

Suffolk County Council Short Break Duty Services Statement

To comply with the Children & Young Person's Act 2008, Suffolk Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide a range of short breaks to meet the needs, wants and wishes of disabled children and young people, to enable their parents and carers to receive regular breaks from caring. Later, the Short Break Regulations 2011 made it a requirement for all local authorities to publish a Short Break Duty Statement.

Our Short Break Duty Statement is a guide for parents and carers of children and young people with additional needs and/or disabilities and their families. It includes:

- Details of the range of short breaks services available in Suffolk for children and young people with additional needs and/or disabilities and their families
- How these services respond to the needs of parents and carers
- How these services can be accessed, including their eligibility criteria.

What are Short Breaks?

Short Breaks enable children and young people with additional needs and/or disabilities to take part in fun, exciting activities and give parents / carers and their families a break from their caring responsibilities. In Suffolk we believe the short breaks should also support families to do things together.

The short breaks may take place after school, at weekends (including overnight), in the school holidays, and can include any kind of activity or tailored befriending support. Short breaks are available to all children and young people and young adults with additional needs and/or disabilities, up to their 25th birthday.

How to access Short Breaks

Short Breaks are available for all children and young people aged 0-25 with additional needs and/or disabilities in Suffolk. Simply visit www.activities-unlimited.co.uk, browse through the activities we have available and contact the provider / organisation directly to book your place.

How are decisions made about commissioning Short Break services?

We commission our Short Break services via an annual grant application process. The final decisions about which providers are funded and to what amount are made by a multi-agency panel which includes parents and carers. As local needs change, we consult and engage with parent carers, providers and practitioners to keep families at the heart of everything we do, and are committed to offering high quality short break services in response to the needs, wants and wishes of families children and young people with additional needs and/or disabilities in Suffolk.

Can I use short breaks for childcare?

Whilst we understand that parents may benefit from the childcare that some Short Breaks provide, childcare is not the primary aim of Short Breaks and so we would not expect a Short

Breaks Personal Budget to be spent wholly on childcare.

[You can read more about finding childcare for children with SEND here.](#)

Can I get help with transporting my child to their Short Break?

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to events and activities or for making alternative arrangements. We commission activities all over Suffolk to reduce the need for transport as much as we can, although as much of Suffolk is rural, this is not always possible. With this in mind, if families are in receipt of a Short Breaks Personal Budget, they can use this towards transport costs for their child to attend activities.

How to apply for a Short Break Personal Budget

Any Parent Carer of a child aged 0-18 with additional needs and/or disabilities who lives in Suffolk can apply for an Activities Unlimited Short Breaks Personal Budget. Not all families who apply for a Personal Budget are eligible to receive one; budgets are reserved for those children, young people and families with moderate-significant needs.

Parent Carers apply online via our application portal, which asks a range of questions about their and their child's needs.

[The link to apply, along with our user guides and more information about our budgets, is on our website here.](#)

How do you assess applications?

Our online application form asks a range of questions about you and your child's needs. We use a range of indicators to try and build as full a picture of your family's needs as possible, whilst keeping the application process as simple for families to complete as we can.

[You can read more about the things we take into account when assessing applications here.](#)

How to access further support

A range of specialist residential 'respite-style' short breaks are also available for disabled children and young people with complex needs who are eligible for support from the Disabled Children and Young People's Social Work Team. In most cases, families open to this Team have a named Social Worker.

If you are accessing short break services through Activities Unlimited and feel your child's needs are more complex than can be met through AU's Short Breaks, you can ask for a Statutory Assessment by the Social Care Team by contacting Customer First on 0808 800 4005.

You can also find out more information about Social Care support here: [Social Care and Early Help](#)

Links to other useful info

[Suffolk Local Offer](#)

[Sendiass](#)

[Suffolk Parent Carer Forum](#)

[Suffolk County Council](#)

[Emotional Wellbeing Hub](#)

[Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership](#)