Wandsworth Borough Council
Eligibility Criteria for Wandsworth Short Break Services for Families with Disabled Children and Young People aged from 0-18

A short break is any service which gives disabled children and young people the chance to do an activity that they enjoy and gives their parents a break from caring. These eligibility criteria explain what factors the Council takes into account when deciding which families are eligible for short breaks. Wandsworth Family Information Service can provide more information and advice about the range of short breaks available and which services may be best suited to your needs. You can contact them through their website www.wandsworth.gov.uk/localoffer, by email at fis@wandsworth.gov.uk or seek advice by leaving a message on the SEND Enquiry Line on 0208 871 8907.

Access to Short Break Services

Short Break Services are for families living in Wandsworth who are caring for a disabled child or young person from birth to their eighteenth birthday. The criteria for eligibility for services for young people and carers changes when a young person reaches the age of 18 years. Information about the services for those aged 18 or over can be found on: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/carers.

Further information is available on:

Family Information Service | Preparing for adulthood

Make a referral to adult social care - Wandsworth Borough Council

Carers are eligible for short break services if they are caring for a disabled child or young person which results in a substantial and long-term effect on the child's ability to carry out everyday activities. This may include:

- a physical disability;
- a learning disability;
- a sensory disability, for example a hearing or visual impairment;
- autism;
- children with complex health needs or who have a life-limiting or life-threatening condition;
- children whose behaviour may be challenging as a result of their disability.

Families with disabled children may need different levels of support at different times and the type of short break that meets the needs of families and that children enjoy

will change. All decisions about short breaks will be based on the individual needs of the child, in their family context.

All disabled children and young people under 18 years old are entitled to an assessment of their needs. Assessment involves gathering information about the child and their family to find out what level of support they need. Carers are eligible for short break services if they are caring for a child or young person who has a disability which results in a substantial and long-term effect on the child's ability to carry out everyday activities.

In Wandsworth we aim to make it as easy as possible for families to use short break services, wherever possible without the need for any additional assessments. We are also working to increase the ability of all services to include disabled children and young people.

Universal services

Many disabled children do not need extra help or an assessment for a short break because they will get enough support by using universal services. Universal services are the services used by all children and families. After school and breakfast clubs provided at your child's school or through local community groups, leisure activities such as youth clubs, sports clubs, church groups, or organisations such as Scouts and Guides, or holiday play centres are all examples of universal services. If you want to use a universal service, you should approach the service provider direct.

The WAND card (for children aged 0-17 years) and WAND+ Cards (for young people aged 18-24 years) are convenient forms of ID which indicate that the holder has a high level of special educational needs, disabilities or complex health needs. To be eligible for a card a child or young person must:

- be a Wandsworth resident, or "looked after" by Wandsworth,
- have their name included on the Disabled Children's Register
- be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) middle or upper rate or a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or have a recommendation from a professional indicating that they would meet the criteria for DLA or PIP.

The WAND and WAND+ Cards can be used to access concessions or to seek assistance with a wide range of services and independent providers within the borough. More information is available on the Council's local offer:
Family Information Service | Wandsworth's WAND and WAND+ cards

Targeted or specialist services

Some children and families will need more specialist provision so that they can enjoy a short break. In Wandsworth we have a range of specialist services for disabled children and young people from which families can choose. These services may cater for children with different impairments or ages and have their own access

criteria. They will all be able to offer specialist support and will have expertise in offering short breaks to disabled children and young people. Examples of targeted services might include after school, holiday and weekend provision at specialist playgrounds and clubs, after school or holiday provision run by special schools, or buddying services.

Targeted services will usually require some evidence of your child's disability. Examples of the type of information that can be used include:

- evidence that your child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance;
- an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan that demonstrates that your child falls within the priority groups for short breaks set by the provider;
- support from or referral by a professional who knows your child.

Services which need to be accessed using an additional assessment

Some children and families need more help than is available through general specialist services. If you think that this applies to your family then you can request a social work assessment by phoning Children's Services on 020 8871 6622 or by emailing: mash@wandsworth.gov.uk and asking for a Child and Family Assessment, with a view to receiving short breaks.

You may also be referred to the Supporting Disabled Children Service by a professional working with you, unless there are concerns about your child's safety, this will happen with your consent. A social worker will carry out an assessment and will discuss with you a range of issues that may affect whether you will be able to receive a service, these may include:

- Family breakdown, either imminent or likely in the future, which is due to the additional stresses caused by bringing up a disabled child, which would be eased by the provision of a service.
- Severe challenging behaviour from a disabled child which impact on all aspects of the child/young person's functioning or pose a risk to themselves or to others.
- A disabled child who occasionally needs more supervision than children of the same age
- Single carer, particularly if there are other children in the household.
- The effect of disturbed nights on the carer and their family.
- A child who has speech and language impairment
- The impact Moving & Handling a disabled child has on the wellbeing of the carer.
- The health of the carer.
- Number of children in the household their ages and needs.
- The family's own resources and/or Universal and Targeted services are unable to provide the required level of support.

- Disabled children who have recently been subject to a child protection plan and who remain in need of ongoing specialist services.
- No or a limited extended family network.
- Opportunities for a young person to gain skills and experience to support independence appropriate to their ability are not available.

This information will be used to decide whether you need additional services and what additional services should be provided. These services might include:

- support in the home;
- overnight breaks, either at Oakdene, the Council's overnight short breaks centre, with a short breaks foster carer, or if necessary with a specialist provider;
- extra staffing to enable your child to attend a short breaks provider if their needs require it; or
- direct payments to enable you to purchase the services that you need
  DP Wandsworth Leaflet
  Ruils Independent Living : Ruils Independent Living

Any services provided will be tailored to the assessed needs of the child and family. Your disabled child's eligibility for a package of support will be reviewed by their social worker every six months, more often if their needs change and set out in a child in need plan.

The Council and Wandsworth Integrated Care Board work together to make sure that children with complex health needs receive an appropriate range of services and short breaks. Referrals to the Integrated Care Board can be made by a health professional or social worker involved with your family. The two agencies will work together with you to consider how best to meet your child's needs and your needs as a carer for a disabled child.