



Wigan[♥]
Council

Wigan Council Short Breaks Statement 2025

Author: Wigan Council

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What is a Parent Carer?

A parent carer is someone who provides care to their child who needs additional support.

What is a Disabled Child / Young Person?

A child with a disability is defined as having a severe learning and/or multiple/complex/profound learning disabilities and/or life threatening/life limiting/terminal condition.

Short Breaks Services are available for children and young people up to the age of 18. The entitlement for short breaks changes when young people become adults at 18 and are then entitled to an assessment under the Care Act 2014.

Depending on the child's needs, the support they will need to access a short break will differ.

What is a Short Break?

Short breaks provide parents and carers support to enable you to continue your caring role, undertake training, education or enjoy leisure activities and spend time with other children. It's also an opportunity for your son/daughter to develop new skills, make new friends and become more independent.

A short break can be varied in length of time. This can be anything from a couple of hours to overnight. Short breaks are activities that take part outside of school hours during daytime, evenings, weekends and school holidays.

Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 states that a Local Authority must offer, so far as is reasonably practicable, a range of services which is sufficient to assist carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively. Local Authorities must provide Short Breaks services for carers of disabled children to enable them to continue to care for their disabled child and to participate in everyday activities.

We have worked in partnership with parents and carers and other local partners such as The Parent Carer Forum and Embrace to plan and develop our short break offer.

Through significant consultation with children and young people and their families, the following outcomes have been identified as being important:

Outcomes for Children and Young People

- Children and young people with a disability have opportunities to enhance their social networks and friendships.
- Children and young people with a disability have opportunities to enjoy themselves, have new experiences and fulfil their potential.
- Children and young people will develop independence and gain more confidence.
- Children and young people will be able to achieve goals and learn new skills.

Outcomes for Parents

- Parents and carers have opportunities to have a break from their caring role.
- Parents and carers feel confident that the people providing the short breaks can meet their child's needs.
- Parents and carers are better able to manage the issues associated with caring for a child or young person with a disability.
- Parents and carers will meet and get to know other families that share similar experiences.

We will continue to consult and work in partnership through co-design with our Wigan Parent Carer Forum (WPCF), Embrace, colleagues from Education, Early Years, our Children with Disability Services, Provider services and a range of private sector, voluntary, community, and faith sector services to continually monitor, review and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the Short Break offer in Wigan.

We continue to engage with our Parent Carers through open forum events held throughout the year. In addition, we run SEND drop-in sessions where Parent Carers can speak directly with representatives from relevant services. Senior leaders across children's service will set up or attend sessions to engage regularly with our families to gain their views and to share information about services. The Wigan Parent Carer Forum also conducts an annual survey to help shape the forum's priorities and influence the wider partnership. This is complemented by targeted consultations and focus groups on specific topics to ensure that the voices of Parent Carers are central to service development.

Through our service provider feedback surveys, we ensure that the services we offer are equitable and meeting the needs of our children and families. Our future commissioning intentions will be co-designed and developed based on our Big SEND Survey 2025, where any gaps or barriers to inclusion are identified to deliver a needs led, holistic and responsive offer.



What Short Breaks are Available?

[Universal Short Breaks](#)

Universal Short Breaks are routinely available through resources in the local community that are available to children and young people and their families. The majority of our families are able to access a short break by utilising these free or low-cost activities. These are groups, clubs and activities such as:

- Brownies
- Guides
- Drama and Music Clubs
- Dancing groups
- Sports Activities (e.g.: Football, Rugby or Martial Arts)
- Local parks or adventure playgrounds
- Youth Clubs

Universal services aim to be inclusive and open to disabled people however, families are advised to contact service providers directly to discuss the offer, eligibility criteria, availability and fee.

Families are advised to speak directly with the universal service provider in relation to sharing information around their child's additional needs and how best to support their child and discuss and explore any reasonable adjustments that they may need to undertake.

An online search of our 'Local Offer' will be able to signpost our families to local activities including leisure centres, community centres, faith groups, voluntary organisations, general access council services. All of which are also included on 'Our Town Directory'.

The organisation provider will be able to confirm the fee for their activities.



LINC 2 is Wigan Council's information service for local young people. This aims to keep young people informed about anything that might be useful for them such as opportunities to have your say and what local youth groups are up to and how you can get involved. Follow the link below to access the LINC2 webpage:

[LINC 2 - Young persons survival guide](#)

Targeted Short Breaks

Targeted short breaks are groups, clubs and activities that have been designed to meet the specific needs of a particular cohort of disabled children, where universal services are unable to suitably meet their needs and no assessment is required from Children's Services, although some organisations may have their own criteria.

Some examples of Targeted Short Breaks are:

[Be Well Offer – Active Inclusive](#)

Active Inclusive offers individuals with disabilities and their families a huge range of fun and friendly inclusive and accessible experiences. Sessions are suitable and accessible for all individuals, including those who use a wheelchair. Some activities may require transfer, and hoists are available for some activities.

Follow the link below to find out more: [Fitness, Health & Wellbeing for Wigan | Be Well](#)

[Leisure for All](#)

The Leisure for All service supports children and young people with a physical and/or learning disability aged 5 – 18 years inclusive to access a range of leisure activities, with staff and volunteer support.

Leisure for All provides a safe, secure environment, where children and young people aged 5-18yrs inclusive come to receive high quality, interesting and exciting short breaks in their leisure time.

Children and young people have opportunities to forge friendships, try new things, and to express their wishes and feelings in a range of groups and activities, enabling them to grow in confidence and gain independence whilst being supported by trained and experienced staff.

Leisure for All prides itself in providing a unique service, where fun, laughter, friends and new opportunities provide life-long memories. The service does this alongside providing the parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities and complex health needs with a short break from their caring role.

To find out more information about the activities on offer please contact the Leisure for All Team on 01942 486062.

Specialist Short Break Services

Most families will be able to receive the support they need from the range of universal and targeted services that are available to them and should be the first options for you to receive a short break.

We recognise however that there will be some children who, even with the best efforts of the children themselves, parent carers and service providers, are not able to have their needs met within universal or targeted services with additional assistance. This may occasionally include specialist short breaks services such as evening and weekend activities, overnight short breaks or packages of care and support within the home.

Parents and Carers of these children and young people would request access to these services following an up-to-date assessment from either Family Help or a Social Worker to consider the impact of their child's disability and needs on their family life and what assistance they need to have a short break.

We have a range of services in Wigan that could provide a short break. These offer the following services:

- Short break support within the family home and in the local community for children with complex health needs.
- Overnight residential short break care for young people 8-18 years old with complex health and behavioural needs.
- Domiciliary care for children with complex health needs.

Families can also be awarded a direct payment. This allows our families to explore and access self-directed choice led services, but most importantly for children and young people the opportunity to access and try new activities.

Eligibility decisions are based on individual need including to what extent a child or young person's disability or impairment affects their lives and the lives of those who live with and care for them.

To request an assessment for eligibility please contact:

Children's First Partnership Hub

01942 828300



How can you find out more?

[SEND Local Offer](#)

The Local Offer is all the provision we expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in Wigan Borough who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.

The Short Breaks Offer forms part of the Local Offer. Please follow the link below to access Wigan's SEND Local Offer Pages.

[SEND Local Offer](#)

[Embrace SENDIASS](#)

This is an information advice and guidance service.

Embrace support parents who have a child with a disability aged 0-19 (up to aged 25 years where an Education, Health and Care Plan is in place) with emotional and practical support.

Referrals can be submitted by online form, telephone or email – Embrace operate an online booking system whereby so many appointments are released throughout the week and parents can book on to these. With regard to SENDIASS, all families are offered an initial appointment, and if following this support is still required, they are added to a waiting list to be allocated a support worker. Embrace will prioritise cases based on the urgency of support required. Please follow the link below to make a referral to Embrace.

If you need any more information about short breaks or your entitlements, contact SENDIASS

[Wigan SENDIASS](#)



[Wigan Parent Carer Forum](#)

Wigan Parent Carer Forum is the collective voice of parent carers of children and young people age 0-25 in Wigan Borough with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Working independently, but in partnership with, our Local Authority, Health and other partners to reflect the voice & impact change on SEND services.

participation@wiganpcf.org.uk

[Wigan Council SEND Team](#)

SENDSAdmin@wigan.gov.uk

[Children's First Partnership Hub](#)

01942 828300

[Additional Information](#)

The Disabled Children's Register

The Children Act 1989 required all local authorities to establish a register of disabled children aged 0-18 years in their areas. This is known as the Disabled Children's Register and is kept up to date by the SEND team in Wigan.

We want everyone with a disabled child or teenager, aged 0 to 18 years old in Wigan to register. This will enable us to look at numbers of children and young people and help us plan our services and local health services within the borough.

You are not obliged to register your details or those of your children, this register is voluntary.

If you choose to register you can do so on the online web form link below:

<https://forms.wigan.gov.uk/xfp/form/360>

[Holiday Activity and Food \(HAF\) Programme](#)

The HAF Programme provides **free** healthy food and enriching activities to children and young people on benefit related free school meals. They can attend activities and/ or access food over the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays.

If you have any further queries, please contact the HAF Team on **HAFReferrals@wigan.gov.uk**.

[Transition from Child to Adult](#)

Transition is a carefully planned process by which young people with health or social care needs move from children's services to adult services.

For more information, please complete the web form below:

[Supported living and accommodation](#)

Help us shape the Short Breaks Offer

The Local Offer Steering Group which meets every six weeks is attended by a variety of people from different teams within the Local Authority, Social Care, Health and includes representatives from the Parent Carer Forum. The SEND team Engagement Officer also works with a variety of external groups to gain insight from children and young people with lived experience with a variety of needs.

The Local Offer Steering Group is set up to respond directly to the needs of all Children and Young People. Any feedback that is received regarding the Local Offer is brought to the Steering Group and explored in terms of areas of development and next steps. The Steering Group feeds into the SEND Partnership Board to ensure appropriate challenge and scrutiny.

If you are interested in providing feedback in relation to short breaks and/or helping to shape the short breaks offer, you can use the **Local Offer Give us your feedback** or contact local.offer@wigan.gov.uk. You can also explore some of the groups offering opportunities to have a voice via the [Our Town Directory](#).

If a child or young person would like to share their views in relation to short breaks, they can also be contact through the SEND Local offer details above.

Alternatively, please contact Wigan Parent Carer Forum: Wigan Parent Carer Forum ([Wigan Parent Carer Forum](#)) so they can represent your views when working with the Local Authority

Review

The Short Breaks offer will be reviewed at least annually by a survey to Parent Carers and children and young people and this will inform the Short Break Statement and associated actions.

Complaints Procedure

We are committed to ensuring that we have good quality support available to our children and families in Wigan.

There may be times that you feel unhappy with decisions around your child's short break provision, in these circumstances please contact **Children and Families Social Care Complaints team on 01942 489808.**

Alternatively, you can make a complaint via the Wigan Council Complaints Procedure online at [Council complaints](#)

The statement has been produced following consultation with representatives from:

Parents / Carers

Children's Health Services

Transition Services

Children with Disabilities Social Work team

Education Service

BeWell Service

Provider Services

Parent Carer Forum