

Short Breaks Services

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Short breaks provide a positive activity for disabled children and young people while giving their parents the benefit of a 'break' from their caring responsibilities.

These breaks allow parents and carers the time to rest, take care of other children or do something they wouldn't be able to do otherwise. Short breaks can be for an hour or two, a whole day, or sometimes a longer period.

A short break can be something you and your child enjoy doing. Provided your child is happy and safe in a short break the choice is yours.

Is my child entitled to short breaks funding?

Your child is entitled to short breaks funding if they:

- receive disabled living allowance at the middle or higher rate, or
- have severe or profound elements in their Joint Agency Record

You can find more information about the Joint Agency Record in **Factsheet 7**.

Short breaks funding builds on services families are expected to fund themselves, services available to all families and disability-related benefits and tax credits.

In Devon there are two levels of short breaks funding.

- The Local Offer is for children who only require a small amount of funding to meet their needs.
- The Fair Access to Short Breaks (FASB) is for children with more complex needs.

What is the Local Offer?

The Local Offer is a payment of up to £200 to help fund an activity, or help towards enabling your child to participate in something they enjoy.

How do I access the Local Offer?

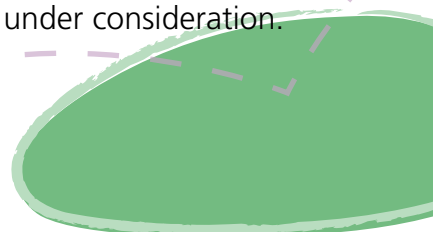
No additional assessment is needed to access this funding; it is funded as part of the Team Around the Child action planning process. Your child's lead professional arranges for you to receive a cheque and you spend the money in line with the outcomes recorded in the plan. You give the lead professional receipts showing how the money was spent, as these are required if any further funding application is made

What is Fair Access to Short Breaks Services (FASB)?

FASB is used across Devon as a way of sharing out short breaks funding for children with more complex needs. A short breaks assessment establishes your allocation.

How much could I get by agreeing to a short breaks assessment?

Short breaks allocations are between £200 and £10,000 a year. We don't set a limit to support for disabled children and will spend more if your child needs intensive support at home or can only live at home for part of the week. Any costs in excess of the allocation are met outside of the scheme and have to be approved by an Area Funding Panel. You can start to use your allocation while this is under consideration.



Factsheet 13

Can I get more short breaks by having a Carer's Assessment?

It won't increase the short breaks allocation, but will signpost you to other forms of support available to carers.

How is the short breaks allocation worked out?

The short breaks assessment is given a **points score** which we use to calculate the allocation. If there is more than one eligible child in your household, their needs are assessed separately. The scoring system is age-related so allocations are lower in the early years when all children need a lot of care and attention, and increase if they aren't achieving greater independence as they get older.

How are the services arranged?

When you know what your allocation is we give you a list of typical costs and ask you to make a budget plan. Help can be arranged if you need it. You can use any service you feel is suitable as long as it is appropriately registered. You can choose to take some of the allocation as **Direct Payments** which will enable you to arrange some of your own services and have some services arranged for you. Providing there is no application being made to the Area Funding Panel you can choose to have all of your allocation as **Direct Payments** – see **factsheet 14**.

What if our allocation runs out before the end of the year?

Your budget plan must:

- cover a full year
- show expected changes in monthly spend
- allow for likely increases in the cost of services
- include some contingency money for emergencies.

You can't use all the allocation in a short period, but it's fine if you want to budget for more support in the school holidays.

Your allocation will be reviewed every year, changing if you need more support, or if the situation has improved. If we don't re-assess after 12 months your allocation will continue at the same level until this is rectified.

Do I have to use my allocation?

You can choose not to take all or any of your allocation. Families on higher incomes, or who have had compensation payments for their child's disability may feel they don't need financial help. We will ask you about this as part of the assessment process and will treat information you give us in confidence and respect your decision.

What if I am unhappy with my FASB assessment or the allocation?

Let us know what you feel is incorrect or inaccurate. If you feel that points have not been awarded fairly they will be recalculated and you will be offered the highest allocation. You have the right to appeal if you are not happy with the outcome.

The Fair Access to Short Breaks Scheme operates within a fixed budget which may require adjustment to the points value from time to time. It has been developed in partnership with parents and carers. Your feedback will help us monitor satisfaction with the scheme and amend it if necessary.

