

CONSULTATION PAPER

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHORT BREAK OFFER FOR CHILDREN IN JERSEY

(1) The reason for this consultation

We are consulting about how we develop the children's short break service. In this paper, we describe the current short break service and other services available which provide disabled children and parents/carers with a short break opportunity and outline the views of families about current provision.

We then explain why the current short break offer needs to change and propose a new model. We also discuss how we should manage the current shortage of short breaks fairly.

We would like to hear your views on the proposals in this paper. [We have included some structured questions \(in blue\) about the proposals.](#) Please email your comments to l.perkins@health.gov.je by 21st November 2018. There is also an electronic survey available on [www.gov.je](#) (insert link) and you can come and talk to us at one of the four drop-in engagement sessions (insert link). We will use the findings of the consultation to guide further work to develop what is practically possible and the best fit for Jersey and inform the services we commission to deliver short breaks for 2019 -2021.

(2) Current short break service

Short break services give disabled children and young people the chance to spend time away from their parents and carers, relax and have fun with their friends and develop their independence. They also give families an opportunity to have a break from their caring responsibilities, rest and unwind, catch up with daily tasks and spend time with other members of their family. Short breaks have an important role in supporting good outcomes for children with disabilities or additional needs.

The introduction of community short breaks in 2014 has more than doubled the number of families accessing the short break service. The service supported 84 children at the end of August 2018.

Short breaks are currently provided at two different levels:

1. Community short break standard offer. Eligible families get 198 hours support per year (three hours per week term time and six hours per week in the school holiday) from one of four Approved Providers. Three of the providers offer 1:1 support either in the community or in the home. One provider offers nursery, after-school and school holiday play schemes. The standard short break offer is administered by the Child Development Centre.
2. Enhanced short break provision. Families needing more support than the standard offer are assessed by the Children's Complex Needs Social Work Team. The Children's Service Placement and Resource Panel agrees Enhanced short break

support which may include community short break 1:1 or 2:1 support from the Approved Providers or from HSSD's short break service. This may include overnight provision at HSSD's Eden House and Oakwell Short Break Centres. Some families with very high needs have overnight provision and daytime support either from one of the approved providers or by extra hours from the Eden House or Oakwell teams.

Compared with UK local authorities, the number of children receiving overnight short breaks in Jersey is high. There is, however, a lack of universal and targeted group opportunities for disabled children in Jersey and this has resulted in a high use of 1:1 support.

The number of children eligible for the community short break standard offer has continued to increase. There has also been an increase in families who are accessing enhanced short breaks. The current approved providers cannot meet demand because of difficulties recruiting staff. As a result, thirty-two families are currently waiting for their children to start their short break support.

The majority of children accessing short break support do so through one of the three providers who offer 1:1 support. The fourth approved short breaks provider is Centre Point Trust, offering after school and school holiday provision but uptake for this has been low.

There are many after-school and holiday clubs in Jersey who want to include children with disabilities but they lack the confidence and/or skills needed. We appointed a Community Short Break Development Officer in February 2018 to work with providers to increase disabled children's access to universal services in Jersey.

(3) Other services which are not currently part of the short break offer

Targeted school holiday clubs are not funded through the community short break service at the moment. They do, however, provide an important short break for children and parents/carers. The following school holiday clubs for children with disabilities are run:

- Youth Service runs a holiday club for primary school children attending Mont a L'Abbe School for four weeks in the summer holiday and a few days at Christmas and Easter.
- Youth Service runs holiday club for secondary school children attending Mont a L'Abbe School for three weeks in the summer holiday and a few days at Christmas and Easter.
- Autism Jersey runs four weeks of school holiday activity for primary school age children with autism who are not Mont a L'Abbe pupils.

These three schemes include a co-payment from families with the remainder of the costs being met by either Education or Autism Jersey. The Youth Service have made the decision to cease their provision for primary school children in 2019.

The Youth Service runs three youth club sessions after school on a week day for children and young people with disabilities aged 11 – 25.

(4) Views of families

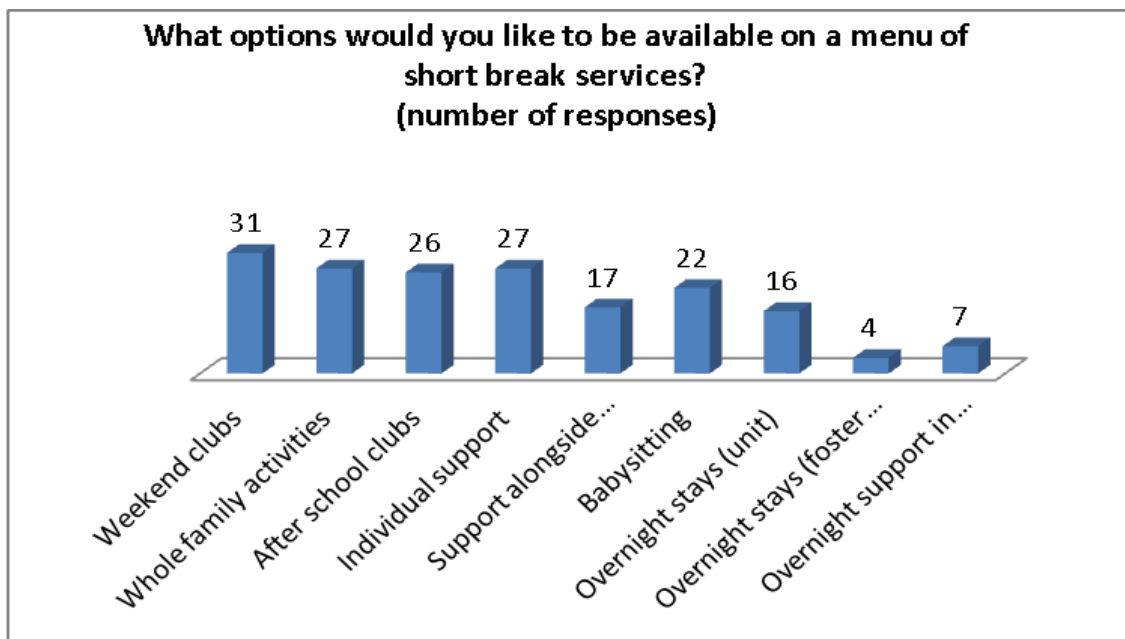
The Parent Forum has highlighted the need for better school holiday club provision. Children without disabilities can access holiday clubs throughout the holidays (including half-terms). Children with disabilities can't. Also children who can't access the Mont a l'Abbe School or Autism Jersey clubs have no provision if they can't access universal clubs.

In 2017, parents rated the community short break scheme as follows:

- service received: average score of 4.5 out of 5
- suitability of activities: average score of 4.7 out of 5
- happy with the staff team: 4.6 out of 5

Comments were generally positive, with reports on the benefits for both the child accessing the short break and the family. Three negative comments related to staffing issues and cancellations.

A survey of parents of children with special needs and disabilities co-produced with a group of parents was undertaken in 2016. The survey asked "What options would you like to be available on a menu of short break services?" Forty-nine parents responded to this question. Figure 1 summarises the responses with weekend clubs and after school clubs receiving the two highest ratings alongside whole family activities.



Parent feedback from the 2017 review of community short breaks was generally positive. Parents wanted the following areas to be developed:

- An increase in community short breaks including weekend breaks and overnight stays
- The development of a baby-sitting service

- Support alongside family e.g. in the family home whilst the parent/carer is present
- More after school clubs
- Activities that the whole family can take part in

Parents have also said they would like to have the option of a direct payment scheme for enhanced short breaks and care package support.

(5) The need to change community short break provision

There are lots of reasons why we need to change short break provision:

- Parents/carers would like more choice including more group opportunities for their children
- Parents/carers would like more support in the school holidays
- Parents/carers who need higher levels of support would like the option of direct payments
- Approved providers cannot meet the demand for the current service which provides 1:1 support. This means that eligible families cannot access support
- As demand for standard and enhanced short breaks increases, we will not be able to fund 1:1 support for everyone
- We need to make sure access to short breaks is fair and that services can meet both current and future need.
- We want to better support children and young people with disabilities to access sports and leisure opportunities

(6) Proposed new model

We have listened to parents/carers, considered the current challenges in meeting demand and looked at how short breaks are offered in other places. We are proposing a new model for short breaks with three tiers:

Tier 1 - Universal: Universal services are open to everyone, e.g. youth groups, cubs, nurseries and sports clubs.

Tier 2 - Targeted: Daytime group activities designed for disabled children. Children do not need a social care assessment to access these services.

Tier 3 - Specialist: Specialist short break services will meet a specific need following a social care assessment of the child's and carer's needs. Depending on the outcome of the assessment, needs can be met through a range of services, including those at tier 1 and 2 but also providing access if needed to:

- 1:1 support to access community activities
- day time support at Eden House or Oakwell Short Break Centres
- residential-based overnight short breaks
- self directed support

We think that by increasing the number of children we support at tiers 1 and 2, the need for 1:1 support at tier 3 will reduce. We think that by doing this, we will be able to offer support

to eligible children without a delay and also enable more opportunities to be available to all disabled children across the Island including those that don't currently meet eligibility for the Community Short Break Standard Offer.

The ways we propose to increase children being supported by universal and targeted services are:

- Funding an organisation to provide inclusion support to universal providers to help them offer their activities to children with disabilities
- Funding targeted groups offering fun activities at the weekend for children with disabilities
- Funding increased school holiday clubs

We are proposing that a child will be supported at the lowest tier required to meet their needs. This will mean that for some children currently receiving 1:1 support, if their needs can be met by supported universal or targeted groups, they will be required to change their provision. We propose there is a transition period so that children and parents are supported with the change and this will be linked to the six monthly review that occurs to access suitability of current provision.

New model

What are your views of the proposed new model? Do you think it will provide a better short break service?

Do you think that the range of options we propose to fund are the right ones?

Do you think short break funding should be used to fund school holiday clubs?

(7) Parent co-payment

At the moment, parents/carers are not asked to pay for their child's community short break but they are asked to pay for any activities their child does during the short break.

In the UK, it is common for parents/carers to pay a fee for short breaks that is equivalent to the fees paid by any parents for their child to attend universal activities. These fees are usually waived for those on low income.

If we introduced a fee for short break activities, we would be able to fund more activities. The level of fees we think would equate to fees currently charged for universal services are:

- A three hour weekend group activity: £5 per session
- A three hour 1:1 support worker session: £5 per session
- A six hour school holiday club: £25 per session

Parent co-payment

What are your views on an affordable fee for all short break activities being introduced to enable more targeted activities to be offered?

Do you think a standard short break offer with a specified number of free hours per year should continue?

(8) Self directed support including direct payments

The new model proposes an option of self directed support for families of children who require specialist support. The assessment of needs carried out by the Social Worker will lead to a support plan with an individual budget being set.

The first self directed support option is direct payments. This option is for parents/carers who would like to arrange and pay for their child's short break services. A direct payment is paid into a separate bank account held by the parent/carer and is used to pay for the services required. This money can be used to employ support workers or buy services from organisations. If parents/carers use the budget to employ a support worker, they will have the responsibilities of being an employer. These include employment contracts and checks, holiday and sick pay and payment of social security contributions. Some UK local authorities use an agency who will employ named support workers on behalf of parents, subject to criminal record and employment checks. If direct payments are introduced in Jersey, we propose the use of this type of agency. This is because:

- it will give parents the choice of the individual who supports their child without the additional responsibility of being an employer
- it will ensure that children are supported by appropriately trained staff who meet the requirements of the Jersey Care Commission

The social worker will ensure that the budget is being used to achieve the outcomes agreed in the child's care plan. Parents using direct payments to employ a support worker will also need to plan for what happens when the support worker goes on holiday, is off sick or leaves.

The second self directed support option is individual budgets. The individual budget is worked out following the social work assessment. The parents/carers then decide how they wish to spend this money and Children's Service will make arrangements to pay the support provider that they choose. Children's Service will have a list of providers that they can choose from.

The third self directed support option is arranged support and is for parents/carers who want to have support arranged for them. The parents/carers are still involved in planning the kind of support they want with their child's social worker but all of the detail of

planning, arranging and payment is done by Children's Service. The support may be provided from Children's Service short break service or from an approved provider.

Currently, the complex needs social work team offer the third self-directed support option of arranged support for children requiring specialist support. The limited provider market place in Jersey, does, however result in very limited choices of support for families. For those requiring 1:1 support, providers are struggling to recruit enough suitably qualified staff to meet demand. It is important to recognise that parents/carers choosing direct payments and individual budget options would face these same challenges.

Self directed support

Should the three self directed support options of direct payments, individual budgets and arranged support be offered to parents/carers whose children require tier 3 specialist short break services/care packages?

Do you support the proposal to use short break funding to commission an agency to employ named support workers on behalf of parents?

(9) Managing the current shortage of provision fairly

We think that with the new model, by commissioning services across the three tiers, we will be able to provide short breaks for all eligible children. We will use the findings from this consultation to inform what services we commission for the future.

In July we set up a Forum to encourage providers to think about offering a range of different short break services. Providers are enthusiastic about developing more inclusive universal services and more targeted groups but we think it is going to take time to develop the capacity needed.

Currently, 46 children are accessing a standard short break offer of 198 hours per year but there are 32 children who have been identified as eligible but who are not receiving short breaks. This is because providers have not been able to recruit more staff to meet the demand.

One option to improve fairness between those families who are currently accessing support and those who are waiting is to reduce the number of hours of children currently receiving a standard short break offer so that all families receive some support. This might mean that children are only offered a short break every other week. As the capacity increases, the number of hours of support could be increased.

Fair access to short breaks

Do you think that until there are enough short breaks for all eligible children, the number of hours of support for those receiving short breaks should be reduced to enable all children to receive some support?
