

Short breaks transformation

Summer 2010

More short breaks for children and young people

After consulting and engaging with our parents, carers, children and young people about how to spend the new Aiming High for Disabled Children short breaks funding money. Lambeth Council and health care partners have started to commission the type of short break services you have said you wish to access and see more of in Lambeth.

Money has gone towards increasing the number of short break activities in specialist settings and we are increasing access to community settings such as play, early years and youth provision through capital investment and staff training programmes. The short breaks begin this July with the Michael Tippett and Livity school summer holiday activity programmes.

We are also seeking to commission a greater number of arts organisations to help us provide a range of stimulating activities. We are reviewing palliative care service and access to specialist equipment relating to short breaks.

We have allocated money to increase parent and carer participation so that parents and carers can become more involved in decision-making about the provision of services that their children want. Contact a Family, a UK-wide charity providing advice, information and support to the parents of all disabled children, have been commissioned to help us achieve this goal.

For more information about the new short breaks menu please visit the children with disabilities webpage at www.lambeth.gov.uk or www.younglambeth.org



Who is eligible for new short breaks funding?

A short break (respite care) has always been organised by a social worker. The decision about whether a disabled child and their family get respite or not has been as a result of a social work assessment and whether the disabled child and family meet the eligibility criteria.

The eligibility criteria enables us to work out who needs funding the most. Despite doing this, we know that a lot of children don't receive short break services.

The government wants us to prioritise children and young people with the highest level of need, who have remained on waiting lists for

the longest time and have often not been given a choice of the type of short break service they receive. In response to this the following groups of children will be prioritised for short breaks funding:

Group A - children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) who also have an additional impairment, such as severe learning disabilities or behaviour which is challenging or those children and young people whose challenging behaviour is associated with other impairments such as severe learning disabilities.

Group B - children and young

people with complex health needs including those with disability and life limiting conditions, and/or those who require palliative care and/or those with associated impairments such as cognitive or sensory impairments and/or have moving/handling needs and/or require special equipment/adaptations. These children may be referred to as having 'multiple impairments' or 'Profound and Multiple Disabilities (PMLD).

This is not an exhaustive list, but rather an indicator of which children may meet the criteria for the new additional short breaks funding.



Access to Short breaks Q and A

Q: How do I get one of these short breaks?

A: There are 3 steps to getting a short break for you and your child. These are:

1. Checking that you are eligible
2. Making your request to either your social worker or contacting the Family Information Service (FIS)
3. Undergoing an assessment of need if you need one

Q: Am I eligible?

A: To access a short break your child will need to meet all the following:

1. Their needs fall within the ICount register categories of disability severe and profound (i.e. groups A and B) as assessed by a social worker
2. Resident in Lambeth
3. 0-19 years of age

Q: I meet the above.

What happens next?

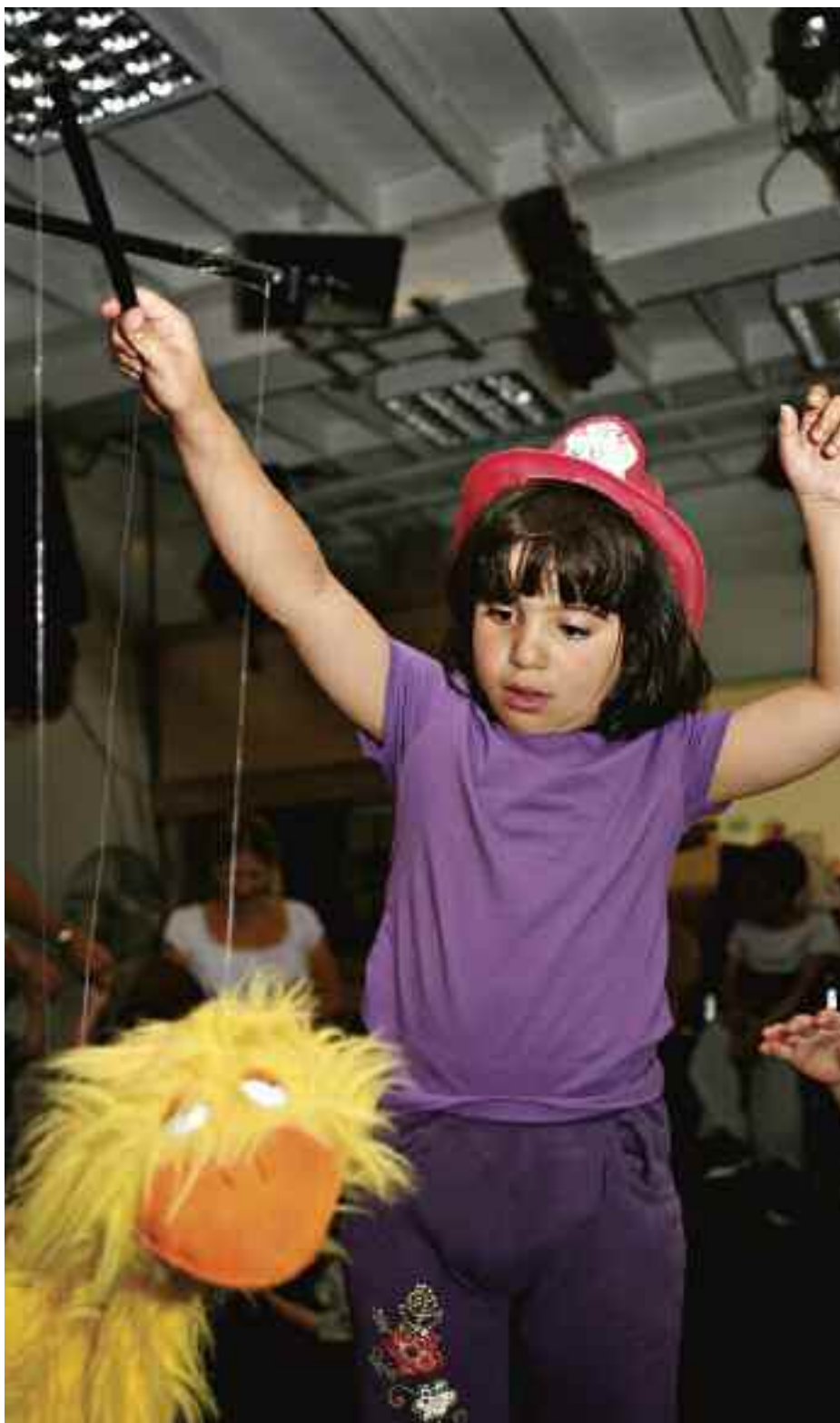
A: To access any short breaks your child and your family will need an assessment of need. This will either be undertaken by a social worker from the Children with Disabilities Team (CWD) or jointly with Health's Continuing Care Nurse.

Q: I have already been assessed why do I need another one?

A: If you are already known by the CWD/health team and are already receiving a care package from both CWD/ and or health you may not need another assessment. We will only undertake assessments where absolutely necessary.

You will need a social worker or joint assessment if you are not known to CWD and if your child's needs are complex requiring a high level of support.

We want to make access to short breaks an easy, transparent and flexible process.



Time to play

Friday morning developmental play sessions are being held during term time at the Mary Sheridan Centre in Kennington. The sessions will provide a play and learning opportunity for children before starting nursery or school.

The aim of the play sessions is to develop play and learning skills for children with complex needs and give parents attending the session ideas and strategies around play. There will also be opportunities for parents to learn more about the statementing process, services and local nurseries.

For further details contact: Chryseus Yamaguchi on 020 7733 0681 or email cyamaguchi@thelivivity.lambeth.sch.uk

Are you entitled to extra benefit money?

As a carer of a child with additional support needs you could be missing out on extra benefit money that you are entitled to. Over half the families who care for a child with additional care needs often do not receive all the financial help they are entitled to.

A family in Lambeth who looked after autistic twins did not realise they were missing out. The Every Pound Counts service helped the family to claim additional disability living allowance for their children and extra child tax credit worth over £7000 each year. The family were already receiving disability living allowance but their adviser explained the awards were too low because the children's sleep was disturbed and their behaviour was difficult to safely manage in outside environments.

Lambeth's Every Pound Counts service, can help make sure you claim all the benefit support you are entitled to receive. So, don't delay. If you live in Lambeth, contact the service and make sure you claim what is rightfully yours. Families looking after ill or disabled children could be possibly missing out on an extra £5000 per year.

If you call the service you can talk to an experienced benefits adviser or make an appointment to receive face to face advice. Advisers can provide help and advice about tax credits, housing and council tax benefits, disability living allowance and carer benefits, as well as other benefits you may be able to claim. They will explain how much extra benefit you can claim, help complete claim forms and help you appeal if you are turned down.

The Every Pound Counts service is funded by Lambeth Council and NHS Lambeth, and is run in partnership with local advice agencies.

For more information contact Every Pound Counts team
By phone and textphone on 020 7926 5555,
Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm
By email: everypoundcounts@lambeth.gov.uk
www.lambeth.gov.uk/everypoundcounts





Lambeth leads the way in inclusive design

Building work has begun at Max Roach Park in Brixton. The park is being transformed into a play park through the injection of Aiming High capital funding and will be open at the start of the school summer holidays. The play park has been designed to include the needs of children with profound and multiple disabilities.

In the new park there will be a sand and water play area all within a dog free play lawn. An accessible route will lead past a nest swing and hammocks to the existing adventure playground building.

The adventure playground building is having a general refurbishment and a new toilet facility to 'Changing Places' standards is being installed which will be accessed using a new entrance.

Max Roach Adventure Playground will continue to lead the way in art and digital media projects. A new and larger digital media room will have height adjustable desks and a permanent outdoor screen will transform the playground into a cinema space for viewing digital art, film and music projects.

The new play park will be open all year round and staffed by a skilled team of play workers – delivering play activities for children.

John Sloan, Aiming High programme manager said: “council officers, Lambeth Community Health, parents, carers, children, young people and an award winning team of architects got together through workshops to come up with this very exciting and inclusive design, which is located in the very heart of Brixton and will provide a interactive fun experience for children and young people with complex needs”.

The play park will open in June 2010 (please note that children and young people accessing Max Roach must be accompanied by a parent carer or personal assistant).

For further details contact: John Sloan on 020 7926 9653 or email: jsloan2@lambeth.gov.uk

Parent voices

Lambeth resident June Douglas has been appointed chair of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG). June, whose daughter attends Michael Tippet School, successfully completed the Lambeth Aiming High for Disabled Children - Parent Participation Training Programme and was awarded a certificate of attendance by Lambeth Council's Chief Executive Derrick Anderson.

The aim of PAG is to routinely involve parents and carers in the development of services for children and young people with disabilities and or statemented children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

June says that she is passionate about representing the views of parents and ensuring their voices are heard in the development of services for their children. She is committed to service planning in the borough and will seek to spearhead parents' participation in local decision-making for disabled children, young people and their families.

June's first task will be to increase the number of parents and carers attending PAG, which meets every other month during school term time. June, who has a professional background in law, said: “The voice of disabled children, young people and their families is crucial in creating a partnership approach to providing positive short break experiences for children and young people. I am honoured to be part of this exciting process in Lambeth”.

If you would like to join PAG as a parent representative please contact June on 07962002365, junedouglas.7@btinternet.com or email Bob Ballard bballard@lambeth.gov.uk

Early Support

Early support is a national programme aimed at families with disabled children under three and anyone who regularly works with them. It was developed by parents, carers and practitioners as a way of developing more co-ordinated services.

The programme aims to provide a key worker or lead professional system and more detailed information to help parents and their disabled child. Local councils, hospitals and community based

health services are using this across England to ensure families are kept at the heart of discussions and decision-making about their child.

Karen Nugent will lead on the development and implementation of a multi-agency early support programme in Lambeth. A significant part of this role is to ensure that early support is developed through children's centres. In Lambeth we will be using early support for children under five that are accessing universal

services. A programme is being developed to offer training and support to our children's centre's. Our first six children's centres have been selected and we will be re-launching early support from March 2010.

If you would like further information contact Karen Nugent on 07908 119 625 or email knugent@lambeth.gov.uk.



Silver Autism-Friendly Screenings

Picturehouse cinemas are working in partnership with the National Autistic Society to hold special film screenings for children and young people on the autism spectrum and their families, friends and carers.

During the film low lights are left on inside the auditorium and the volume of the soundtrack is reduced. Customers can move around, make a noise or take a break during the film if they need to. Autism-friendly screenings are regularly held at the Ritzy Cinema in Brixton call 0871 704 2065 and the Clapham Picture House call 0871 704 2055 to find out more.

The National Autistic Society is the UK's leading charity for people affected by autism. If you need information, advice and support call the National Autistic Society's autism helpline on 0845 070 4004 (Mon-Fri from 10am to 4pm).



More access to creative activities

Candoco Dance Company's disabled and non-disabled dancers at a parent engagement event at Michael Tippet School. Children and young people have said

they want to access more creative arts based activities and this will be reflected in the types of short breaks that are commissioned.

New water play area in Norwood Park

Aiming High for Disabled Children capital funding has been injected into the redesign of Norwood Park, which will re-open in July 2010.

The water play area in Norwood Park is an extension to the existing playground and will provide a natural play environment with a focus on co-operative, sensory and motoric play. The water play area has been specifically designed for children with profound disabilities and will give them the chance to play in an adapted environment or simply 'hang out' with friends.

New grassy hills connect the water

play area to the existing playground. The hills allow access to the first level of the climbing tower and to a variety of water play activities at a higher level.

A climbing tower contains climbing and water activities, musical instruments and a bird's nest outlook point. There will also be a basket swing and a roundabout. A nearby building is being upgraded to provide an accessible changing room.

Sand and water play activities such as pumps, channels, sand cranes, sand and water tables will be

located at different levels to encourage collaborative and creative play.

Sharon Synmoie, strategic lead for the Aiming High programme in Lambeth said: "the water play area will give children and young people enjoyment in a local public space and the chance to make new friends" (please note that children and young people accessing Norwood Park water play area must be accompanied by a parent carer or personal assistant).

For more information contact John Sloan on 020 7926 9653 or email jsloan2@lambeth.gov.uk



Your voice counts

Over 500 parents, carers, children and young people attended a recent Aiming High event at Michael Tippet School. They met the Aiming High team and heard about how short breaks provision in Lambeth is being transformed. The event gave parents and carers the opportunity to voice their views about short breaks and meet Lambeth Council's Chief Executive, Derrick Anderson. There was entertainment provided by Candoco Dance Company whose dancers are both disabled and non-disabled.

Derrick Anderson presented certificates to all parents and carers who had attended the Aiming High parent engagement training. Derrick said "improving the well-being of disabled children and young people, providing access to exciting and inclusive short breaks and working closely with parents to achieve this goal is a priority for Lambeth".

Ying Butt, Assistant Director, Children and Young People, Lambeth Community Health, said: Aiming High for Disabled Children provides a fantastic opportunity for Lambeth Council and health to work together with parents and carers to improve outcomes for children and young people".



Why not volunteer?

We are looking for parent/carer volunteers to help us train short breaks carers in the voluntary and statutory sector. As experts in the needs of your children you can bring these invaluable skills and help us develop a confident and skilled short break workforce.

If you have a few hours to spare and would like to become involved please register your interest by contacting: John Sloan on 020 7926 9653 or email: jsloan2@lambeth.gov.uk

Young voices

Triangle, a Brighton based voluntary organisation has been commissioned by the Aiming High team to work directly with children and young people in Lambeth about the short break services they receive.

Triangle have been working with 40 children and young people on a wide range of issues, for example, finding out their wishes and feelings to inform decisions about their lives, exploring their experiences and discovering their views about the services they use. This information will help the Aiming High team ensure they are delivering the best short break services.



Results of the Triangle consultation will be published in the next newsletter.

Key Dates

Norwood Expo (opening of Norwood Park water play area for disabled children and young people) 24 July 2010, 1pm to 4pm

The Aiming High Steering Group will meet on the following dates at Gracefield

19 July 2010, 09.30am to 13.00pm

23 August 2010, 09.30am to 13.00pm

20 September 2010, 9.30am to 1pm

18 October 2010, 9.30am to 1pm

22 November 2010, 9.30am to 1pm

13 December 2010, 9.30am to 1pm

Lunch provided and all parents/carers attending the above meetings will be paid for their valuable time through the parent participation gift voucher scheme.

If you would like this information in large print, braille, audio tape or another language, please contact 020 7926 0000