

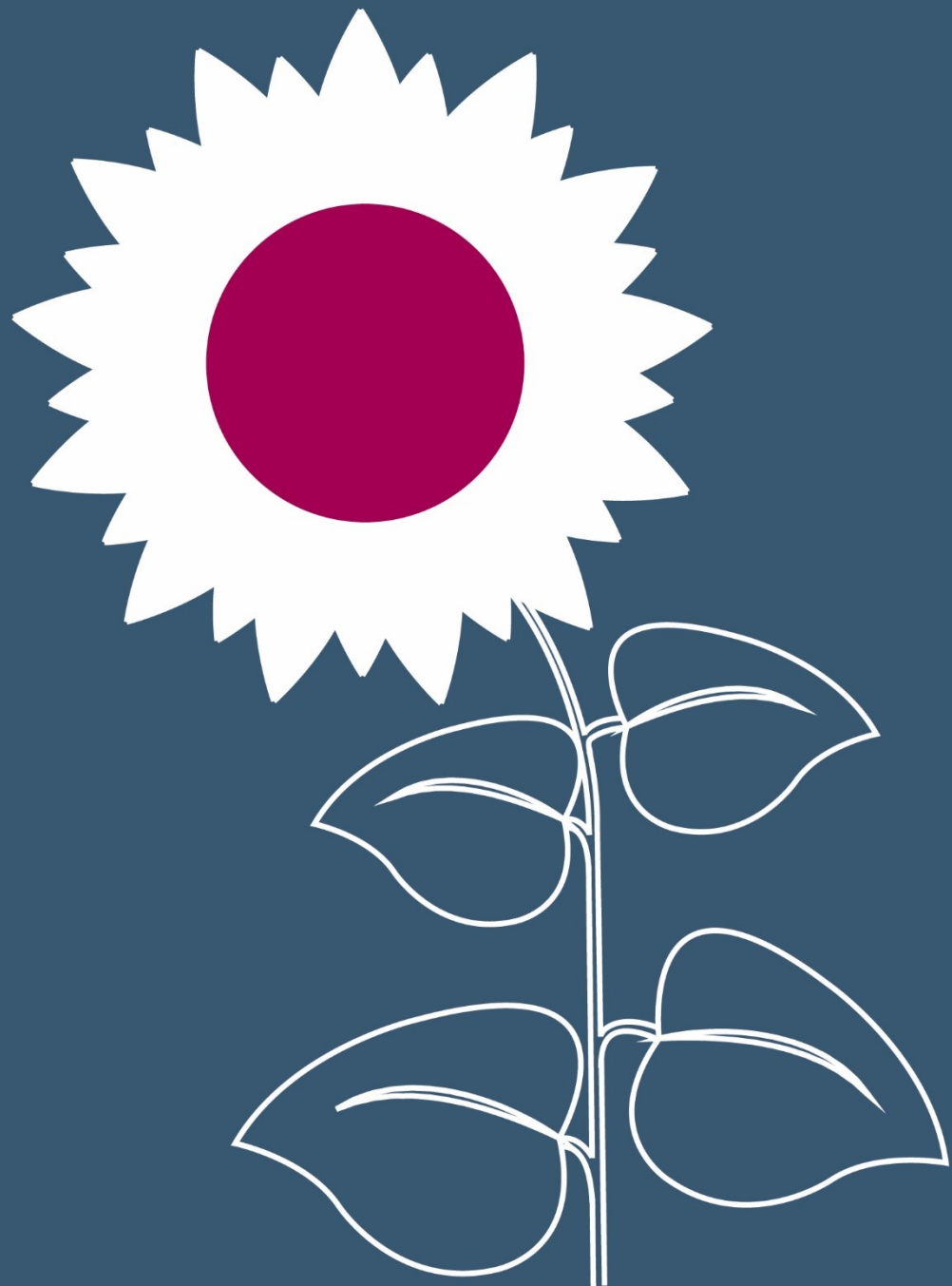


City of
Stoke-on-Trent

Short Breaks

Tri x 3_1_18 October 2023

Review October 2024



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1 Short breaks

Following assessment by a social worker on the children with disability team where the outcome is that the child meets the threshold for the provision of services under section 17 and that services are required for the purposes of promoting the child's welfare and having established eligibility for the CWD service and where the child and their family only require a service through a direct payment or other local authority short break, this may be allocated to a Short Breaks Worker and delivered via a short breaks plan. Where the child receives overnight short breaks as part of their plan these will continue to be overseen by a social worker although where this is provided under section 17 the visits can be undertaken by the a social work assistant or short breaks worker under the supervision of a social worker.

In general, this is likely to be where the child has a low to medium level of need as identified on the Need Identification Tool¹ of need and the short break is sufficient to meet this need.

Where the child or their family requires either a greater package of support and care or the child's needs are such that they require the coordination of a multi-agency response in order to ensure that a child's welfare is maintained, then the child is likely to require a child in need plan overseen by a social worker. In general, this will be identified as medium or high on the matrix of need.

¹ The Needs Identification Tool is a tool to guide thinking and assessment and should never take the place of professional judgement, nor should it be used to cap any resource decisions.

2 Assessment

The child and family assessment will be carried out by a social worker on the cwd team. Once the assessment has been completed the assessment will have identified the child's unmet needs that are eligible for support under either the Children Act 1989 or the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.

These needs should be clearly identified as this will inform the resources required to meet the needs which will be kept under review through the short breaks care plan, and monitored via the short breaks reviews which will be overseen by the Short Breaks worker. This would usually be via a Direct Payment but may also be through alternative local authority resources.

The social worker and family should be satisfied that the initial short breaks care plan will meet the assessed needs.

3 Plan and Review

The initial short breaks care plan should be reviewed after three months and then at intervals of no longer than every 6 months. If the plan is not meeting the identified needs, then earlier reviews can be held. Where possible, reviews should be coordinated with other reviews for the child such as reviews of their EHCP so as to reduce the number of meetings that children and families are expected to attend.

The format of the reviews should be agreed with the child and their families but it is expected that at least one review per year is a face to face meeting which should include the short breaks worker, the parent, the child where appropriate, the direct payments Worker (PA) as well as any other person who may be contributing to the short break care plan. The reviews will be chaired by a social worker who would usually be the social worker who undertook the initial assessment.

The key requirement of the review is to ensure that the short breaks plan is meeting the child's assessed needs. In order to demonstrate this it is expected that the person delivering the short break is able to evidence how the short break is meeting the identified outcomes for the child.

Where there are any safeguarding concerns these *will be escalated to a social worker*.

4 Engaging with Children

The views of the child are paramount and as such it is expected that the short breaks worker will visit the child at least every 3 months to obtain their views, wishes and feelings with regards to the provision of services and at least one visit per year should be at the child's home. The other visits should be agreed with the child and their family and could take place where they receive respite, in hospital, at school (as long as it does not disturb the child's education) or any other suitable location.

5 Supervision and management oversight of short breaks children

It is expected that supervision of short breaks cases will take place initially at least once within the first three months to ensure that the identified service provision is suitable and is meeting the child's needs and thereafter within 20 days of each short breaks review and therefore no longer than every 3 months.

Should the child's needs change between reviews then the Short Breaks Worker should discuss this with the Team Manager who can arrange for an additional supervision to take place.

6 Updating of Assessments for short breaks children

Children who receive only short breaks should have their assessments updated regularly and;

- at natural points of transition (Transition from early years to primary school, primary to high school, high school to college);
- When the child's needs change and the short breaks appear as if they may need to be substantially altered
- When any safeguarding concerns have been raised
- At the request of a parent or child or if the short breaks care plan appears to no longer be meeting the child's needs

The updated assessment **will be allocated to a social worker on the cwd team** who will become the primary worker for the duration of the assessment although the short breaks worker will still maintain the key worker role in respect of the short break.

Once the assessment has concluded that the outcome continues to be a short break only, then case responsibility will continue to be the short breaks worker, if the child's needs have increased to the point that he / she now requires support via a child in need plan then the primary worker will change to a social worker.