

Children, Young People and Families

'Aiming High' for disabled children

We can make this information available in other formats and languages on request.

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www.wigan.gov.uk/aiminghigh



'Aiming High' for disabled children

In May 2007, following a review of services for children and young people with disabilities, the government produced a report called 'Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families'.

The report focused on short breaks and highlighted areas of improvement that needed to be made nationally to improve the support available to families of disabled children. As a result, a substantial amount of money has been made available over three years to councils to transform services for the following target groups of children and young people:

→ children and young people with Autism Spectrum Disorders, who may also have other impairments such as severe learning disabilities or challenging behaviour. 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 a disability;
- those with life-limiting conditions who have reached the palliative care stage of their life;
- young people with complex health needs and other impairments, e.g. physical, cognitive, sensory.

→ children and young people aged 11+ with moving and handling needs, who will require equipment and adaptations. These children



→ young people aged 14+. Those who fall into this group are young people who are severely disabled and require services that are appropriate to their age. These are not discrete groups of children and some may fall into more than one of these groups.

In deciding how best to spend that money, Wigan Council has:

- are likely to have physical impairments, and many of them will also have cognitive and/or sensory impairments.
- those whose 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.
- held events to engage with parents and carers
- established a parent/carer forum
- developed a consultation network
- established a group to oversee the spending of the money (called 'the steering group') with representatives from social care, health, youth services and schools.



Wigan's vision for short breaks

“To develop a range of quality short breaks that children and young people with disabilities and their families want; short breaks which enable them to have the same experiences, opportunities and aspirations as other children, young people and their families, throughout their lives...”

In the financial year 2008/09, Wigan Council used the first year's allocation of £60,000 to trial a new service, called '**Leisure for All**'. This is a scheme that provides access to leisure activities for disabled children and young people aged 3-19, with staff and volunteer support.

Following consultation with parents and carers, the following projects are being funded in 2009/10:

Capital:

- modifications to Low Bank Ground (one of Wigan's outdoor education centres)
- specialist equipment purchased for swimming pools across the borough

Schemes:

- a continuation of the 'Leisure for All' service
- an extension of a 'sitting' service through Crossroads Caring for Carers
- packages of care tailored to individual needs, to enable carers to take a break whilst their child is being cared for.

To make a referral for any of the these schemes, please phone 01942 488146.

Revenue:

We will be consulting with parents and carers further to determine how to spend the money in 2010/2011.

How to get involved

→ the **parent/carer forum** meets monthly and is made up of parents/carers of children and young people with a wide range of disabilities. It's a decision making group, which has a say about the types of short break services needed. These decisions are fed back to a strategic steering group.



Parent/carer forum

- the **consultation network** is for parents who want to have a say but who don't have the time to commit to attending meetings.
- we currently also have a **communications sub-group**, which meets monthly. Other issues are dealt with by '**task and finish**' groups.

Further information

If you would like further information about the **Aiming High project**, or are interested in joining the **parent/carer forum** or one of the **sub-groups**, please contact us at:

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Children and Young People's Services,
Wigan Council, Leigh Town Hall,
Market Street, Leigh, WN7 1DY.

Phone: 01942 488146

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To find out about **Leisure For All** activities available, phone 01942 481208.