

## Short Breaks Engagement Activities April / May 2023

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs - Staff)

**There will be regular updates to these FAQs as the engagement activities progress and new questions are asked.**

#### **What are Short Breaks?**

Short Breaks are fun or educational activities for children and young people with disabilities. They allow their parents or carers to take a 'short break' from caring. Short Break activities can be accessed at the weekend, during the school holidays, and at youth clubs in the evening. Short Breaks can also be provided in the form of additional support with caring duties (such as personal care). This would be provided at times when the family most needs help. A Short Break could allow parents or carers to take part in training, take part in leisure activities, perform day-to-day tasks, spend time with other children, or complete education and training. Overnight care support may be available for families with the most complex needs if appropriate, following a social care assessment.

#### **Why do Local Authorities and Integrated Care Boards offer Short Breaks?**

There are important duties for both Local Authorities and Integrated Care Boards (ICB) as part of the Children Act 1989 section 17 and The Children & Families Act 2014 to arrange for the provision of services or facilities for any children and young people who have special educational needs or who have a disability. Additionally, each Integrated Care Board has a duty under section 3 of the NHS Act 2006.

Northamptonshire Children's Trust undertakes the local authority duties on the behalf of North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Councils.

#### **Why were the Short Breaks services reviewed and re-designed?**

Parents and practitioners have told us that short breaks are critical for supporting families with children with disabilities. They told us they can be improved by being more flexible, more responsive and more joined up.

Children and young people using the service have told us the type of activities they want to take part in.

We are also aware that children with more complex needs or who require higher levels of support are not always able to access short break activities. This means the option for them to access a short break can be limited so they are not necessarily receiving the support they need when they need it.

#### **What Short Breaks Services are there in Northamptonshire?**

**Residential Short Breaks** for overnight stays in either John Greenwood Shipman (JGS) in Northampton or Squirrels in Rushden and is delivered by Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT).

**Non-Residential Short Breaks** for weekend, youth club and holiday activities, currently available in Northampton, Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and Daventry and is delivered by Action for Children.

**Sleep Service** - Sleep Right is a free support service available online or over the phone. It helps parents and carers of disabled children to improve their child's sleep and is delivered by Scope.

**Sensory Impairment Services** offering support and activities for children with visual and hearing impairments and is delivered by Northamptonshire Association for the Blind (NAB) and Deaf Connect.

### **Who funds the short breaks services in Northamptonshire?**

The residential short breaks and the sleep service are jointly funded by Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT) and the ICB. The non-residential short breaks and sensory impairment services are funded by NCT.

### **What will be different from the current model of Short Breaks?**

Currently there are separate contracts for each of the Short Breaks services, each with their own referral and assessment processes. The proposed new model would join the services together, with the addition of a central hub to support families across all services. There would be additional activities and support to help families get the right help at the right time.

### **What will happen to my feedback?**

All responses to the engagement and consultation activities will be analysed and a report will be published sharing the outcome of the engagement. We will use the feedback to inform our equality impact assessment and final proposals for the future short breaks service.

### **Has the proposed model been co-produced with parents / carers?**

Parents, practitioners and other linked organisations were part of the co-production workshops in the Autumn 2020 and further engagement session in November 2020. There is a Children with Disabilities Board (commissioned services) which has parent representatives attending which has been updated on the progress of the project. These engagement activities will ensure that the voice of children, young people, their families and practitioners are able to engage and further share their views.

### **Will this affect the service children and families currently receive?**

If a child currently accesses residential or non-residential short breaks they will still be able to access these at the same level, and we expect there will be a greater choice of short breaks for the child to access. Depending on the feedback we receive there may be some changes to the locations and days on which short breaks are available. If we plan to make a significant change we will consult on the proposals. We will ensure support is in place to manage any transitions.

### **When do you expect any changes to be made?**

We expect the new short breaks service to start on 1st April 2024

### **How will the tender process affect my job?**

Your job will remain the same until the new model is in place on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, see below for more information.

**Could my current organisation bid for the new contract?**

When the new model is advertised to the provider market all interested parties can view the specification for the services and decide whether they are bidding for the contract.

**If there is a new provider identified, will I be placed 'at risk' of redundancy as an employee and have the choice to stay with my current provider.**

The future provider would decide how they would deliver the new model and which posts would be required within the model. Current posts included in the new model would fall within the scope of TUPE.

If there is a new provider of your service there would be more information after contract award on how this might affect your job.

**What are my employment rights under TUPE if a new provider is identified?**

Staff who transfer under TUPE maintain their existing terms and conditions at point of transfer. This includes your employers contractual policies.

The exception to this would be pensions provisions, and we would seek further clarity from the new provider as to details of their Pension scheme. There would be an expectation that they provide a comparable Pension arrangement.

**What will happen next?**

Once the engagement activities are complete there could be a further 12 week public consultation in which parents, carers and staff will be notified. There will additionally be engagement with interested organisations who may be interested in delivering short breaks to discuss the proposals and gain their feedback. Once all engagement and consultation activities are complete the results will feed into a new service model for which we would seek an organisation / organisations to deliver.

**These FAQs will be updated weekly with any additional questions and the answers**