

Our Children – Resilient * Successful * Safe

**Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Children & Young People Services
Short Breaks Statement for Children and Young
People with SEND**

April 2024 v.1.2



www.rotherham.gov.uk

Rotherham
Metropolitan
Borough Council 

Introduction

Our Vision

“Working with Rotherham’s children, young people and families to be resilient, successful and safe”.

Rotherham’s vision for children and young people with SEN and disabilities is the same as for all our children and young people; that they be safe, happy, healthy, confident, and successful, contributing to a thriving, inclusive community that is welcoming to all.

This sets our strong clear ambition for children and young people’s services. The vision aligns with the **Council Plan: Council Plan 2022-25 – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council** and is delivered through robust Service Plans that sit in all areas of Children and Young Peoples Services Directorate as well as joint plans in partnership with Health.

The Four Cornerstones

The Four Cornerstones evolved from the voices of Rotherham children and young people with SEND and their families, underpinning the area’s approach to SEND. The approach is facilitated by Genuine Partnerships, a team involving parent carers, children, young people, and practitioners working together as equal partners. Cornerstones packages of support and resources have been co-created to support schools, settings and services across Education, Health and Social Care to build trust and embed inclusive practice by strengthening co-production within their systems and processes. The model is nationally recognised as best practice in co-production and the team is regularly asked to support other areas regionally and nationally.

WELCOME AND CARE

- Providing a happy and secure environment or context
- Nurturing confidence, wellbeing, and self-esteem
- Working together with you to build a supportive community
- Making sure your voice is heard and valued
- Communicating expectations clearly
- Emphasising strengths and achievements

VALUE AND INCLUDE

- Identifying needs early, welcoming your involvement at every stage
- Having a ‘can do’ approach
- Making sure that all our public practitioners have the right skills and understanding
- Sharing information about strengths and needs sensitively with relevant partners
- Being creative and flexible so that we can respond in the best way to individual’s strengths, needs and changing circumstances.
- Involving all relevant partners in decision-making processes about referrals to others
- Encouraging all partners to contribute to the development of our values, systems and policies

COMMUNICATE

- Asking for your views and involvement
- Being available when people need to talk and making time to listen
- Listen calmly and respectfully
- Responding promptly and following up
- Reviewing regularly
- Providing all the information needed in a timely way, in a form that can be understood
- Striving to use positive and constructive language
- Nurturing confidence, wellbeing, and self-esteem
- Working together with you to build a supportive community
- Making sure your voice is heard and valued
- Communicating expectations clearly
- Emphasising strengths and achievements

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

- Encouraging participation
- Valuing your contributions
- Working together to develop plans, set targets and create and deliver specific programmes
- Involving you in decisions about organisational changes and improvements

About Rotherham

Rotherham is a large minster town in South Yorkshire, England which along with its nearby settlements form the Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham, with a population of 265,800 (ONS, 2021).

In Rotherham there are 61,600 0–19-year-old children living in the Borough (23.1% of the local population – ONS, 2021). There has been a significant increase in the Eastern European Roma population (from Slovakia and Czech Republic since 2004 and Romania since 2014), concentrated in a few central neighbourhoods (Boston Castle, Rotherham East, and Rotherham West).

Further local and national demographics information tells us that: -

- 23% of children living in Rotherham are in low-income families (England 20% - 2022).
- Our Free School Meal (FSM) entitlement rate is above national average, 25.2% compared to 23.1% at Primary phase and 24.1% compared to 20.9% at Secondary phase (DfE 2021/22)
- According to the 2019 Indices of Deprivation, deprivation in Rotherham has **increased** with the Borough now ranked **44th** most deprived district on average IMD score, compared to 52nd in 2015. Rotherham's rank means that the Borough is amongst the 14% most deprived local authority areas in England.
- In 2019, the key drivers of deprivation in Rotherham remained **Health & Disability, Education & Skills**, and **Employment**. Of these, Health & Disability deprivation was most severe and widespread whilst Employment and Education deprivation were more concentrated and polarised. Health and Crime deprivation have increased the most since 2015 according to the Indices.
- 20.1% of our school age population is from BME background (England 36.1%) (DfE 2021/22)
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is claimed for 7.7% of children aged under 16 years in the local authority area compared with 5.3% in England as a whole.

How many Disabled Children and Young People live in Rotherham?

- there are 45,627 children and young people attending Rotherham's schools
- 1089 pupils (2.4%) are in a special school and 118 pupils (0.3%) attend a pupil referral unit (PRUs). The Rotherham School Census January 2023 identifies 9325 children and young people who are SEND (20.4%) attending Rotherham's schools in the borough

Information below is taken from the local area SEND-LGI information website

- Data for 2021/22 shows that 19.7% of Rotherham children and young people are identified as having any Special Education Need (SEND) compared to the national average of 16.3% (figures are for pupils attending schools in Rotherham only and do not include children and young people for whom Rotherham are responsible for but are placed out of the borough.)
- 4.4% of our Special Educational Needs cohort have their needs met through an Education, Care and Health plan (EHCP)
- 15.3% of Children and young people have their needs meet by graduated response (SEN Support level) compared to the national average of 12.4%

SECTION A

What are short breaks?

Short breaks are part of a variety of services which support children in need and their families. The Council will support families in the provision of short breaks where there is a clear, assessed need and where universal and community services cannot meet need. They include the provision of day, evening, overnight and weekend activities for the child or young person, and can take place in the child's own home, the home of an approved carer, or in a residential or community setting. Short breaks come in a variety of options and each one can last from just a few hours to a few days. Short breaks should promote health, independence and inclusion, whilst recognising and valuing the child and their family's choice and preference.

Most users of short breaks are children with disabilities and their families but non-disabled children in need may also receive short breaks. Short breaks can give enjoyable experiences for disabled children and young people with or without their primary carers, or a break for parents and families from their caring responsibilities.

The Legal Context

The short breaks regulations provide further detail on how local authorities must perform their duty in the Children Act 1989 to provide breaks from caring for carers of disabled children at home and to allow them to do so more effectively. In summary, the Short Breaks Regulations require local authorities to do three things:

- to ensure that, when making short break provision, they have regard to the needs of different types of carers, not just those who would be unable to continue to provide care without a break;
- to provide a range of breaks, as appropriate, during the day, night, at weekends and during the school holidays; and
- to provide parents with a short breaks services statement detailing the range of available breaks and any eligibility criteria attached to them.

Local Authorities must:

- provide a range of short breaks services;
- give families the choice to access short breaks services using a direct payment;
- publish a statement of their short breaks services on their website;
- keep their short breaks statement under review;
- state in their short breaks service statement the range of short breaks services available, the criteria by which eligibility for services will be assessed, and how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of families with disabled children in their area;
- consult parents as part of the review of the statement;
- consider the legal implications of the eligibility criteria they apply to short breaks services; and
- not apply any eligibility criteria mechanistically without consideration of a particular family's needs

SECTION B

What is available in Rotherham for disabled children, young people and their families?

Universal Services

Disabled children and families have access to a wide range of universal activities, recreational spaces and clubs, sports and leisure services across the borough. Universal services are available for ALL and have a duty to make reasonable adjustments and not treat a disabled person less favourably.

Universal Services are not quality controlled by the Local Authority and therefore parents, carers and young people who are able to must make their own checks to ensure that the service they access is appropriate and safe to access. There is guidance on this on the Rotherham SEND Local Offer

Universal Services have a duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (2001), subsumed within the Equalities Act 2010, to make reasonable adjustments and not to treat a disabled person less favourably than any other individual.

Childcare

43 Day Nurseries [Day Nurseries – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

21 Preschools [Pre-Schools – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

13 Children's Centres [Children's Centres – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

17 Out of School Clubs [Out of School Clubs – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Many local schools provide breakfast clubs [Breakfast Clubs – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

A range of holiday clubs and activities [Rotherham Healthy Holidays Programme – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

The Families' Information Service (FIS) provides free and impartial information and advice on all registered childcare in Rotherham. They can also provide information on free early education places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds and the 30 Hours Free Childcare offer for working parents.

They work closely with the Early Years inclusion co-ordinator who provides support to childcare settings to ensure that every child's needs are met through offering support, information and managing grants.

Early Years Inclusion Officers works directly with parents to determine childcare needs and the additional support needs for the child. They also work with the childcare providers to ensure all of the relevant specialist training is in place for specific needs as well as any equipment required to look after the child.

Activities

A wide range of youth and sporting activities [Places to go and things to do – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Family activities [Family Activities Directory – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Lots more information can be found on the Family Information Service website [Families Information Service – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

There are various community groups such as Brownies and Girl Guides, Cubs and Scouts, sporting groups and clubs across the borough. Universal services such as the Civic Theatre, bowling alleys, and play centres/soft play areas are also available in Rotherham.

Leisure Centres

There are 7 leisure centres across Rotherham:

Aston Cum Aughton Leisure Centre

Maltby Leisure Centre

Rotherham Leisure Complex

Wath Upon Dearne Leisure Centre

Graves Health and Leisure Centre

Thornccliffe Health and Leisure Centre

Wisewood Sports Centre

The leisure centres are managed by the Council's partner Places Leisure [Rotherham Leisure Complex | Rotherham – Places Leisure](#) and offer a range of opportunities for healthy activities for all ages.

Parks and Green Spaces

18 parks [Parks – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

9 nature reserves [Nature Reserves – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

29 Woodlands [Woodlands – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs

There are 15 Libraries and Neighbourhood hubs. [List of libraries and neighbourhood hubs – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

All Library members and visitors can use all 15 libraries across the Rotherham borough. The library at Brinsworth is community managed through Brinsworth Parish Council with support from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. If you are unable to visit your local branch on a regular basis the Home Library Service may be able to bring our service direct to you.

Specialist Non-Commissioned SEND Groups and activities

Accessible Swimming

Inclusive swimming, Instructor led inclusive swimming sessions [Inclusive Sessions – Places Leisure](#) . The Rotherham Parent Carer's Forum also arrange swimming sessions for children and young people with SEND and their families. [RPCF Rotherham Parent Carers Forum](#)

Chat “n” Chill

Chat 'n' Chill aims to support young people aged 13-19yrs who experience Autism. To embrace their transition from adolescence to adulthood, in ways that enable them to grow, live the lives they want and to be active members of their community.

Chat 'n' Chill operates on two evenings per week, at the Chislett Centre in Kimberworth Park (Tuesday evening) and The Stepping Stones Centre in Maltby (Monday evening).

The Groups' programme includes a range of social/recreational activities which encourages the young people's interaction with peers. Through the activities, staff explore with young people impact issues such as growing up, peer pressure, anxiety, anger management. Trips out/residential experiences further encourage young people to look beyond their comfort zones. [Chat 'n' Chill | kimberworth-park \(kimberworthpark.org.uk\)](#)

RANSS

RANSS is a support service for autistic adults/ adults with ADHD (18+) with a Rotherham GP. They deliver a range of activities including an allotment project, craft and outdoor projects and opportunities for volunteering and training. [RANSS | Rotherham Adult Neurodiversity Support Service](#)

Play Valley Soft Play

Play Valley provide play sessions exclusively for Children with Special Educational needs and their families. Children should be either diagnosed with a SEND or on the pathway to diagnosis. Children are able to benefit from quieter, more relaxed sessions. [Rotherham \(playvalley.co.uk\)](#)

Swinton Lock Activity Centre

Swinton Lock offer a range of activities, clubs, classes and support for both children and adults within the community. [Programmes & Services – Swinton Lock Activity Centre](#)

Wacky Superstars @ the Storyteller

These sessions have a very relaxed atmosphere with the music is turned down low. No age or height restrictions will be in place for this private session and parent/carers can go into the play area to support their children/ young people. [Story Teller \(Rotherham\) » Wacky Warehouse](#)

Commissioned Short Breaks

<p>All local authority commissioned short breaks providers are performance managed. Quarterly meetings with short breaks providers enable oversight of service delivery and promote ongoing service development.</p>		
<p>Elephants in Steps Club</p>	<p>Monthly themed activity club for young disabled people aged 13 – 25.</p> <p>The Elephant's in Step club in Maltby offers quality activities for young people with disabilities on a monthly basis. The sessions are fully staffed by qualified youth workers and support staff and include activities such as dance and karaoke, arts and crafts, massage therapy and themed games.</p>	<p>Email: Claire.haddon@rotherham.gov.uk 07791789570</p> <p>SEND Groups – Rotherham SEND Local Offer</p>
<p>Tumbis Step Club</p>	<p>The Tumbis Step Club provided by Regen is a session for children and young people with disabilities under the age of 13 and supports social and emotional wellbeing, confidence, building positive friendships and socialisation.</p>	<p>Email: Claire.haddon@rotherham.gov.uk 07791789570</p> <p>Active Regen – Supporting communities through sport</p>
<p>Rotherham Parent Carer Forum (RPCF)</p>	<p>A registered charity run by and for families of children and young people (aged 0-25) who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) providing regular family activities including a youth club run in partnership with Rotherham United Football Club.</p> <p>RPCF also provide drop ins, coffee sessions and events for parents and carers of children with SEND.</p> <p>Sibling groups are also provided by RPCF alongside the SEND youth groups.</p>	<p>Email: info@rpcf.co.uk Phone: 01709 296262</p> <p>The range of activities can be found at www.rpcf.co.uk</p>
<p>Nexus Multi Academy Trust Extended Services</p>	<p>Weekly after school and monthly Saturdays clubs to meet the needs of children and young people 2 – 19 with Severe Learning Difficulties, specifically Profound and Multiple Learning</p>	<p>Nexus MAT Extended Services coordinator by emailing ESC@Nexusmat.org or your child's school, social worker or family support worker for details of how to access Nexus MAT short breaks.</p>

	Difficulties (PMLD) and Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).	
Guiding Voices	A group of young people with SEND aged 10 and above who get together to share their voices weekly. They engage with local services to provide feedback to support service improvement; hold events; and have a calm atmosphere for people to come along and share their voices with us.	Guiding Voices – Rotherham SENDIASS
Specialist short breaks		
Liberty House	This is a residential short breaks offer providing overnight stays for children and young people that meet criteria. The home is rated as Outstanding by Ofsted and provides a warm, homely and safe environment for young people between the ages of 8 – 18 who experience a severe physical or learning disability and/or sensory impairment.	Access is arranged through the child or young person’s social worker or family support worker.
Families Together Service	Specialist foster carers who are recruited, assessed, trained, and supported to look after children with disabilities aged between 0-19 years for ‘short’ periods of time, usually in the carer’s home. This can be in the daytime or overnight.	Access is arranged through the young person’s social worker or early help worker.
Direct Payment	These are direct payments made by the Local Authority to parents of children and young people with disabilities which meet criteria which can be taken in place of an assessed short break service. Parents and carers are supported to select and secure their preferred short break. Often this type of short break is provided through the employment of a Personal Assistant.	Access is arranged through the young person’s social worker or early help worker. To request an assessment relating to short break support please contact the Multi Agency Support Hub on 01709336080
Specialist short breaks which are not commissioned or delivered by RMBC		
Amy’s House	Caters for children aged 5-18 and provides Saturday and school holiday sessions, family support, sensory room sessions, support in the home and inclusive activities in a safe and secure environment.	The service is accessed by direct payments, personal budgets and self-referral Contact: 0114 2422294 www.amyhouse.org.uk

Rainbow House	Provides respite care; life skills and organisational support to young people aged 10 to 25, with additional needs and learning disabilities.	The service is accessed by direct payments, personal budgets and self-referral Contact: 01709 252810 www.rainbowshouse.co.uk
Additional specialist short breaks		
Complex Nursing Team	Provide short breaks for 0-19 year olds with complex health needs. Services are offered throughout the week, day and night, and in a variety of settings.	Contact Numbers: 01709 423814 (admin) Parents/carers to access via the Care Co-ordination Centre; 01079 426600
Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice	Provides care and support to families who have a child or young person who has life limiting conditions.	Phone: 01909 517360 www.bluebellwood.org Families and professionals are able to refer into the service; the referral form can be found at the website address above.

Personal Assistants (PAs)

Access to universal services, such as youth clubs, extended school activities, early years setting and play schemes is key to ensuring disabled children have fun and enjoy the same things as other children and young people. For some disabled children, there can be barriers to them being able to do the same activities as non-disabled children. Disabled children and their families commonly face social and environmental barriers to enjoying opportunities their non-disabled counterparts take for granted. Additional support is needed to ensure disabled children and young people don't miss out on these everyday experiences. Where this applies, a disabled child and family can access an activity-based short break without having to have an assessment but demonstrate need against the short breaks criteria.

A multi-disciplinary monthly Short Breaks Panel is the Local Authority's access and allocation process for Commissioned short breaks. This is a transparent and equitable process which promotes the social model of disability. Applications to Short Breaks Panel are via short breaks needs assessment completed by either a disability social worker or family support worker.

The family, young person and practitioner may request the support of a personal assistant. A personal assistant can assist a child or young person through a range of support which may contain elements of:

- Access to community services or activities
- Personal care
- Preparing meals
- Getting dressed
- Taking medication
- Getting to school or college

Finding and recruiting a PA

Parents and carers can either decide to recruit and manage a PA themselves or go through an agency or support provider. There are several types of support provider, including profit-making companies, not-for-profit companies or registered charities and co-operatives.

The advantage of doing recruiting directly is the freedom and flexibility it allows, as well as saving on management fees and other overheads that providers include in their charges. Parents and carers have direct control over who supports their child, what hours they work, and how they work. The potential disadvantage is that time and skills are needed to do it and families will be taking on more responsibility.

Parents and carers can also use a management service to support with the recruitment and employment of a PA and there is a recognised provider list of these services on the Local Offer Short Breaks page. Management Services can support the payment functions needed to be an employer and legal advice and support can be provided through an insurance provider.

SECTION C

Direct Payments

A **direct payment** is money from your local authority to allow you to buy the care your child needs instead of having services organised by us. Some of the ways direct payments can be used include:

- employing a personal assistant
- employing an agency to care for your child in your own home
- an activity club session
- booking short breaks
- buying equipment

This list is not exhaustive. Direct payments can be used flexibly providing they are used to meet the assessed need and agreed outcomes for your child.

Either a family support worker or social worker may recommend a Direct Payment as an option following the completion of a short breaks needs assessment. An assessment is conducted by an allocated worker from a Children's Disability team. A parent can request an assessment by contacting the Multi Agency Support Hub on 01709336080. In Rotherham we use a resource allocation system to assess family's needs in relation to short break support and identify additional breaks that may be needed. Criteria for short breaks that have a referral to and assessment by social care can be found [here](#).

For families receiving direct payments there is support available from recognised organisations who provide help and advice relating to managing accounts, payroll and recruitment. More information on these providers can be found on the Rotherham SEND Local Offer [Early Help and Social Care – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)

SECTION D

Children's Home Based Short Breaks

Home based short breaks is a short break offer that takes place in a child's own home. The short break may be day support or overnight care. The package will normally be delivered by a PA agency that a parent will have instructed via direct payments approved by Short Break panel.

An assessment of need (section 17 of the Children Act 1989) and resource allocation system (RAS) will need to take place to help us understand if home based short breaks is right to meet the child's needs and is safe to take place in their home. Home based Short Breaks sits in the 'specialised' continuum of the Local Authority short break offer.

Allocation of any package of care under home based short breaks will depend on the assessed needs of the child and family, resource availability and whether the child can access another service that is as or more appropriate to meet their needs.

Assessment process:

- A single child assessment undertaken by the Children's Disability social care team will consider the needs of the child and their family. The assessment will consider the families request for short break, the outcomes we are hoping to achieve for the child and their family and how the identified needs can be met, considering the continuum of short break offer.
- The single child assessment will need to consider if there are any safeguarding concerns about the home environment that might mean it is not appropriate for a home based short break to take place.
- Parents' capacity to safely manage and oversee a home based short break package should be considered in the assessment process. If there are safeguarding concerns for the child linked to parenting capacity, it is unlikely a home based short break will be assessed as safe to meet need.
- The single child assessment and RAS should consider what other services the family are in receipt of and why other short break options cannot be pursued and meet need.
- If the assessment identifies that home based short break is in the child's and family's best interests; a Resource Allocation System (RAS) assessment should take place and be presented to Short Break Panel for endorsement. Short break panel occurs monthly, and a panel slot can be booked by emailing cyps-shortbreakpanel@rotherham.gov.uk
- The duration of each session will depend on the individual needs of the child and family however, no more than 75 nights per year in total will be agreed.
- The staffing levels required during the home based short break, alongside the frequency/ duration of support will be determined via an assessment of need and via the RAS form.
- Home based short breaks should be used for short break purposes only. It should not be used to supplement or support parental care or capacity to meet the needs of the child or to manage safeguarding concerns. This should be considered outside of short break panel if assessed as required.
- All home based short break packages will be reviewed in line with Rotherham's direct payment procedures [Direct Payments \(proceduresonline.com\)](http://proceduresonline.com). In summary, one review within 3 months of the direct payment plan starting and for home based short breaks, every 6 months thereafter or when conducting a review or a re-assessment of

an Education, Health and Care Plan. A review should occur sooner if there has been a significant change in circumstances or the family's needs have changed.

- A home based short break offer will end if circumstances have changed and need can be met by accessing other appropriate short break services within in the continuum of short break options outlined above.

Continuing health care:

- For children where a single child assessment and RAS recommends a home based short break, it is likely that their needs are so great or complex that they cannot be met in an alternative setting.
- As a result, a Continuing Health Care (CHC) Checklist should be completed for all children where home based short break is being recommended. This will help us consider if health should be contributing to the child's short break package.
- Short break panel will not consider a request for home based short breaks where a CHC checklist has not been completed, or the reasons for not submitting a CHC checklist aren't clearly outlined in the RAS.

Key responsibilities:

- The allocated Social Worker is responsible for completing the single child assessment and RAS.
- The allocated Social Worker will sign post the family to information about direct payments. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure they set up and manage their account in compliance with employment legislation.
- The allocated Social Worker will be responsible for ensuring the parent understands the importance of completing the employee checks and reassurances before the home based short break package commences.
- It will be the parents' responsibility to work with the PA or PA agency to agree dates and times of sessions; to include moving sessions or cancellation of sessions by either the PA, PA agency or the parent.
- It is the parents' responsibility to complete any risk assessment with the identified PA or PA agency to ensure their child is safe and appropriately cared for during PA time.
- It will be the parents' responsibility to ensure the PAs have the appropriate training and skills to meet their child's needs during the short break period. (This should be covered in the initial risk assessment completed prior to the short break commencing and should be reviewed regularly between the PA agency and parent).
- It will be the parents' responsibility to ensure the PAs have access to essential items for the child during the short break period e.g. food, clothing
- It will be the parents' responsibility to secure and fund their own accommodation outside of the home if required for overnight short breaks.
- It will be the parents' responsibility to check in with their child after each home based session to ensure there are no indications of concern (this may be a change in their child's behaviour or emotional welfare; or a verbal disclosure of concern).
- It is the parents' responsibility to act appropriately in response to any concerns raised; putting in proportionate safeguarding measures, which may include suspending the home based short break offer and reporting concerns to appropriate services.

Legal Comments

1. The relevant legal framework applicable is the Children Act 1989 which reflects the following key principles, that every child should have their welfare safeguarded and promoted by the Local Authority, that children are cared for by their parents and family

if possible and that parents and carers should not be deterred from seeking support from the Local Authority. The home-based short breaks support recognises that families will need help in how children are cared for, in this instance, support in the home which also allows the parents to maintain how they exercise parental responsibility.

2. Home-based short breaks support can be provided under s17 of the CA 1989 and the LA has the power to decide how it will discharge this duty in specific cases (**R (G) v Barnet BC and others [2003] UKHL 57**) once a “child in need” is identified. In addition, under the statutory guidance, Working Together (July 2018) and framework for the assessment of Children in Need and their Families (March 2000) a LA must take reasonable steps to assess who is a “child in need”.
3. A child is a child in need if,
 - (i) he or she is unlikely to achieve or maintain (or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining) a reasonable standard of health or development without the LA providing services for them.
 - (ii) their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the LA providing services for them.
 - (iii) he or she is disabled.
4. The LA is required to assess and identify the child’s need and try to minimise these deficits through providing services and support before they get to the point that the child is likely to suffer significant harm and care proceedings under section 31 of Children Act 1989 become necessary. It is already noted that this support would not be made available if there were safeguarding concerns as it is dependent on the parents exercising parental responsibility.
5. For the LA to complete an assessment, the family will need to cooperate in providing as much information as possible (which may include financial details) however if the information is not given, the LA can conclude that the family are unwilling to access available support and that no services or support is required (**MN and KN v LB of Hackney [2013] EWHC 1205 (Admin)**). Before concluding the assessment, the LA must also ascertain a child’s wishes and feelings regarding the provision of services/support and give due consideration to the child’s age and understanding (**section 17 (4A) CA 1989**).
6. With regards to children with disabilities, the LA has other duties to assess children with disabilities and a CIN assessment can take place at the same time as other assessments, either under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and the Disabled Person (Services, Consultation and Representations) Act 1986 or an assessment of special educational needs under Part IV of the Education Act 1996 (**paragraph 3 Schedule 2 CA 1989**).
7. Reference has been made to consideration of health needs following the completion of a continuing health needs checklist. Under section 27 of Children Act 1989, a LA can ask for assistance from a health authority for example. The authority receiving the request must provide help by responding to the request unless to do so would be incompatible with its own duties.
8. The key responsibilities listed are also noted, which support the parents in their exercise of parental responsibility in how a child is cared for, particularly with the way in which direct payments are managed as parents are free to suspend and/or report concerns to a provider of homes based short break support, if and when they arise.

9. Areas of challenge would be if an assessment was concluded with a lack of analysis within the assessment and the LA was unwilling to provide the services and support. With any challenge to a decision about support, the avenue to complain or challenge would be via the LA's internal complaints procedure, complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman or to apply for a judicial review.

SECTION E

How we Listen and Learn from Parents, Carers and Young People

Rotherham Parent Carer's Forum

Rotherham Parent Carers' Forum is a registered charity run by and for families of children and young people (aged 0-25) who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

As well as providing some of the borough's short break activities, they work in partnership with service commissioners and providers, sharing knowledge and experience of families to help plan and develop the quality, range and accessibility of provision, creating better outcomes for families through participation and co-production. One way for parents and carers to contribute to co-production and have their voices heard is to join RPCF as member and/or volunteer.

As part of a wide range of collaborative activity focused on the co-production and improvement of services the Forum deliver a range of events including:

- "Listening Days" where attendees can hear about developments or contribute to consultations
- Fun Days
- Training and awareness events
- Mystery shopper volunteer sessions

"Rotherham Parent Carers Forum is the jewel in the crown of the provision for SEND in Rotherham's local area. Members truly understand co-production and advocate for it. They seek stakeholders' views, whether they are children and young people, parents and carers, special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinators (SENCos) or commissioners. Members are passionate, committed and act with the highest integrity. They are uncompromising, tell it like it is and are a force to be reckoned with. The forum has meetings with commissioners regularly and tells them about children and young people's and their families' lived experience. In this way, the forum makes sure that children and young people's and their families' voices are heard. Rotherham Parent Carers Forum is a pivotal partner in the co-production of services for children and young people with SEND in the local area."

Extract from Ofsted's Local Area SEND Inspection of Rotherham July 21

The RPCF is a key partner in **Genuine Partnerships** who are a team of practitioners, parents and carers, and young people. They work together as equal partners modelling and supporting co-production and inclusive practice.

"Inclusive practice is ensuring that everyone is included and accepted as an equal. Co-production is working together on something in equal partnership from the start."

Genuine Partnership website [Genuine Partnerships](#)

They are based in Rotherham and work with schools, settings and services in the borough.

Guiding Voices

Guiding Voices form part of Genuine Partnerships and is a group of young people with SEND aged 10 and above who get together to share our voices once a month. They lead on or get involved with a number of events and meet in a calm atmosphere for young people to come along and share their voices.

“Sometimes it is hard to explain what it is like for you and it is important to have the chance to show what it’s like inside your head, so people can understand.”

Genuine Partnership website - [Guiding Voices – Rotherham SENDIASS](#)

The group recognises that sometimes it is hard to explain what it is like for young people with SEND and it is important to have the chance to show what it’s like inside your head, so people can understand.

Rotherham SEND Local Offer

The Rotherham SEND Local Offer www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk contains a large amount of information on services for children and young people with SEND and their families.

You can provide your feedback about the Local Offer website and SEND Services by sending an email to the following address SendLocalOffer@rotherham.gov.uk. Feedback can also be provided by clicking on the “feedback bar” which is on each page of the Local Offer. There is a “You said – We did” section to the site which outlines every change which has been made as a result of website users’ feedback.

Listening through Performance Monitoring

Each of our commissioned short breaks are performance managed for quality and service development. Part of this process is making sure that Commissioners listen to feedback from the children and young people that use these services. Below are some examples:

What families have liked about short breaks:

“My child is non-verbal so unable to tell me but the difference for the first session to know is brilliant- lots more confidence in the water and looks so happy it’s something we really enjoy doing together without judgement – lovely sessions!”

“Had a fab time attending Wacky Warehouse and Trip to Deep. Was fab as a single parent being with other parents who understand...”

“My daughter can become very anxious but the staff have a wonderful ability to make her feel calm, safe and included”

“The activities always fit the needs of the kids and the team are all very approachable and good at making the adults feel relaxed and comfortable. Keep up the hard work. You are all amazing!”

What families have told us they would to change:

“More activities at the weekend as due to medication, my daughter cannot attend after school”

“Why are most activities on Tuesdays?”

“More activities specifically for teenagers”

“Activities for older children”

“My two children seem to have outgrown most of the activities on offer”

What do you think about short breaks now and what improvements could we make in the future?

It is a duty of the Local Authority to listen to children, young people and their family’s views of short breaks. Following the publication of this statement a period of consultation will take place with families, children and young people, and practitioners so that the Council and its partners can better understand where things are going well and where things need to improve. Further information will be published this Summer on these pages including details of how to be part of this conversation. To register your interest in taking part in this consultation, please email your name and email contact details so that you can be contacted when the consultation begins. The email to contact is SENDlocaloffer@rotherham.gov.uk and please header your email with “Short Breaks Consultation”.