-breaks service statement must be published, which includes the range of services available, any eligibility criteria, and how these services have been developed to meet the needs of parents and carers. It is recognised that these statements will need to be reviewed regularly in order to ensure that services are meeting the needs of the people they are being provided for. This should be done through consultation and collaboration with local parents.

2014

The Children and Families Act. The SEN Code of Practice is the biggest shake-up to the system in over thirty years. Instead of having an SEN Statement after assessment, they now receive an EHCP, which can run from birth to age 25. Parents are given greater say in how money is spent on their child's SEN support. Young people also have the right to be consulted about their support. The legislation places a duty on local authorities to publish information and advice for parents to help them understand what services they and their family can expect from a range of local agencies, including statutory entitlements such as short breaks.

2015

The Care Act 2015 makes some of the biggest changes to Health and Adult Social Care in England in more than sixty years. The legislation puts people and carers in control of their care and support.

HOW HAS THE SERVICE STATEMENT BEEN PREPARED?

The Short Break Statement will be reviewed annually in co-production with our partners including Manchester Parent Carer Forum, Manchester Parent Champions, Manchester Working Together Group and The Change Makers.

PARTICIPATION IN FUTURE REVIEWS

This statement will be checked annually to ensure it remains a good reflection of current services. We are likely to make changes to the statement as our services develop, and we will notify parents and carers of the opportunities and how to get involved via the Participation Register, the Parent Champions and children and young people.

“The staff we’ve had for Joe have been fantastic – skilful and sensitive while being ambitious about what our child can achieve.”

Laura, a parent talking about Time Specialist Support

