

Short Breaks Statement

Supporting children, young people and families to thrive together



For children and young people up to 25 years with SEND living in Sandwell

2026

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Foreword

Welcome to the Sandwell Short Breaks Statement.

This Statement has been developed with children, young people, parent carers and partners across Sandwell. Thank you to everyone who shared their views, experiences and ideas to help shape our Short Breaks offer.

Over the last year, we have listened to what families have told us is important. You told us that information needed to be easier to find, access to support needed to feel fairer, and there should be more opportunities for children and young people to take part in activities within Sandwell. The changes included in this Statement have been developed in response to that feedback.

Throughout this Statement, you will see comments from families who have shared their experiences of Short Breaks. These comments have been taken from surveys, engagement events and co-production activities and help us understand what is working well and where we can continue to improve.

Our Short Breaks offer was refreshed for 2025–2026 and will continue to develop over time. We remain committed to working alongside children, young people and families to ensure our offer continues to meet local needs.

What are Short Breaks?

In Sandwell, we understand that family life can be busy, rewarding and sometimes challenging - especially when a child or young person has additional needs or a disability. Short breaks are here to support the whole family.

Short breaks give children and young people chances to have fun, make friends, try new activities and grow in confidence and independence. At the same time, they give parents and carers time to rest, recharge and spend time with others.

We believe every child should feel part of their community, and every family should feel supported, understood and connected.

Our aim is simple to make sure every family in Sandwell feels supported, included and able to enjoy life together.

We offer a graduated range of support, helping families access the right help at the right time based on their child's needs.

We offer a graduated range of support, so families can access the right help at the right time, based on what their child needs.

Short breaks are available from childhood through to young adulthood (0–25), with an increasing focus on independence and preparing for adulthood



UNIVERSAL & COMMUNITIES Offer

Universal & Communities Offer

These are activities open to all children and young people in Sandwell, including those with SEND. They help children build friendships, enjoy their local area and join in everyday community life.

This includes:

- Leisure, youth, sports and play services
- Public spaces, for example, parks and adventure playgrounds
- Libraries
- Early Years services and Family Hubs
- Extended services in school including after-school and holiday clubs
- Voluntary and community facilities
- Scouts, Guides, Brownies
- Sports and games clubs, community clubs and holiday activities

In Sandwell, we also have Creative Active Lives and our Marvel Youth Club which supports children and young people with SEND.

creative + active + lives

MARVEL
YOUTH CLUB

Wherever possible, we want children and young people to enjoy these opportunities first. All groups and activities are expected to make reasonable adjustments so that children with a disability are not treated unfairly. We believe every child should feel included, supported and able to take part in the same opportunities as their peers.

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SEND**



Visit [Sandwell SEND Local Offer](#) for more information



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ADDITIONAL Short Breaks

Additional Short Breaks (4-18 years)

Additional Short Breaks provide extra support for children and young people who are unable to access universal activities without more support

We know that some children need more help to join in activities, feel safe, or take part in the same way as other children.

This support is for children and young people who:

- have a disability and/or an EHCP, and
- cannot access the Local Offer or community activities without extra support

No social work assessment is required for this level of support. Support is flexible and designed to meet family needs. It includes access to:

- Saturday Clubs
- Summer holiday activities
- Family Activities
- Independence and life-skill opportunities
- Personal Assistant (PA) support (up to 104 hours per year)

Personal Assistants can support children at home or in the community, helping them access activities, develop independence and feel safe. This is particularly helpful for children who may find group settings difficult.

Families can register for the Additional Short Breaks offer and will receive an annual allocation of credits to book activities with approved providers.

All providers in the Additional Short Breaks programme can support with personal care so children can join in safely and comfortably.

(This does not apply to activities, when parent/carers are present.)

Registering for Additional Short Breaks

[Register here for the SEND Short Breaks in Sandwell](#) or to find out more, please email SCT_shortbreaks@sandwellchildrenstrust.org

Once registered, you will receive a voucher for 10 credits for April 2026 until March 2027 by email. These credits can be used to book the services and activities that work best for:

- your child or young person, and
- you as a family

You can choose the providers and sessions that best suit your family's needs.

Additional Short Breaks for Young Adults aged (18–25 years)

As young people move into adulthood, short breaks continue to support their development, with a stronger focus on independence and community participation.

This support is for young adults with SEND who need extra help to:

- take part in community activities
- build confidence and independence
- develop friendships and social opportunities
- have regular time away from home in a safe and supportive way

The offer links closely with Preparing for Adulthood and focuses on helping young people move towards greater independence, community involvement and life skills.

This Additional Short Breaks offer is for young adults aged 18–25 who do not have an allocated adult social worker and still need extra support to take part in community activities

How to access this support

4Community Trust

www.4communitytrust.org.uk

Telephone: **0121 533 3431**

Email: info@4communitytrust.org.uk

This offer was shaped by the voices of young adults and families, who told us what helps them feel included, confident and able to enjoy their community as they move into adult life.



SPECIALIST Short Breaks

Specialist Short Breaks- (up to 18 years)

Some children need even more support because their needs are even more complex. A social work assessment is needed to access this level of support.

This offer may include:

- higher levels of PA support
- Direct Payments or Personal Budgets to give families more choice
- Overnight short breaks (respite) where there is an assessed need
- support in the home or community

Specialist Short Breaks are discussed at the Partnership Specialist Short Breaks Panel to make sure decisions are fair and consistent.

These supports are planned around what your child needs and what will help your whole family.

To request an assessment please call the Front Door on **0121 569 3100**

Specialist Short Breaks for Young Adults (18–25 years)

Some young adults have more complex needs and require a higher level of support.

These short breaks are accessed through a Care Act assessment carried out by the Young Adults Team. This support ensures a smooth transition into adult services and helps reduce reliance on crisis support later in life.

This support may include:

- Direct Payments or Personal Budgets
- Day support
- Increased PA support
- Overnight short breaks/respite, where there is an assessed need
- Support in the home, community or specialist settings

The assessment helps us understand what support will best meet the needs of the young adult and their family.

Families can contact the Young Adults Team on **0121 569 2266**

How to access Short Breaks

1. Start with universal services through community activities
2. Register for Additional Short Breaks if extra support is needed
3. If needs are more complex, request an assessment for Specialist Short Breaks
4. Support will be agreed based on assessed need and family circumstances

For more information, please email: SCT_shortbreaks@sandwellchildrenstrust.org

How short breaks help families

Short breaks are more than time away - they help families thrive by:

- building children's confidence and independence
- giving children opportunities to learn, explore and make friends
- giving parents and carers time to rest, recharge or spend time with siblings
- strengthening family relationships and wellbeing
- reducing stress and pressure on the whole family

Short breaks can take place:

- at home
- in the community
- in groups
- through PA support
- in specialist short break settings
- through overnight respite (where assessed)

Working together with families

We value the voices of children, young people and families. This offer has been shaped by your feedback and will continue to evolve as we learn what works best.

What families have told us:

You Said...

- More opportunities in Sandwell
- Fairer access
- Family activities are important
- More autism provision
- Greater independence opportunities

We Did...

- ✓ Our providers are based in Sandwell
- ✓ Introduced Short Breaks Portal
- ✓ Introduced Autism Saturday Club
- ✓ Introduced Independence Group
- ✓ Continued Family Activities
- ✓ Developed 18–25 Offer



What our families have told us

"My daughter has loved attending the short breaks, and it's wonderful to see her engaging in a variety of activities. As a family, we truly appreciate the diverse opportunities provided through the KIDS services. These breaks have been a valuable respite for carers like myself, allowing us to recharge while knowing that my daughter is staying active, entertained, and well-supported during the half-terms and summer."

"The boys have been able to take part in activities that I would not be able to take them to on my own (they participate much better without me there). They have built up really positive relationships with the staff and have a lovely rapport with them. It has given them the opportunity to socialise with others and broaden their experiences. Without support, the number of things the boys can access is very limited, so Kids allows them to experience a wider range of things."

"My daughter often shares with us how much she enjoys the activities and the opportunity to engage with other peers in her community. She seems particularly happy and engaged, which is evident in her positive attitude after each break. From my observations, she appears more relaxed and enthusiastic, indicating she benefits greatly from these breaks both socially and emotionally. It is always great to hear about the fun activities she took part in and also seeing her come home with things she's created or received from for example, arts and crafts sessions."

If you would like to share your views or help us improve, please contact:
SCT_shortbreaks@sandwellchildrenstrust.org



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Our Additional Short Breaks Providers

Families can choose from the following providers:



- [4 Community Trust](#)
- [Kids](#)
- [Progress Care](#)
- [Sandwell Asian Family Support Service \(SAFS\)](#)
- [Sandwell Parents for Disabled Children \(SPDC\)](#)

Our responsibilities

Our Short Breaks offer is underpinned by national legislation, including the Children Act 1989, Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014.

This means Sandwell must:

- Provide a range of short breaks to meet different needs
- Consider the needs of families and carers
- Make information clear and accessible

We review this statement annually with families to ensure it continues to meet local needs.

Our aim is simple

To make sure every family in Sandwell feels supported, included and able to enjoy life together.

We review this Short Breaks Statement every year with parents, carers and young people to make sure it reflects what families tell us they need

Finding out more



You can find full details of activities, services and support through the [Sandwell SEND Local Offer](#)