

# **Monmouthshire Health and Social Care - Short Breaks Service Statement**

## **Introduction and Background**

The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children (Wales) Regulations came into force on 28th June 2012. The Regulations require local authorities in Wales to assist the person caring for the disabled child to continue to care, by giving them breaks from caring; building on the general duties under the Children Act 1989 and the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 in respect of disabled children and informal carers.

The Regulations require local authorities to:

- ensure that, when making short break provision, they have regard to the needs of different types of carers, not just those who would be unable to continue to provide care without a break;
- provide a range of breaks, as appropriate, during the day, night, at weekends and during the school holidays; and
- provide parents with a short breaks services statement detailing the range of available breaks.

This statement applies to all children and young people with a disability aged between 0-18 who live in Monmouthshire and their parents and carers. This statement will be reviewed annually.

The following has been designed to give information about:

- Who can access short breaks
- The range of short breaks currently available in Monmouthshire
- How short breaks meet the needs and aspirations of children with a disability and young people and their families in Monmouthshire.

### **What is a Short Break?**

Short Breaks provide disabled children and young people with an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, relaxing and having fun with their friends. They provide families with a 'break' from their caring responsibilities; they give parents a chance to un-wind, rest, spend time with their other children and give brothers and sisters an opportunity to enjoy family time too.

Short Breaks can take the form of:

- Daytime care in the home or in the community
- Overnight care in the home or elsewhere
- Leisure activities outside of the home

Short breaks come in many different forms and can last anything from a couple of hours to a few days. The length and type of break will depend on the child/ young person and family. Not all children and families will need the same level of support and short breaks; some will need more than others because of the nature and severity of their child's disability or family circumstances. We may need to assess the child and family to ensure we provide the right amount of support and short-breaks at the right time.

## **The Principles behind Short Breaks**

- Short breaks should not just be there for those at crisis point; they are also designed to be an early intervention.
- Access to short breaks must not be judged on the child's disability alone
- Short breaks should be reliable and take place at a time to best meet families' needs
- Parents/carers should be consulted in the design of local short breaks services
- Short breaks can also be offered by universal service providers
- Short breaks can be a key service to promote greater levels of confidence and competence for young people moving towards adult life

## **What short breaks are available?**

For most short breaks an assessment by a Social Worker will be required but there are some other short breaks where no assessment will be required. Short breaks broadly fall into 3 groups:

### **1. Opportunities which can be accessed by all children and young people within or near their local community**

These are sometimes referred to as Universal Services. All children and young people should be able to access universal leisure and activity opportunities. These are opportunities which everyone can get involved in such as libraries, leisure centres, youth groups and playgrounds – for some of these opportunities there may be a charge to access them.

Wherever possible these are the opportunities which should be used as a first choice. Children and young people with a disability and their families are part of their local communities and it is important that they have the opportunity to become involved in local opportunities. Some children may require additional support in order to fully participate in community based activities. We are committed to ensuring that universal groups and services have the support they need to meet the needs of Children and young people with a disability and their families. You can find out information about these opportunities through the Monmouthshire Council website, Family Information Service. <http://www.monfis.org.uk/> You will also find information within the community such as Schools, Libraries, Leisure Centres and Community Centres.

### **2. Opportunities for children and young people who require some additional support**

We recognise that families may have additional needs if they are bringing up a child with a disability, and that the children and young people may need extra support on either short or long term basis to be able to take part in activities. There are services available which aim to offer support and to encourage children and young people to try new things.

Short break support services are specifically for children with a disability and their families and may be provided for different age groups. Access is not necessarily dependent on a formal assessment of need although each service may operate its

own criteria. This information will be published on the Monmouthshire website at relevant times. <http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/home/>

Examples of opportunities for children and young people who require some additional support are given below. For some of the opportunities there is a charge to access them.

**Half term and summer play schemes**– These take place in various settings across Monmouthshire including schools, community halls, youth centres and leisure centres. A variety of activities are provided for children and young people who may include: music; drama; arts and crafts; sports; and games.

**Disability Sports Development Officer** – Within Monmouthshire there are currently existing clubs and provisions offering a variety of sporting activities for children with a disability including: Swimming; Multi-sports, Football, horse-riding, gymnastics, wheelchair fencing, fencing, rowing, and petanque. Taster events are also offered – such as Para-Olympic sports as well as holiday activities.

The role of the Disability Sports Development Officer is to initiate, promote and provide quality sporting and recreational opportunities for people with disabilities, mainly at grassroots level, and to establish mechanisms for development. This can include supporting children with a disability and young people to access sports clubs, but also includes supporting sports clubs to become more accessible, for example, training coaches and helping with the purchasing of specialist equipment.

For more information on Disability Sports, please contact Mark Foster Disability Sport Wales Development Officer  
/ *Swyddog Datblygu Chwaraeon Anabl Cymru* Monmouthshire County Council / *Cyngor Sir Fynwy* **Tel / Ffon:** 01633 644558 / 07753 850550 **Email:**  
[markfoster@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:markfoster@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

**Web:** [www.monleisure.co.uk](http://www.monleisure.co.uk) / [www.disabilitysportwales.com](http://www.disabilitysportwales.com)

**Twitter:** @DSW\_MonLeisure

**Monmouthshire Young Carers' Service** – supports young carers, including those who are carrying out significant caring and household tasks because they have a brother or sister with a disability. The service offers one-to-one support, time out to enjoy group activities, advocacy and residential breaks.

**Gwent Visual Impairment Service (GVIS)** – The GVIS works alongside parents and other professionals to bring children with visual impairments and families together to develop learning, so that the children have the best possible basis for their future development. Short break opportunities available through GVIS for children and young people with visual impairments include:

1. GVIS Pre-school Groups – During 2012-13 there are 4 groups that meet in the Family Centre in Cwmbran, Tuesday through to Thursday, where there are purpose built rooms designed to meet the needs of children with sensory

loss. Places are allocated according to age and developmental level. Children are assisted to develop skills in: social and emotional development / wellbeing; communication; language and meaning; play and learning; movement and mobility; and independent self-care. The centre provides a variety of quality play activities in both indoor and outdoor environments that are fun, exciting, stimulating and safe. There is no registration fee or weekly subscription required for the placement.

2. After School Clubs – The GVIS After School Club helps develop and enhance children’s self-esteem, confidence, life skills, friendships and personal and social skills. The club provides children with the opportunity to meet socially with other young people with a visual impairment of a similar age. It is open to any child with a visual impairment who is known to the service. GVIS are currently able to accept a maximum of 8 children at any given time. A waiting list operates if more than 8 children wish to attend. There is a contribution of £3 per child to attend the club. 2012-13 club times are: Tuesday 16:00-17:00 and Thursday 16:00-17:30.

3. Holiday Clubs – During school holidays GVIS also run holiday clubs 2-3 days a week which are open to any child with a visual impairment who is known to the service. The activities of these clubs vary but include things like: cookery; arts and crafts; and games. There is normally a small charge for these clubs to cover the cost of the activities (usually £3-£5), though cost will depend on the activity.

**Monmouthshire Family Information Service (FIS)** – Monmouthshire FIS hold detailed information on local childcare, including Sure Start, Home Start, and parent and toddler groups. They also hold an extensive range of information to support young people, parents and prospective parents of children and young people and hold childcare related information on:

- Child-minders
- Day Nurseries
- Playgroups
- Before School Clubs
- After School Clubs
- Holiday Clubs, Half Term and Summer Play schemes
- Nursery education

### **3. Opportunities for children and young people who require a high level of support**

These are available to children and families who are assessed as needing a specialist service from the Council’s Children with Disabilities Team. They are provided to children and families with the most complex needs and include services in or away from the child’s home and could be with family carers or with individual support workers to use community facilities. Due to the nature of some of these services there may be a waiting list to access them.

#### **Social Care Assessment**

A parent of a child with a disability has a legal right to ask for an assessment of their child’s needs by social care services. Monmouthshire provides social care services in partnership with other agencies to children and young people who:

- have a moderate to severe learning/physical/sensory disability and

- meet the eligibility criteria for a child in need

The assessment process, carried out by a social worker, will establish if the child is eligible for social care services, which enables us to find out exactly what kind of support the child needs. We may need to consult with health, education professionals and voluntary agencies to get the clearest picture of the child's needs.

Once we have established that the child is eligible for services from the Children with Disabilities Team, we will produce an individual Care Plan which sets out what kind of support services the child needs. This will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it continues to meet the child's needs.

There are a range of short break options available from Monmouthshire Social Care, depending on the family's wishes and the child's needs, including:

**Family-based short breaks** – These are provided by foster carers who have been approved specifically to offer short breaks to children with a disability. These foster carers have been rigorously assessed and, as with all our foster carers, they have thorough checks. Short breaks, including overnight stays, for up to six weeks per year can be arranged depending on assessed need.

**Sêrbach and Ty'r Enfys**– This is a family-orientated service which is provided in partnership with Monmouthshire Social Services. Foster carers provide short breaks for up to two children at a time, one wheelchair user and one ambulant child, in their large, specially-adapted home. Each child has his/her own bedroom, one of which is adapted for children with physical disabilities. All family-based breaks are arranged by the Children with a Disability Team so you will need to speak to your Social Worker if you wish to arrange one for your child.

### **Direct Payments**

Direct payments allow the parents of children with a disability who are eligible for services to arrange care and services themselves instead of receiving them directly from their local council. Following an assessment, direct payments can be used for a variety of services, including personal care, short breaks and recreational opportunities.

Direct payments must only be used on services that meet the needs described in the child's assessment. There are some services that direct payments cannot be used for, for example to pay for health or housing services.

Disabled young people aged 16 and 17 are entitled to receive direct payments in their own right and may enjoy the additional choice and control over their care arrangements that direct payments provide; the scheme also supports independent living.

Direct payments are also available to carers, including young carers of 16 or 17 years of age.

If a person chooses to use direct payments, they will take on the role of

employer and the people who provide the child with care and support will become their staff. While this might sound daunting, a lot of families of children with a disability now choose direct payments to give them more choice and flexibility.

### **Community Children's Nursing Service**

The Community Children's Nursing Service is a team of Registered Children's Nurses and Healthcare Support Workers. The team provides short-term and long-term nursing support for children with disabilities, including those who are leaving hospital. The team also provides support for children with long-term, complex health needs to give families the opportunity to take a much-needed break. Short breaks can be provided within the child's own home or, in certain circumstances, at other locations.

Any healthcare professional can make a referral to the Community Children's Nursing Service. Children with a disability who have previously been discharged from the service can make a direct referral to the service if the same diagnosis/condition re-occurs. A Referral for a child/young person to be considered for Continuing NHS Healthcare can be made by any professional within Health, Education or the Local Authority. However parental consent is needed for the Continuing NHS Healthcare process to be undertaken.

Services available from the Community Children's Nursing Service include:

**Nursing support** – Following an individualised assessment of the child's needs the Community Children's Nursing Service can provide nursing support within the special needs schools in order that children and young people can access education. They can also teach educational staff to perform the tasks required in order that a child may attend mainstream school or access school trips. If a child has identified health needs that require nursing support on transport to and from school, this would also be considered on an individual basis.

**Nursing Respite Care** – For a child to access nursing respite care within their own home they would need to be assessed for children's continuing care status against the All Wales eligibility criteria. This is a multi-disciplinary team approach and an approved scoring grid is used when considering a request for nursing respite care. This package could include supporting a child within an approved Local Authority respite centre.

**Respite Centre** – The Community Children's Nursing Service are in the process of setting up a respite centre which will be open on weekends initially. Children would need to meet the children's continuing care status in order to access the facility.

**Tŷ Hafan (The Children's Hospice in Wales)** – this is a family-orientated children's hospice based in Sully in the Vale of Glamorgan. Tŷ Hafan provide short breaks, palliative and end of life care to children suffering from life-limiting conditions (those which mean that the child or young person is not expected to reach the age of 19). Children and their families might receive support for many years, or just for a few days at the end of life. Either way, Tŷ Hafan provides love, care and support for the

children and their families free of charge. Referrals can be made by anyone, e.g. parent, professional or family friend, however the parent or carer's consent must be given before the referral can proceed.

### **Contact Information**

#### **Children with a Disability's Team**

The Library

Manor Way,

Chepstow

Monmouthshire. NP16 5HZ

#### **Community Children's Nursing Service**

Risca Health Centre

Cromwell Road

Risca

NP11 6YF

Tel: 01633 618020

#### **Disability Sports Development Officer**

**Mark Foster 07753850550**

#### **Gwent Visual Impairment Service (GVIS)**

Brecon House

William Brown Close

Llantarnam Business Park

Llantarnam

Cwmbran

NP44 3AB

Tel: 01633 645420

E-mail: [gwentvisualimpairmentservice@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:gwentvisualimpairmentservice@caerphilly.gov.uk)

#### **Monmouthshire Family Information Service**

<http://www.monfis.org.uk/>

#### **Monmouthshire Young Carers Service**

County Hospital

Coedygric Road

Griffithstown NP4 5YA

01495 769996

[southeastwales@crossroads.org.uk](mailto:southeastwales@crossroads.org.uk)

<http://www.carers.org/>

**Tŷ Hafan Hospice**

Hayes Road

Sully

Vale of Glamorgan

CF64 5XX

Tel: 02920 532200

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