



Northumberland County Council

SHORT BREAK SERVICES STATEMENT:
INTERIM

Internal Review – June 2016

Please note that a consultation exercise with families has commenced which will result in this document being updated by the 31st December 2016.

1. Introduction and Context

This information is for families living in Northumberland who have a disabled child/young person (DCYP) aged 0 to 18 years.

Disabled children are first and foremost children, who have rights, needs and aspirations of all children and should be looking forward to healthier and brighter futures along with their non-disabled peers. (Ref: Every Disabled Child Matters).

Within Northumberland we share this vision supported by this short break service statement which is intended to inform families in Northumberland about the services that are available, as part of Northumberland County Council's commitment to providing short breaks.

The Children Act 1989 (Paragraph 6 of Schedule 2) places a duty on local authorities to provide breaks from caring for carers of disabled children so as to support them to continue to care for their children at home and to allow them to do so more effectively. The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 give more detail on how local authorities must fulfil their duty to provide breaks from caring, including a requirement to produce a Short Break Statement outlining the range of short break services available.

This Statement supports our commissioning plans for Short Break Services ensuring we are compliant with the Short Break Duty. This will ensure that we provide the range of Short Breaks that family's value and need. Families are at the heart of what we do so parents, carers and disabled children and young people are involved in this process through consultation with the Parent/Carer Forum In It Together, other Parent Partnerships, support groups and with disabled young people through their Respect Equals Change Group. This is further supported through the Senior Commissioning Manager who continues to work to ensure that commissioned short break services continue to meet the needs of children and their families.

2. How our Statement is Prepared, Published and Reviewed

In Northumberland the original statement was produced in 2011 and updated in April 2014, April 15 and again in June 2016. An electronic copy of this statement is published on Northumberland County Council's website. A paper copy can be obtained on request from the Families Information Service Tel: 01670-624889 or E-Mail: fis@northumberland.gov.uk. We will also be distribute if requested to parents and carers through our Info-Link Database as well as through our parent/carers forums, support groups and partners in education, health and social care.

The review of this Short Break Services Statement has been prepared taking into consideration the views of parents/carers from In It Together annual conferences and Parent/Carer Forum meetings, to ensure that it is up to date and represents the views and choices of local families. The views from disabled young people are very important and continue to be discussed through the Respect Equal Change (REC) Council. This will ensure that our Short Break Services continue to reflect the needs of individual families living in Northumberland who have disabled children.

The REC is a Forum where disabled young people meet on a regular basis with support with officers from the Council to put forward their ideas and opinions relating to services for disabled children and young people across Northumberland. As part of this group REC has positive links with the UK Youth Parliament to raise awareness about different disabilities and to bring together young people across the county both disabled and non-disabled. During 2014/15 our young people worked with Headliners to make a DVD regarding their views and aspirations of the support they required to meet their individual needs.

Continued consultation with local Parent/Carer Forums, which link into the In It Together Forum, along with Respect Equals Change (REC) will assist us in fulfilling the duties outlined in the Equality Act 2010, Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011, Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Children and Families Act 2014, the Care Act 2014. It will also assist in identifying future service needs and gaps in service delivery.

3. What is a Short Break?

Short Breaks have two main aims:

- To give parents or full time carers of disabled children and young people a break from their caring responsibilities.
- To enable disabled children to have social opportunities to join in with safe, fun and interesting activities.

Short Breaks can be for a few hours or longer, including overnight and can be provided in different ways. A short break could include having additional support so that a child or young person can join in with a club or recreational activity in their community. It could involve someone caring for a child in the carers' home or within the child's home. It could be extra support for the disabled child alongside family leisure and social activities.

Short Breaks provide activities for disabled children and young people, while at the same time giving their parents/carers a break from their supporting caring role. Examples of Short Breaks may include term time groups, holiday play and activity schemes, sports and leisure, community groups, overnight care, home support care, task centred care and enabling and can range from a few hours activities to longer breaks.

Our aim is to ensure that families with disabled children have the support they need to access services that can improve their quality of life. We recognise that all families are different, so they may need different levels of support and different types of Short Breaks depending on the age of their child, level and complexity of their disability and their family circumstances. Short breaks should be used routinely to assist parents/cares to maintain and improve the quality of care they naturally provide and should not be used as a crisis intervention.

It is also important to note that whilst we know that both local and national research demonstrates that Short Breaks are a priority for families with disabled children they may be delivered as part of a much broader package of family support services as outlined in the Local Offer. Research continues to indicate the need for early intervention and support so

families are not kept waiting with no knowledge of what services are available, or how they can access them.

Local Authorities are required to secure appropriate:

- Provision of day time care for disabled children and young people in both their own homes and elsewhere
- Provision of overnight care for disabled children and young people in both their own homes and elsewhere
- Provision which will enable children and young people to participate in educational and recreational activities
- Emergency care, for example, due to illness in the family

Northumberland County Council is committed to ensure that all disabled children and young people and their families have timely and regular access to advice, guidance and information through:

- Ensuring that we listen to all disabled children and young people, act on their views, and provide them with choices.
- Ensuring that all disabled children, young people and their families are supported to take part in and enjoy local community life, wherever possible using locally based services.
- Supporting parents and carers to have the opportunity to become equal partners in the decision making process about service developments and priorities, so that we can work together to improve services.

Northumberland County Council's aim is to provide the best possible support and to utilise parent/carers' expert knowledge to help identify gaps in service provision and develop and improve all our services. This is achieved through consultation with parents and disabled young people and engaging with independent organisations to ensure disabled children and young people have a 'voice'.

4. Who Can Access Short Breaks?

Short Breaks are provided for families with children and young people who have additional needs associated with their disability. Short Breaks should facilitate disabled children and young people to access activities in their communities alongside their non-disabled peers.

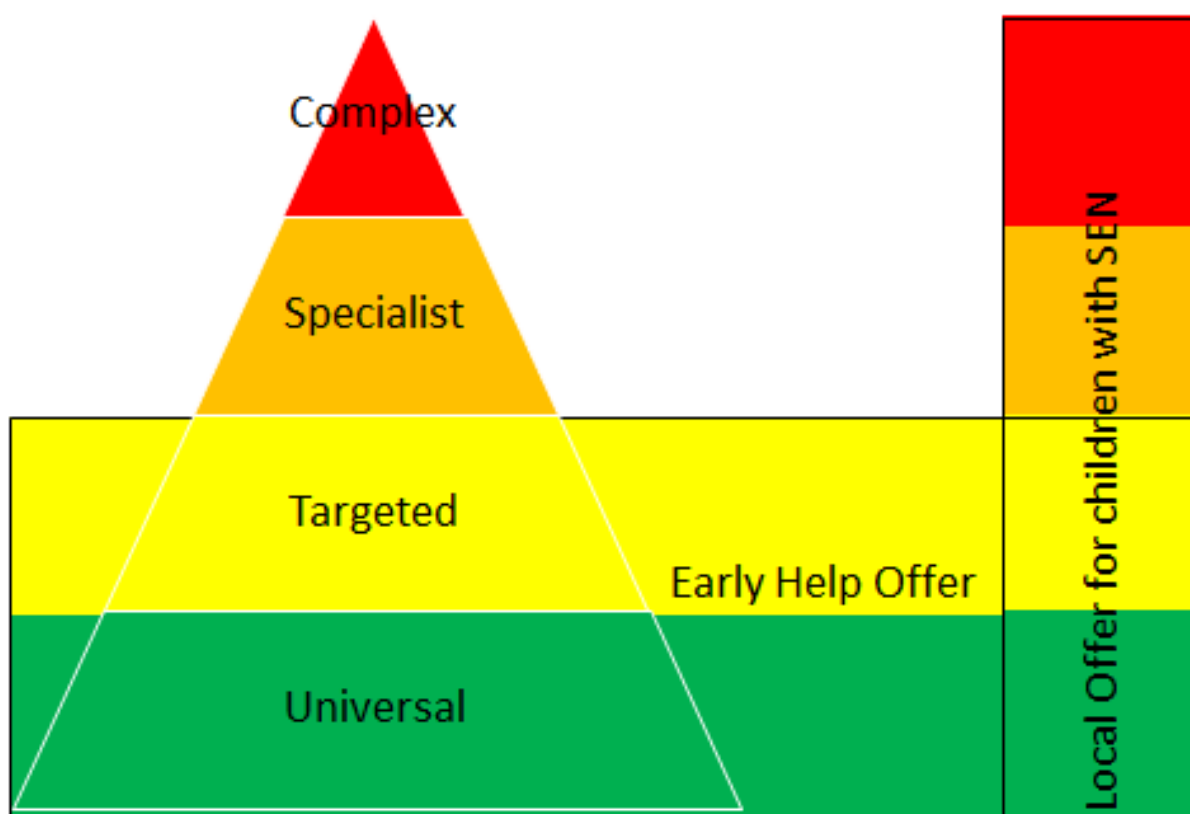
Disabled children and young people are eligible for assessment for a Short Break if they have a learning and/or physical disability, which has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out day to day activities. This includes young people with a hearing or visual impairment, children with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome and children who may have challenging behaviour as a result of their learning disability. It also includes children who have complex needs and who may have palliative, life limiting or a life threatening condition. Children and young people with palliative and life limiting care needs will be supported to participate in the full range of inclusive Short Breaks, ensuring they too can enjoy themselves and have fun with friends.

Eligibility for services is based on the following principles:

- Families with disabled children will have the same opportunities to develop and fulfil their potential as all other children.
- The need to be fair, clear and equitable.
- Supporting families through providing the right level of support at the right time.

Not all children and families will need the same level of support; some will need more than others because of the nature of their child's disability and its severity. Some families may need more support because of their individual family circumstances. This is why we may need to assess your child and family to ensure we provide the right level of support and services at the right time.

We have adopted a tiered approach to enable families to access the services they need at the right time. The levels of access are shown below.



To receive specialist support you will require an assessment by the Disabled Childrens Social Work Team (DCT) or the Locality Childcare Social Work Team if the threshold is met. The appropriate team will consider your child's needs as well as your needs as a carer and

those of your family. This can be completed as a holistic Children and Family Assessment or your needs as a carer can be assessed separately through a Carer's Assessment.

This assessment will take account of:

- The severity of your child's disability and how it impacts on their life and your family life.
- If there are concerns about a child or young person's safety and well-being.
- Your individual family circumstances.
- The level of support you receive within your social/family network.
- If a child is 'cared for' by the Local Authority or adopted.
- Or if there are specific carers needs as supported by the Care Act 2014.

Following assessment, a combination of universal, targeted and specialist services may be offered as part of your overall Short Break Care Package.

For those families assessed as requiring additional support by their Social Worker, Northumberland County Council has had a Framework of Preferred Providers in place since 2013 to facilitate overnight short breaks, outreach into the community and crisis intervention. These interventions are effective in supporting families to remain together and bring a number of advantages in providing the right help, at the right time for children and their families. The Family Support Team also facilitates access to play and activity schemes, day care, home support care, out of school clubs, enabling support and overnight support to meet the assessed needs of the disabled child, young person and their family.

More detailed information on accessing specialist services is available from the Disabled Children Social Work Team on 01670 516131, Northumberland County Council website or Guide to Services 2016-17.

Some families may require more targeted support to enable them to access Short Breaks. Coordination and assessment of need through the Hub is part of the Early Help Offer and can be considered through an Early Help Assessment. In Northumberland the introduction of locality multi-agency Hubs were initially introduced in Blyth in April 2014. During 2015 these have been replicated in the West and North of the county. Early Help Assessments replaced Common Assessment Frameworks (CAF) as a means of accessing early support. The Northumberland Guide To Services 2016/17 has recently been updated by Northumberland SEND information, Advice and support service, in partnership with In it together, Parent Carer Forum for Northumberland. This available as a hardcopy or through the County Council website. This enables parents/carers to obtain knowledge of what may be available to support them within their local area or if additional support is required, professionals who have completed and registered an Early Help Assessment will be able to direct you to appropriate support services that are available.

Universal Services and Inclusion:

Not all families need specialist or targeted short break provision and may find that mainstream services for children and young people are able to meet their needs, for example, after school clubs, holiday schemes and youth clubs. Universal services, for

example early years, extended school activities and youth clubs are really important in ensuring disabled children and young people have fun and enjoy themselves with friends, just the same as their non-disabled peers.

We aim to further develop our range of Short Breaks including specialist and non specialist short break services in universal settings. Genuine inclusion means services which are designed and equipped to enable disabled children and young people to enjoy the same activities and opportunities as their non-disabled peers. We will ensure that all children and young people have access to the most appropriate short break, at a time and level that is appropriate to individual need and will continue to identify further venues on a locality basis to maximise the opportunities for inclusive activities throughout the County.

We have issued 450 MAX cards to families in Northumberland, which will support them to access family leisure activities at a reduced cost. Registered families on Info-Link are eligible for the max card scheme. This scheme gives free or discounted entry into many museums, galleries and heritage attractions across the North East. Further information of where the cards can be used can be found at www.max-cards.co.uk or for further information please contact the Disabled Children Team. This links in to the Info-Link Register (the former disabled Children Register) which can be used to identify gaps in service provision.

Some activities and services have a cost which you would expect to pay whether a child is disabled or non-disabled. Families would be expected to pay such costs. The additional support a disabled child may need to be included should not be an extra cost to their family.

Service providers have a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to the way their services are provided in order to be inclusive to disabled children and young people. Where it is not practical for a disabled child to use a universal service then we need to consider the options and look towards specialist services for a specific group of children which will address their requirements. We intend to continue to pursue options for inclusion wherever possible and will liaise closely with our colleagues in universal services to do so.

Choice:

Frameworks have been developed to ensure a range of Short Break activities are available to meet the individual needs of disabled children and young people across Northumberland, including a Framework for the funded Play and Activity Schemes.

Short Break services can either be accessed directly by families, following an assessment, with agreed funding by Northumberland County Council, and or/by using an allocated Direct Payment or via a Personal Budget. Families can request an assessment or re-assessment at any time.

Northumberland County Council's aim is to continue to provide families with the best possible support at the right time, and to build upon their expert knowledge in helping to improve and develop our services into the future.

We feel confident that with the help of parents, carers and young people we can continue to improve the lives of disabled children and their families living in Northumberland.

Responding to Emergencies:

It is acknowledged that families may experience crises from time to time and will require additional Short Breaks. This could be due to having no extended family or network of friends nearby who they can call on to help. Our aim is to support families during particularly difficult times in a way that is most appropriate to the child and family. To improve our support to families during these times, emergency accommodation is available through one of our residential providers who are on the Framework. Over time, we hope to be able to demonstrate that the increased volume and range of short breaks are providing additional support to families and preventing some emergencies, particularly at stressful times.

5. Personal Budgets and Direct Payments

Personal Budgets:

From September 2014 all DCYP who meet the criteria for funded support can request a Personal Budget as their preferred method of funding their support. This option is further supported through the implementation of the EHC Plans.

Personal budgets were introduced as part of the SEND reforms. A Personal Budget is an allocation of money to support a child or young person needs as specified in their EHCP (ECH) plan. Young people and parents/ carers of children can request a personal budget once Northumberland county council has confirmed that it will prepare a draft ECH Plan. For those with an existing EHC Plan, a Personal Budget can be requested at the annual review.

Direct Payments:

These are an alternative means of providing families with Short Breaks, following assessment of need through a Children and Family assessment. Direct Payments provide families with money 'in lieu' of direct services. This means that a family can buy their own Short Breaks rather than having the breaks arranged for them. Families can choose to employ their own worker(s) or purchase the services of an agency or provider with their Direct Payment. Some families may have a mixture of Direct Payments and commissioned services from the Local Authority and some families may opt to receive just a Direct Payment. To receive a Direct Payment Northumberland County Council needs to ensure that the person receiving the direct payment is capable of managing such payments.

We will agree with the family a plan about how this funding will be used to meet the needs of the disabled child or young person and give their carers a break, but families will then be free within that plan to make the arrangements that suit them best.

It may also be helpful to link direct payments for short breaks with other forms of support, including budgets provided through the NHS or as part of Education, Health and Care Plans. We will explore the options and potential benefits of doing this with each individual family.

6. Short Break Services in Northumberland

The organisations that provide short breaks are listed below:

Action for Children, Monksfield

**Corbridge Road
Hexham
NE46 1UY**

Tel: 01434 601594

Opening Hours: 24 Hour Service

Monksfield provides short-break residential care services to disabled children and young people aged 6-17 years who live in Northumberland. This is in partnership with the Local Authority's children's social care services. Monksfield provides opportunities for the children and young people to enjoy regular short breaks from home where they can make new friends, experience a wide range of activities and have fun.

Action for Children also provides a full-time accommodated provision at Monksfield in a separate unit. This provision is for any Local Authority to access, so is not solely available to Northumberland.

The Alan Shearer Centre - Short Break Service

**West Denton Hall
West Denton
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE15 7LT**

Tel: 0191 267 8128

Opening Times: 24 hour Service, 7 days a week (except Christmas)

www.shortbreak@alanshearercentre.org.uk

Part of St Cuthbert's Care charity, the centre provides tailored short break care for children and adults with physical and learning disabilities, including autism, complex epilepsy and Asperger's Syndrome. Set in its own grounds, the centre has state of the art equipment and provides guests with expert care as well as free access to the Alan Shearer Activity Centre on the ground floor. Contact the centre for further information.

Barndale

**Howling Lane
Alnwick
Northumberland
NE66 1DQ**

Tel: 01665 605921

Opening Times: Weekend Service

A short-break service for children aged 6-17 years who have moderate to severe learning disabilities. The service runs at weekends and provides young people with the opportunity to access a wide range of outings and activities. Referral is through a social worker.

Barndale Saturday Club:

Barndale Day Care Scheme runs twice per month on a Saturday 10:00am – 4:00pm.

There is capacity to provide a service to twelve young people. Currently there is a charge per session for this service. Referrals are through a social worker from the Disabled Children Team.

Calvert Trust, Kielder

**Kielder Water and Forest Park
Hexham
Northumberland
NE48 1BS**

Tel: 01434 250232

Opening Times: Mon – Sun 9am – 5pm

E-mail: enquiries@calvert-kielder.com

Website: www.calvert-trust.org.uk/kielder

Specialist outdoor activity centre for people with physical, learning or sensory difficulties. Located within Northumberland's Kielder Water and Forest Park, families, individuals and groups can enjoy half or full day activity sessions, or stay for an activity break in the main centre or in a 4-star Scandinavian lodge. From Matthew's Linn boathouse, choose from canoeing, sit-on-top kayaking, sailing and motor cruising on Northern Europe's largest man-made lake. Land-based activities include zip wire, 10m high King Swing, climbing wall, archery and nature walks.

Family Placement Service: Adoption and Foster Care

Tel: 01670 626262 E-mail: familyplacement@northumberland.gov.uk

The Family Placement Service is responsible for providing a variety of placements to children across the community. The children in their care benefit from being able to live in a caring family environment other than their own, either on a short or long term basis. The service houses two teams:

The Fostering Service recruit, assess and train prospective foster carers, as well as supporting and supervising approved foster carers. They have extensive experience of providing short break care, short to medium and long term foster care for local children. The team are looking for new foster carers now.

Go online to find out more: <http://fostering.northumberland.gov.uk>

The Adoption and Permanence Service recruit, assess, train and support adoptive families. They have extensive experience of finding families for local children who need

adoptive homes. They also have responsibility for Special Guardianship assessments. The team are looking for new adoptive parents now.

Go online to find out more: <http://adoption.northumberland.gov.uk>

Family Support Team

Tel: 01670 620 288

E-mail: familysupport@northumberland.gov.uk

Website: www.northumberland.gov.uk/familysupport

The Family Support Team provides targeted intervention and support to children, young people and their families following requests from Social Care teams. The following services are available to children, young people and their families. Contact your child's Social Worker for more information about the services listed.

Family Aid Work (for all children and young people aged 0 to 18 years)

Family Aid Workers visit families in their own homes, providing opportunities for the families to affect change and develop confidence and skills in managing challenging behaviour. The work may also include the development of routines, safe caring strategies and financial guidance.

Home Support Care for Disabled Children and Young People (aged 0 to 18 years):

Home Support Carers can take a child/young person out into a community setting, or can care for the child/young person in their own home. This offers the family a regular and valued break from their caring responsibilities. The aim is to reduce social isolation and stress for the whole family; allowing each family member to take part in things that they may not normally be able to access.

Task Centred Care (for all children and young people aged 5 to 18 years):

Task Centred Carers work with children/young people outside the family home, accompanying them to access everyday activities under safe supervision and guidance. The worker provides practical and emotional support to the child/young person, empowering them to develop their social skills, their independence and their ability to interact with adults and other children/young people in the community. This could include taking the child/young person to sports and leisure clubs, and enabling them to participate in activities of interest to them, with their peers.

Supervised Contact (for all children and young people aged 0 to 18 years):

Contact Supervisors help to facilitate the contact between children and their families. The council has a duty to promote contact between looked-after children and their parents, relatives, friends and other people connected with the child.

Play and Activity Schemes for Children and Young People with disabilities/additional needs; groups for Young Carers: Play and Activity Schemes and Young Carers Groups

provide an opportunity for children and young people to participate in a range of term time activities and holiday play schemes.

Overnight Provision: Overnight Support Care (for all children and young people aged 0 to 18 years): This service offers a breathing space to children and families experiencing difficulties. It provides an effective intervention to support families to remain together, and to reduce the risk of children and young people entering the looked after system and/or being excluded from school and other services. It also provides a break to children in foster care and to families of disabled children and young people.

Short break care services are available for disabled children, young people and their families: These give parents and full time carers of disabled children and young people a break from their caring responsibilities. Short breaks also enable disabled children to have social opportunities and join in with safe, fun and interesting activities.

Grace House

**Grace House
Bardolph Drive
Southwick
Sunderland
SR5 2DE**

**Tel: 0191 525 2885
Email: info@gracehouse.co.uk**

Grace House is a children's charity which welcomes children and young people from across the North East with complex disabilities, health needs and life limiting conditions. They provide a fun, safe, exciting environment where children can come and live life to the full.

Their main service will be overnight short breaks at their centre in Southwick, Sunderland. They are also planning to offer additional services to families, including therapeutic music and art activities; adapted sports coaching; alternative and complementary therapies for carers; counselling; information and training; support groups; and activity groups for babies and toddlers with complex needs, and their families.

Helping Hands Community Care

**Helping Hands Community Care
Waterguards Building
South Harbour
Blyth
NE24 3PA**

Tel: 01670 797946

Helping Hands Community Care provides a wide range of services for children, aged infant to young adult, with varying needs, and their families. These include respite at home, enabling and support at school, taking children to school, an extra pair of hands at home, personal care, supporting teenagers with independence and living skills, travelling on public

transport, cooking, budgeting, shopping and socialising. There is a charge for this service. Contact Helping Hands directly for more details.

SAFA – The Armed Forces Charity

Website: www.ssafa.org.uk

Helpline: 0800 731 4880

The charity gives specialist support to military families with additional needs; including parents of children with additional needs or disabilities. SSAFA provide a Forces Additional Needs and Disability Forum (FANDF) because they recognise that if a family has a family member with an additional need or disability then other families in a similar situation can provide unique support. They provide short breaks for service children with additional needs to enjoy with their families.

St Cuthbert's Care

St Cuthbert's House
West Road
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE15 7PY

Tel: 0191 228 0111

Opening Times: Mon – Thurs 9am - 5pm, Fri 9am - 4.30pm

E-mail: enquiries@stcuthbertscare.org.uk

Website: www.stcuthbertscare.org.uk

St Cuthbert's House is the registered head office for St Cuthbert's Care, one of the longest established social care charities in the North East of England. They care for children, disabled children and adults, elderly people and provide care in communities right across the region.

St Oswald's Hospice Children's Service

Regent Avenue
Gosforth
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE3 1EE

Tel: 0191 285 0063

Opening Times: 24 hour service, 7 days a week

E-mail: enquiries@stoswaldsuk.org

Website: www.stoswaldsuk.org

A specialist, short-break residential service for children and young people 0-18 years with progressive life limiting (shortening) conditions and their families. Health and social services work together with families to understand which children need specialist short breaks. Referrals are not made directly to St Oswald's, but via a referral pathway agreed with health and social services.

7. Other Considerations

Transport:

We appreciate that transport and access to transport can be difficult for children and young people with disabilities and their families. When Short Break services are commissioned, care will be taken to minimise transport difficulties. In rural locations, families will be supported to claim appropriate benefits and to access information concerning available local travel.

We will continue to work with parents and organisations to create more locally based services across the four locality areas of the county. We will continue to work to ensure that wherever possible and where appropriate young people are supported to become independent travellers. To support disabled young people to become more independent in travel Bus Buddies is a project managed by Children North East that enlists volunteer peer mentors to facilitate disabled young people aged 15-19 who live in the South East of Northumberland. For further information contact – enquiries@children-ne.org.uk

Transition to Adult Services:

If support services are still required when a disabled young person reaches 18 years of age they may be eligible for transfer to Adult Services for assessment of need. Information about support and services for disabled children and young people going through transitions is also available on the county council website, including the 14+ Team. For young people reaching transitions, information is provided to Adult Services on an annual basis in a timely manner to support their planning process.

We remain committed to improving transitions through our joined up and coordinated approach with Adult and Children's social care, paediatric adult and specialist health care, Employability & Skills', housing and leisure provision. Families will experience a clearer and more open approach to the eligibility criteria and may qualify for support from a Personal Planner. Plans are being put in place to harmonise and align assessment process and eligibility to services across both Adult and Children's Services.

The Workforce:

Ongoing workforce development is a key priority to ensure staff in both specialist and non-specialist services have the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to care and support disabled children and young people so that they can enjoy, and benefit from their short break. Our aim is to ensure that the workforce have the necessary skills to support all

disabled children and young people – irrespective of need - to attend any club or activity of their choice.

Parents and carers are reporting that they have confidence in short break services and the skills of the providers in enabling them to care for their disabled child or young person.

8. Further Information

The Families Information Service publishes information about activities and events that are open and accessible by any family or disabled child and young person, subject to the policies of the provider and any charges made by the provider.
www.northumberland.fsd.org.uk

Information regarding targeted and specialist Short Breaks is available in the Guide to Services 2016-17 or from the Disabled Children Team, Telephone 01670-516131 and the Family Support Team, Telephone 01670-620288. Further information can also be found on Northumberland County Council website by searching for the local offer.