

SUTTON CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLES DISABILITY SERVICE COFFEE MORNING - 23 NOVEMBER 2021

Present: Suzy Mullally, Claire Jackson, Bill Brittain, Liam Roberts

A review of criteria for Short Breaks has been undertaken for both Children's and Adults and this was presented at the session.

600 children on short breaks register

Questions and answers below.

- Q Do you need to have a diagnosis to be eligible for short breaks?
A Yes, you need to have a diagnosed disability. However, the Functional Needs Assessment (FNA) still needs to be carried out to determine the child's needs and to see how their disability impacts them day to day.
- Q How do your families receive payments for short breaks?
A Using a pre-paid payment card.
- Q Can you change an activity that your child is taking part in if they no longer want to carry on with this?
A Currently you have to go back to the Short Breaks team as this has to be done formally through paperwork and completed for the audit trail. However, we are reviewing this process following the Q & A session.
- Q Will my child's support package be lowered?
A A Functional Needs Assessment will be carried out by an independent professional who knows your child well. The team will explore this with you further and everyone is assessed in exactly the same way. When we have the completed FNA that confirms eligibility, we then continue with the assessment via an Early Help Review or Assessment tool. This will then inform the outcomes that will be worked towards which in turn, indicates the type of support of short break required in order to meet any identified needs.
- Q As part of the assessment do families have a choice of options of what is available?
A Families are able to share their preferred activity or support and we encourage them to do so. Our staff are able to recommend some providers that we regularly refer children to that can also support your child's needs. We are looking at producing a menu of options in the future, although this will not be exhaustive and neither prescriptive as we believe the children and families should play a role in designing their short breaks package - again, according to the needs identified.

- Q Why are schools given such a short deadline (10 days) to complete a FNA?
This is not long enough.
- A An assessment with the family cannot be carried out until the FNA comes back and therefore if the FNA is sent back any later there will be a delay in assessing and implementing the short breaks package. We are aware that school holidays will impact on this.
- Q If you are already in the system will this be done at the annual review of when the package was agreed?
- A The FNA will be carried out on the anniversary of when the short break package is due for review. This package will not change during the year until the review unless family circumstances require an early review.
- Q Can we have more than one activity a year i.e. can options change as the paperwork process is too long just to swap activities. Can we have a range of three to choose from i.e. swimming, trampolining and football.
- A An outcome needs to be identified when an activity is provided. However, as mentioned earlier, we are looking to revise the process to include this.
- Q The Carer's Assessment for the parent was carried out but the parent heard nothing back after this was done. What happens now?
- A We understand this individual query has been responded to, but to clarify the process - a worker from CYPDS will refer a parent for a carer's assessment as needed. This is a referral to Adult Services who will carry out the assessment. If there is any delay, we would advise the parent to liaise directly with the referrer who will follow it up.
- Q You are developing a tool for assessment with the parent/carers at Sherwood Park School. Is this tool just for Sherwood Park?
- A We visited Sherwood Park School as part of our Roadshow of events to engage with families and children across the borough. The parents actively contributed to the Preparation for Adulthood tool. The tool is not fully developed yet and we are welcoming ideas and feedback across the next four weeks. This tool will be used for all young people open to CYPDS and we are looking to expand its use next year.
- Q Is there a timescale for comments to be fed back in?
- A The Plan is now live on Mosaic and ready for printing off and using as we did not want to delay. Unfortunately SPCF were not able to respond earlier this year when we requested consultation, and so we set up an event with Sherwood School parents. However we will be reviewing its use within 3 months and welcome any feedback as it will be simple to change the tool if needed.

Q How are parents informed about transition?

A There are 500 children and young people in the CYPDS and parents will have received information about the service via our email set up. We now have a preparation for adulthood guide which we are circulating. We are also working closely with SEN and schools to raise awareness of the preparation for adulthood work and have attended parent carer events/PFA events, including a session for parents at Sherwood School and also a careers event at Orchard Hill. We plan to attend and put on further events.

Q What about people who are not known to the service, but do actually need these services?

A We promote services and support for young people on the Local Offer website. We are also in the process of gathering information about all young people who have EHCP's who may benefit from support. We are attending wider events to promote our service. We now have the Transition Operational Group - outlined further below, as well, to which professionals can bring young people's cases who they feel may require additional support or whose Preparation for Adulthood Plan is not clear. This group can task specific professionals to follow up on individual cases.

A Transition Strategy Group has been set up consisting of Bill Brittain, Averil Kathan, Amalia Bannon from SEN and a health representative to oversee the Operational Group and address common issues/themes as they arise from a strategic perspective.

Q How much training do the staff in children's social care get around completing EHCP advice?

A Claire Jackson is leading on the EHCP process in social care. All requests for social care advice are sent via CFCS by Cognus. If the young person is not known to social care, the referral is passed onto CYPDS to complete. An early help assessment is carried out to find out their needs and the advice is completed in Section D and H1 and 2. Claire Jackson has provided training to social workers in best practice to complete for those children who are open to children's social care.

Q What tools are used to do the Care Act Assessment and what is the criteria used to define a learning disability?

A This is a grey area and eligibility for LD services needs a formal assessment to be completed. If you do not have a learning disability, this does not mean that you cannot access services under the Care Act i.e. Autism, sensory impairment is just as relevant and any professional can diagnose this. A low

IQ score does not mean that you do not have a learning disability. The education history of the young person is also looked at.

Sometimes a GP will say learning difficulties and not learning disability. All professionals should be able to access information from the Single Point of Access.

Q Can we close the gap between people with a learning disability and people who struggle to look after themselves on a day-to-day basis?

A Professionals are all around the same table and need to share information. There are no current plans to change the criteria of a learning disability to learning difficulty. We will look at more complex needs. All young people are entitled to request a Care Act Assessment and currently will be worked with either by the Learning Disability Team 18-25 or by one of the Adult Locality Teams if they meet their threshold. We now have the Transition Operational Group which is a multi-agency group that looks monthly at Preparation for Adulthood planning for all young people open to CYPDS over the age of 14 and will be expanded to include all young people with additional needs who are likely to require support from Adult Services or the voluntary sector when they reach 18.

Q Can we have one team to do all of this as it is unclear whether ASD is classed as a disability.

A Bill Brittain advised that there is currently no plan to have a generic 18-25 team in Adults Services, but he will take this back to discuss with other Heads of Service and share these concerns.

Q My child has been identified as naughty by school. How can I get an assessment carried out by a professional?

A Claire Jackson spoke to the parent at the end of the session.

Q I have switched to a social worker due to health problems with my child. I had a CAF completed in September where some support was identified. The overnight provider will be shutting down for four months next year. How can we get help and what about families who are on the waiting list for Mencap?

A CJ is aware that there is an issue with providers and Mencap's waiting list has been reviewed. Tadworth Children's Trust have a new project where spaces will be made available for young people and more providers are being sought. However, Tadworth Children's Trust will not accept young people with challenging behaviour.

Q Are there waiting lists at Mencap and The Grange?

A Mencap's waiting list is dependent on need i.e. longer if 1-1 support is needed. Due to capacity and balanced service, places only become available when a child leaves. We are aware of the issue in respect of short breaks

community provision and will be expanding our commissioned services framework within the next 12 months. We are looking at Challenges and Tadworth for next year.

The Grange is one year for 1-1 support.

Q What happens if you have more than one child with a disability as the only option is Playwise. This is more difficult if there is a larger age gap.

A This is a common issue for all families with children of different ages and it may be that we need to think with families about how they can have joint outings.

Additional questions raised in email from Suzy & Claire

Q Can a different graphic be used to support the Preparation for Adulthood Guide as it is very detailed. Could it also be called something other than 'Getting a Life'?

A It was explained that the graphic is taken from the Preparation for Adulthood website which is funded by the Department of Education. The website has lots of useful information and a link is included below. Whilst the graphic cannot be amended, we will be developing a young person's Preparation for Adulthood Guide which will be in an easier to read and view format.

[Preparation for Adulthood](#)

Q Why does a PA have to wait 8 weeks before the first payment is made?

A Claire Jackson is liaising with Chrishen Mootasamy, our Finance Officer, to explore why this is and to try and address this issue. We can provide a further update as soon as we know more.

Q Why does only one type of activity have to be specified for a year in a short breaks plan as a child may wish to change or utilise a choice of activities for their short break.

A This has been taken back and our guidance is being reviewed to ensure that parents are now able to select a number of activities for the short break provision.