



COUNCIL

SOFT MARKET TESTING

Trafford Short Break Group Provision for Children
and Young People with additional needs

Contract Period:

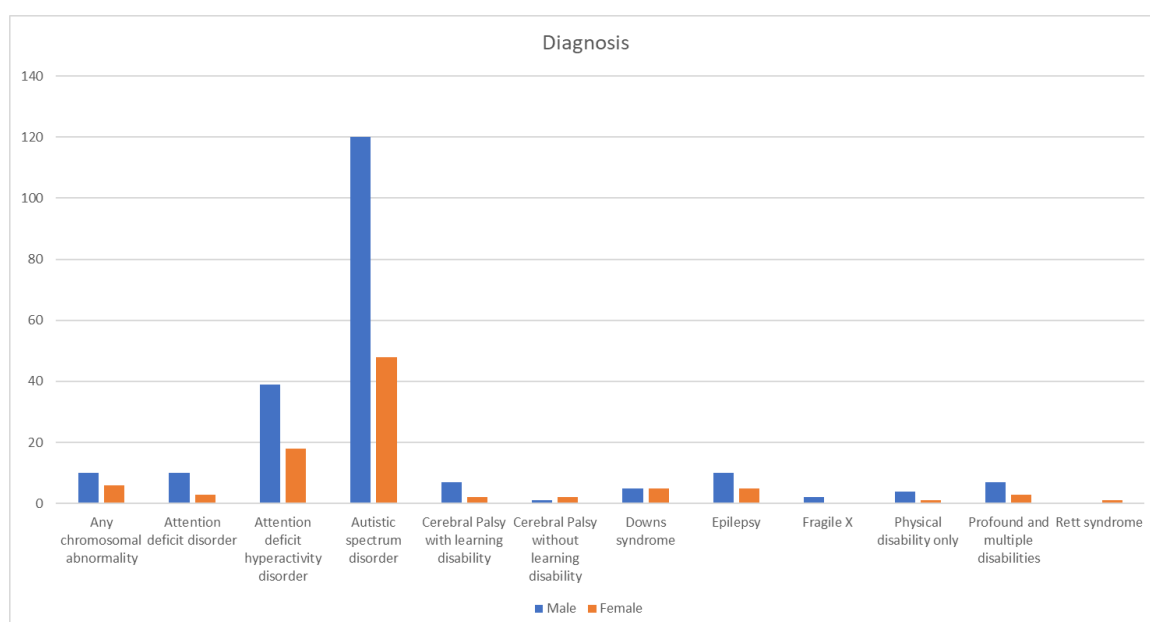
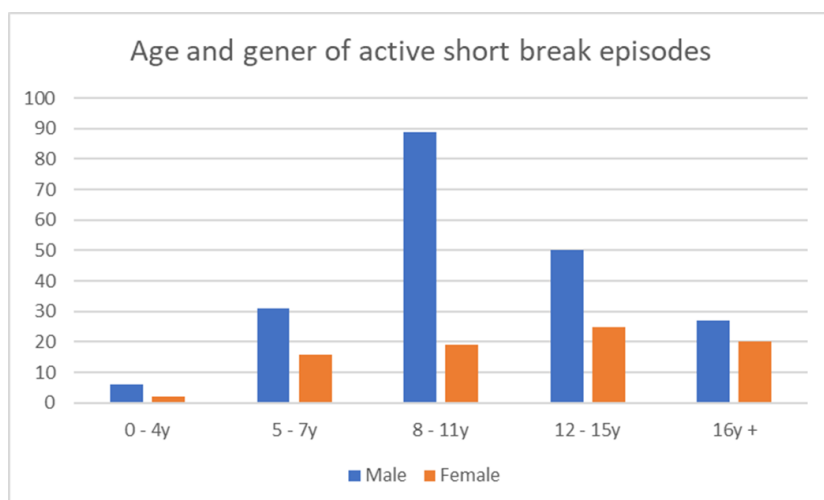
To be confirmed

1. Background and context

All Local Authorities have a statutory duty to provide short break provision for children and young people with additional needs to provide respite for parent carers and a break from their caring responsibilities. Short breaks are groups for children with additional needs / disabilities who find it challenging to access mainstream provision.

Currently in Trafford we provide 3 short break services. Sport Works 5 – 11 years and 11 – 18 years, are groups for 10 – 12 CYP delivered both during school holidays (weekdays) and term time (weekends) for children with mixed abilities. Within this setting CYP can engage in dance, music, art and craft and sport activities. SENSE provides a holiday only offer (weekdays) to up to 10 CYP aged 5 – 18 years who have a diagnosis of autism with or without any other additional diagnoses. These sessions offer free play activities including access to an outdoor space, messy play, board games, role play and art and craft.

Over the period February 2023 and February 2024 there were 401 short break enquiries in Trafford, 317 of which progressed to a short break episode. The breakdown of ages and diagnosis of CYP from those episodes are detailed below.



This data shows that the greatest number of enquiries were from families of children at primary school age, followed by those aged 12 – 15 years.

In relation to diagnosis, autism spectrum disorder, is by far the greatest and substantially higher amongst boys than girls. This may be with or without additional diagnoses. The chart also shows a high number of CYP with attention deficient hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) / attention deficit disorder (ADD). However, it should be noted, that within the Trafford Short Break framework, those CYP with a diagnosis for only ADHD / ADD would not be eligible to access the commissioned short break offer.

In Trafford we have 7 specialist education provisions, 4 primary and 3 secondaries. In total 868 children and young people attend these schools, (449 at primary and 419 at secondary) with varying degree of need. We also have 148 Trafford CYP with an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) who attend schools out of borough. Although not all these CYP will be eligible for the commissioned short breaks (as some may have support needs greater than can be supported in these sessions), it does give an indication of the number of CYP with SEND living in Trafford.

There are currently 272 CYP receiving, or eligible to receive a personal budget and would therefore be eligible to attend a short break commissioned offer, however current capacity is not sufficient to meet need. The offer is also limited in the range of activities available to CYP. To help address both of these issues, a short break review has been undertaken including gaining feedback from schools, parent carers and CYP.

Recent consultation with parent carers in the form of 2 workshops, one face to face and one virtual, highlighted a need for higher staffing ratios to support CYP whether it be from a behavioural, personal care or medical perspective. There is also a gap in current provision to support CYP with personal care needs which automatically excludes several CYP from accessing the current provision.

Main feedback from parent carers about their wishes for a short break offer include:

- Primarily a holiday club offer either full day (5+ hours) or half day (approx. 3 hours)
- At least one offer that provides support for personal care
- To provide flexible staffing ratios to allow for 1:1 needs for some, but not all children within the group provision.
- To ensure all staff are suitably trained to a minimum standard in managing escalating behaviours, SEND, communication skills etc (not an exhaustive list)
- Although not a short break activity, many families highlighted they would benefit and find value from whole family activities open to parent carers, their children with SEND across the age range and their siblings
- To commit to a provider pledge outlining organisation / staff key values and characteristics to ensure CYP and their families are getting the most they can from a short break offer

2. Key Outcomes

Children and young people:

- Are safe and supported
- Are treated as individuals and shape their own goals
- Are listened to and given time to tell their story – and this leads to positive change
- Have opportunities to try new, or a wider range of activities
- Have opportunities to learn new skills and become more independent
- Have opportunities to meet new people

Parent carers:

- Have confidence in the provider and the support the family receives
- Have a break from their caring role
- Have quality time with other children / family members

3. Soft Market Testing

THIS IS NOT A CALL FOR COMPETITION

The Soft Market Test is intended to allow interested organisations with relevant experience to outline their views and provide information with no commitment to themselves or the Council.

The Council is currently reviewing their short break offer, including working with local providers to understand what is currently on offer and any barriers or challenges they face to deliver the specific requirements outlined in this document.

The questionnaire should be returned via The Chest - <https://www.the-chest.org.uk/> by **12 noon on Thursday 11th April 2024**

If Suppliers have any questions about this soft market test, such questions should be submitted to the Council using the 'Question and Answer' facility within the opportunity advertised on The Chest. A copy of the question and a copy of the written reply may be circulated to all Suppliers, with anonymity of the Supplier preserved. Suppliers must not raise questions through any other channels, including emails direct to the Council or to STAR Procurement. No questions will be responded to, other than those raised through The Chest as described above

We encourage your participation in this soft market testing exercise, but must emphasise that your involvement in this exercise will not carry any commercial advantage in any ensuing procurement process.

No information provided in response to this soft market testing exercise will be used in any evaluation of any subsequent response to a procurement exercise.

1. General Information

3.1	Full name of your organisation:	
	Contact Details Name:	
	Job Title:	
	Address:	
	Telephone no:	
	Fax No:	
	Mobile No:	
	Email Address:	
	Web Address (if any):	

2. Undertaking from the supplier

Name:*	
Signed:	
Position:	
Date:	

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

Please complete the following questionnaire fully, highlighting any information that you consider to be commercially sensitive*

1. Do you have capacity to deliver several sessions within all school holiday periods? Would your organisation be able to offer any supplementary sessions at appropriate times during term time either for CYP only, or family-based sessions?
2. Personal care is not considered to be a regulated activity if it is provided outside of domiciliary care, extra care housing, shared lives scheme or supported living and as such, providers of short break group activity do not need to be CQC registered. Several CYP in Trafford will need additional support with personal care to varying degrees but may not require 1:1 support within the group setting itself. Please detail if you are willing, and able to provide adequate staffing ratios to support CYP with varying levels of personal care needs when required, and if you have suitable staff training / DBS checks to carry out this activity.
3. Are you able to provide a flexible higher staffing ratio to support new CYP who access the group and reduce as needed as CYP become more familiar with the provision, staff and peers? Are you able to draw on these additional staff dependent on individual child need within the group where additional support may be required?
4. Feedback from CYP stated the top 5 activities they would most like to try are computer / gaming, bush craft, trampolining, rock climbing and art and craft. Are you able to provide at least one, or a mix of these activities to CYP and would these activities be accessible for CYP aged 5 – 18 years? Would the delivery of your sessions be venue based, accessing community activities or a mix of both? What risks / barriers would you need to adequately and safely address to carry out your chosen activity?
5. What is your experience of working with CYP with SEND? Please detail minimum training expected of your staff relevant to SEND, frequency of refresh training and how in depth the training offer is. Do you draw upon other expert services to deliver relevant training? Please detail how you would address newly identified training needs.
6. Many families have indicated the benefits of using Trafford special schools as a venue base for short breaks delivery due to resource availability and familiarity to CYP and / or linking in with other specialist SEND providers to enhance their current provision rather than trying to replicate or start a new service from scratch. Please provide details of your experience of any partnership working / relationship building you have with other services including special schools which may enhance delivery of a short break group offer.

7. Many families have indicated that they would be willing to contribute financially to a short break provision in line with mainstream group provisions. Please detail how you would manage funding streams from both the council and families to ensure consistent and fair delivery of services considering challenges such as non-payment or enabling families who are unable to financially contribute to access.