

Market Position Statement

Short Breaks for Children & Young People with Disabilities

2024



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Contents

1.	Introduction	
	The county and people of Nottinghamshire	1
	Key Population data	2
2.	Short Breaks for children and young people and their families in Nottinghamshire	3
	Overview of Short Breaks	3
	Local and national drivers	4
3.	Demand	5
	Overall Demand	5
	Direct Payments	5
	Commissioned Provider Services	5
	Commissioning gaps and challenges	6
4.	Supply	8
5.	Quality	10
6.	Support for Providers	12
7.	What do children/young people and families in Nottinghamshire want from their Short Breaks?	12
8.	Short Breaks Expenditure	13
9.	Contracting Arrangements and Commissioning Intentions	13
10.	Summary	15



1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide key market intelligence, which will be useful to existing and potential providers in making business and investment decisions. It should act as a starting point for discussions between providers and Nottinghamshire County Council by highlighting the Short Breaks provision that the Council wishes to commission in the future.

The county and people of Nottinghamshire

The County Council area (excluding the city of Nottingham) is 805 square miles covering both urban and rural areas. 20% of the population lives in the rural areas mostly small towns and villages.

Nottinghamshire has a two-tier structure comprising of the County Council and seven district and borough councils. The Council is the 10th largest Local Authority in the UK.

Mansfield, Ashfield, and Bassetlaw have some of the highest deprivation levels in the country. Rushcliffe Borough has very low levels of deprivation.



Key population data

Nottinghamshire has a population of 824,800, which is an increase of 39,000 since the 2011 census (source: Census, 2021). The total population of Nottinghamshire is expected to increase by 67,000 people to 895,000 from 2019 to 2031, an 8% increase. Children and young people (0-17 years old) make up 20% (168,500) of the population.

Nottinghamshire is a large diverse County, with some of the most deprived and affluent wards in the country. The levels of deprivation vary considerably across the County's seven districts. Nottinghamshire is ranked 9th most deprived out of 26 Shire Counties in England, and 101 out of 151 upper tier Local Authorities in England. Mansfield is in the top 20% of most deprived districts in the country. Rushcliffe is within the top 3% of least deprived districts in the County (Source: Indices of Deprivation, 2019).

In Nottinghamshire, localities where there are higher numbers of families on low incomes are those localities where children and young people are less healthy and do less well at school. 25,021 children in Nottinghamshire, 19.8 per cent of the whole school population, are eligible for free school meals (DFE, 2022).

12.4% of pupils attending a Nottinghamshire mainstream academy or special school has a Special Educational Need or an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan (Source: School Census May 2023).

Table 1: Numbers of children and Young People attending a Nottinghamshire mainstream academy or special school with or without Special Educational Needs (SEN) support and those with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP)

Phase	Number on roll (1)	Pupils with no known SEN provision		Pupils with SEN Support		Pupils with statements or EHC plans		All pupils with SEN	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Primary	73,239	64,420	88.0	8,156	11.1	663	0.9	8,819	12.0
Secondary	54,289	48,404	89.2	5,369	9.9	516	1.0	5,885	10.8
Special	1,212	0	0.0	0	0.0	1,212	100.0	1,212	100.0
Nottinghamshire	128,740	112,824	87.6	13,525	10.5	2,391	1.9	15,916	12.4

Source: School Census Data May 2023

The most common primary SEN needs for children and young people in Nottinghamshire are: (1) Social, emotional, and mental health (2) Autistic Spectrum

Disorder (3) Speech, language, and communication needs (4) Moderate learning difficulty (Source: School Census January 2023).



Short Breaks for children and young people and their families in Nottinghamshire

Short Breaks are an essential part of the support provided by Nottinghamshire County Council to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families. Short Breaks offer opportunities for disabled children and young people, aged between 5 and 18 years, to spend time away from their parents and carers and take part in fun activities that encourage socialisation and support their independence. It can also help them develop new skills and to prepare for adulthood. At the same time, Short Breaks support parents/carers of disabled children to have a break from their caring responsibilities.

Nottinghamshire's Short Breaks offer is delivered via a menu of services and is designed to meet the differing needs and complexities of children and young people. This will include provision through both direct payments and with providers who have successfully tendered to be on the Council's Short Breaks framework. There is a graduated response to the delivery of short breaks in Nottinghamshire as specialist resources are focused on those children and young people with the most complex needs.

Short Breaks take place outside of school hours and can include:

- Befriending services
- Sitting services
- Group activity sessions
- Holiday playschemes and activities



Key Message: Nottinghamshire Short Breaks Key Trends

- The number of families requesting Short Breaks continues to rise
- Short Break demand has exceeded supply, which has been compounded by the recruitment crisis in the care sector
- Not enough providers who can support children and young people with personal care needs
- Children are presenting with increasingly complex needs and/or challenging behaviours
- Provision varies considerably across the County. The right provision to meet a child's needs is not always available at the right time and in the right location.

Local and national drivers

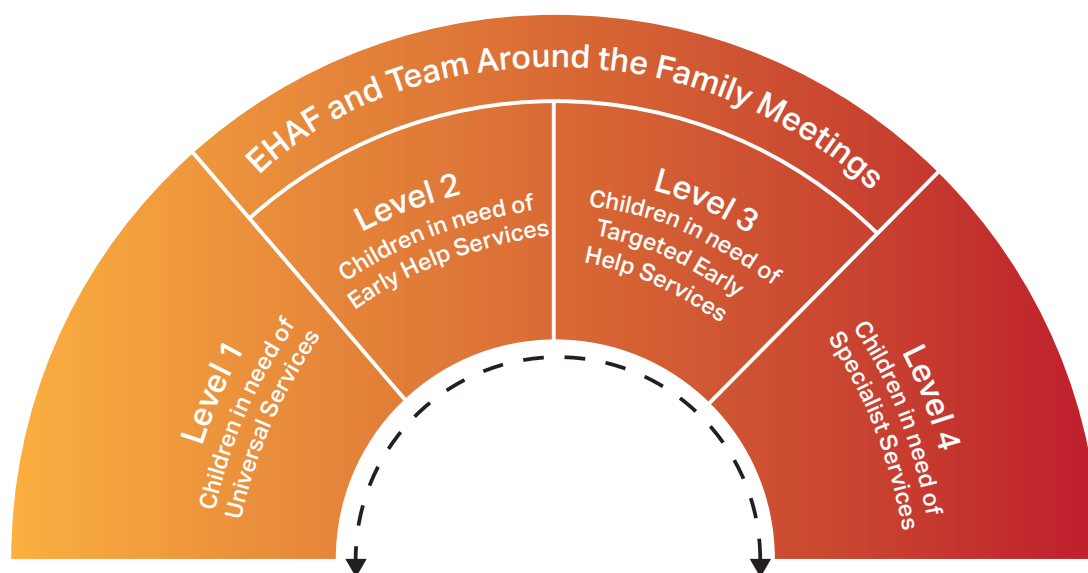
Nationally, the importance of Short Breaks was reflected first through significant investment under the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme and then through the introduction of new legislation, particularly the [Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011](#).

Provision of services for disabled children and young people links to several strategic plans in Nottinghamshire including the Nottinghamshire County SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), the Nottinghamshire Integrated

SEND Commissioning Strategy and the Nottinghamshire SEND Strategic Action Plan. It also links to, and forms part of the Nottinghamshire SEND Local Offer.

There is a graduated response to the delivery of Short Breaks in Nottinghamshire; as is to be expected, specialist resources are focused on those children and young people with the most complex needs. There are two categories of Short Break, each of which are accessed in a different way and sit within Level 3 and Level 4 of Nottinghamshire County Council's Pathway to Provision model.

Figure 1: Nottinghamshire's Continuum of Children and Young People's Needs



Source: Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership 2021

3 Demand

There are currently 1,244 children and young people accessing short breaks through Nottinghamshire County Council. 965 children/young people receive direct payments and 279 children/young people receive a directly commissioned provider service. 226 of these have a mixed package, which is a combination of a direct payment for activities and a Personal Assistant or a direct payment and a directly commissioned provider service.

Since September 2018, when the Council's new short breaks offer came into effect, there has been a decrease in the total number of short breaks packages being allocated but the total number of hours and average hours per package has significantly increased.

Table 2: Number of open Short Breaks cases by district/borough 18/10/2023

District	Number of Cases
Ashfield	262
Bassetlaw	118
Broxtowe	130
Gedling	206
Mansfield	190
Newark and Sherwood	173
Rushcliffe	175
Total	1254

Source: NCC Commissioning Team

Direct payments:

There are currently 1037 children and young people accessing direct payments through Nottinghamshire County Council. This is split between 858 children and young people who receive a direct payment for activities, and 109 who receive a direct payment to employ a Personal Assistant (PA). There are 70 children and young people who have a mixed direct payment, which consists of both activities and a PA.

Commissioned Provider Services

There are currently 128 cases accessing commissioned provider services (providers on the Short Breaks framework) although this number will fluctuate dependent on new referrals and cases that may close. The number of children/young people has dropped significantly from previous years. This can partly be explained through the lack of available provision available to meet specific needs at the right time, which has resulted families receiving a direct payment as an alternative option.



Commissioning gaps and challenges

The table below shows each individual district including specific areas where cases could not be commissioned plus the total number of cases, hours and whether the referrals indicated need for personal/complex care needs including 2:1 support.

Table 3: Total numbers of Short Breaks hours where a provider service could not be commissioned September 2022 – April 2023

District	Specific Area(s)	Total number of Cases	Personal Care/ Complex Care Need Requests	Total Number of Hours
Ashfield	Sutton-In-Ashfield, Hucknall	4	1	1062
Broxtowe	Worksop, Retford, Beckingham	4	1	632
Bassetlaw	Beeston	2	0	324
Gedling	Arnold, Bestwood, Woodthorpe, Linby	5	3	756
Mansfield	Mansfield, Rainworth	2	1	235
Newark	N/A	0	0	0
Rushcliffe	Ruddington	1	1	120
TOTAL		18	7	3129

Source: NCC Commissioning Team

During the period September 2022 to April 2023 requests for provision (open and not commissioned) had the following characteristics:

- Ashfield and Gedling had both the highest number of cases, followed by Broxtowe
- Ashfield had the highest number of hours, followed by Gedling then Broxtowe
- 52% of short break provider requests included personal and/or complex care needs
- 76% of cases were children and young people with Autism and/or additional conditions
- Singularly, the most requests were for befriending, although equally some families expressed a preference for either befriending or group provision

Key Message: Demand Trends

- Short break requests for direct provider services have exceeded supply
- Children are presenting with increasingly complex needs and/or challenging behaviours with many allocations for high numbers of Short Break hours
- Requests for personal care support e.g., assistance with toileting needs has increased
- Demand for Short Breaks significantly increases from the age of eleven and throughout the teen years. In the 5-11 age range there are currently 429 children and in the 11-17 age range there are 825 children/young people
- Short Breaks are predominantly being accessed by males 848 (68%) compared to females 406 (32%)
- In terms of Primary SEN Needs for children and young people accessing provider services, over half of the cases (55%) across the County are children/young people with Autistic Spectrum Condition, followed by Other difficulty/Disability and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs both with (9%), then physical disability (8%)



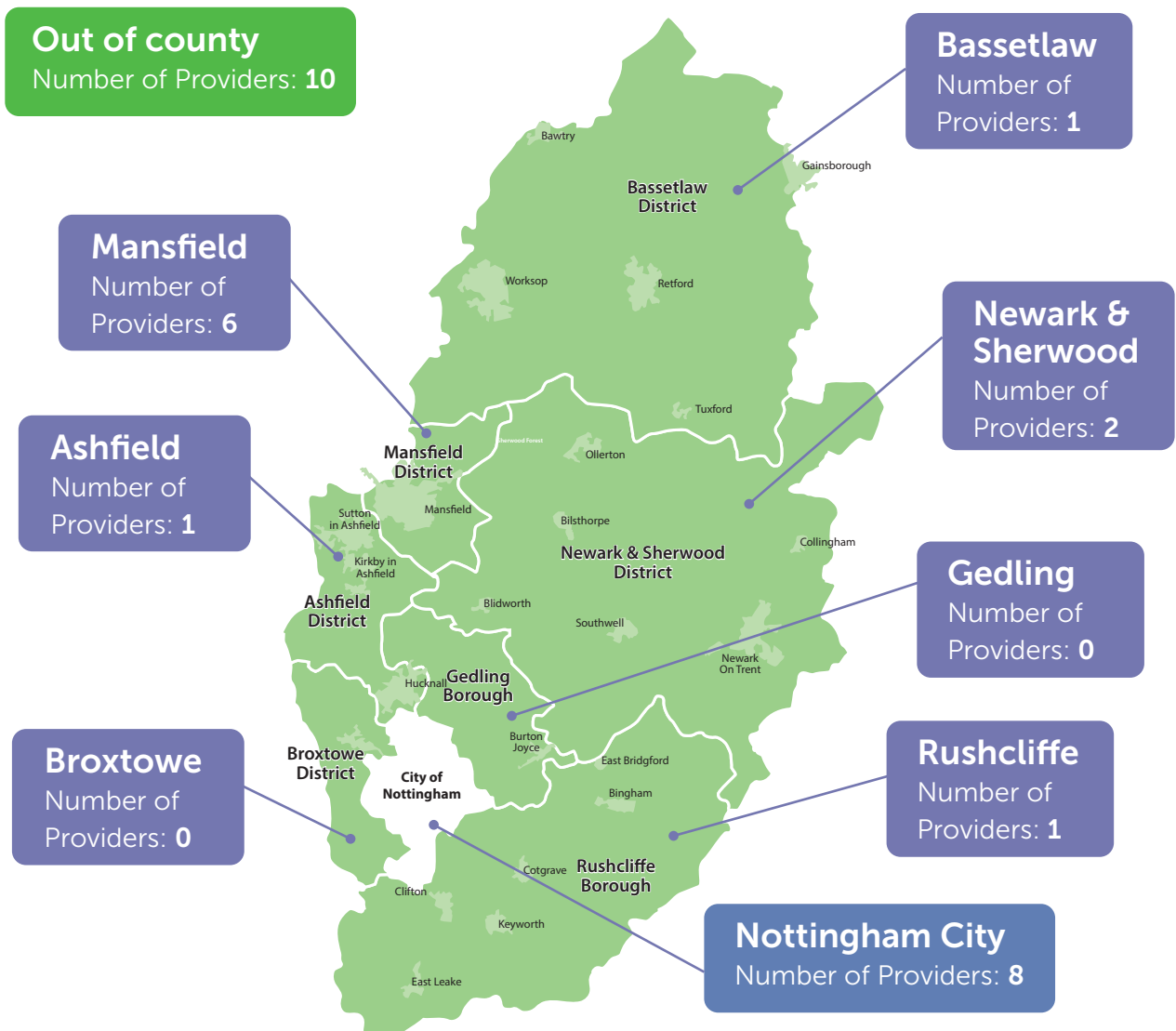
4 Supply

Nottinghamshire County Council procure provision for Short Breaks from a range of external providers who are on the provider framework.

There are currently 29 providers on the Short Breaks' framework, ranging from charities to private social care organisations. Nottinghamshire County Council also has the Mill Adventure Base who now offer an established Short Breaks provision.

Some providers specialise in specific areas of need for example, learning disability or complex health care. The providers also vary in their Short Breaks provision offer with the majority offering one to one support, which includes sitting in the home environment and befriending to access community activities. There are a more limited number of providers who solely offer group provision, however, some providers also offer groups in addition to their one to one offer.

Figure 2: Location of providers on Nottinghamshire's Short Breaks Framework



The figure above shows the distribution of providers across the County in terms of where their main operating base is located, although some providers may have other satellite bases or staff teams located around the County. Most Short Breaks providers based in the County are in the more heavily populated and urban areas of the County notably Mansfield and Nottingham City. The areas which

providers cover is relative to where they are based in the County, mainly due to the economic viability of travelling longer distances to provide a service, and is also dependent on the type of provision that is required. There are an increasing number of providers who are based out of County but operate within Nottinghamshire either through satellite bases or locally based staff.

Key Message: Key supply information

- 69% of current providers offer a Countywide service but this can still be dependent on the needs of the child, their specific location, availability of staff and transport costs (*travel to and from the child's home address is the responsibility of the provider. Any transport costs, which are part of an activity should be met by the parent/carer)
- Outside of Nottingham city and Mansfield, there are few providers based in other areas of the County. The more rural areas of the County (Bassetlaw, Newark, and rural areas of Rushcliffe) can be very challenging to find support although referrals are less than other areas, including Gedling and Ashfield, where there are higher numbers of referrals and little or no provision therefore support has become increasingly challenging to find in these areas, too
- 83% of providers offer one to one support such as sitting and/or befriending compared to 48% offer group provision. Groups can potentially be economically more viable for organisations to run but may be dependent on minimal numbers for sustainability, and the needs of the child/young person. Some children/young people may start off with one-to-one support but build enough confidence to be integrated into group provision
- 69% of providers offer personal care support and 62% offer complex/health care support. However, providers are still required Countywide who can provide personal care and provision for children and young people with health/complex care needs due to increased referrals for this type of provision and providers capacity to offer this provision.

Children and young people may also have very complex and specific needs and therefore recruitment and training may need to take place to put a bespoke package of care in place. This type of support could include:

- bowel/colostomy/catheter care
 - naso-gastric feeding and care
 - epilepsy management
 - suction
 - gastrostomy feeding and care
 - Tracheostomy and ventilator care
- There are increasing challenges with provider capacity in terms of being able to offer Short Breaks due to the current recruitment crisis in the care sector. This means that provision is often not available when needed
 - Providers on the Short Breaks framework are required to be proactive and actively respond to mini tenders as part of the commissioning process

5 Quality

Nottinghamshire has robust contract management and quality assurance processes in place to ensure providers are offering children and young people a continued good level of service, which is safe and meets their specific needs. These processes include:

- Essential checklist completed for all new providers to ensure key policies, procedures and documentation are in place. A provider is unable to receive referrals until the checklist is completed satisfactorily.
- All existing providers are required to complete a Children's Quality Assessment Framework (CQAF) self-assessment on an annual basis, which covers six areas of service delivery: Assessment and Support Planning, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Fair Access Diversity and Inclusion, Client Involvement and Management of the Service.

Self-assessments are quality checked by Nottinghamshire County Council upon receipt. Providers receive an inspection visit approximately once every two years. The inspection seeks to validate the statements made within the self-assessment by viewing policies and procedures, evidence from service delivery and speaking with staff, children and their families. Providers are required to meet minimum Level C standards in all areas of the CQAF during the inspection. All providers on the framework do currently meet this standard.

- A robust contract management process, which includes quarterly summary of progress against agreed KPI's and an annual full contract review, which includes outcomes for children and progression of the service. Recent contract reviews of services have been positive with providers making good progress and working well within the quality assurance parameters.





CQC/OFSTED Registered Providers

20 of the providers on the Short Break framework are registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). In terms of their most recent inspections, 1 provider is rated as 'Outstanding', 14 are rated as 'Good', and 1 provider 'requires improvement'. 4 providers are still awaiting inspection, but new services are assessed to check they are likely to be safe, effective, caring responsive and well-led. Where a provider rating is 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' Nottinghamshire

County Council Commissioning and Contracts Management Team will conduct their own quality assurance assessment to ensure the safety and quality of that provision.

2 providers are registered with OFSTED. 1 service is rated as good for their school holiday provision and 1 provider is registered for their education services, which is rated as 'Good'.

6 Support for Providers

The Council aims to develop closer working relationships with providers through Short Breaks provider workshops, market development discussions and contract management arrangements.

Provider forums and workshops are an opportunity to open a dialogue between Nottinghamshire County Council and providers and help ensure the market is responsive to changing service user need, including local care provision. As well as being an opportunity for the Council to share information and provide support to providers, forums are an opportunity for providers to network, raise questions and bring fresh ideas to discussions.

7 What do children/young people and families in Nottinghamshire want from their Short Breaks?

All families currently accessing Short Breaks in Nottinghamshire were sent a survey to ask their views on what they would like from their short break so these views can be used to help shape the current provider market. In total 170 families responded and the main themes from this have been summarised below:

Key Message: What do children/young people and families want from their short break?

- The best time for a short break is during school holidays and weekends
- The types of Short Breaks that families would most like to be available are days/trips out, holiday clubs, and one to one befriending
- In terms of specific activities that families would like to be available, the most popular responses were Days/Trips Out, SEND Groups and Clubs, Sports and Leisure Activities, and Adventure Activities
- Short Breaks can be important for families for multiple reasons, but the main reasons are reducing stress/Improving emotional well-being, their child/young person developing social skills, and their child/young person improving their confidence/self-esteem
- Short Breaks are most important to children and young people for getting out the house, having fun, and developing independence



8 Short Breaks Expenditure

2021/22 – Total Expenditure = **£1,399,271**

Direct payments £929,024

Provider Service £470,247

2022/23 – Total Expenditure **£1,836,098**

Direct Payments £1,353,376

Provider Service £482,722

9 Contracting Arrangements and Commissioning Intentions

When purchasing services, Nottinghamshire County Council, as a 'Best Value' authority is under a duty to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness." When undertaking a procurement this involves challenging how services are provided, consulting with service users, comparing the performance of suppliers, and using fair and open competition wherever possible to secure efficient and effective services. Nottinghamshire County Council runs tender processes through ProContract found at www.eastmidstenders.org where organisations apply for contract opportunities.



Nottinghamshire is seeking to increase the numbers of providers to meet the needs of children and young people eligible for short breaks in the county by using a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS). Any provider interested in doing business with the Council will need to apply through the www.eastmidstenders.org procurement portal. The provider list commenced in April 2018 and will operate electronically for a period of ten years until March 31st 2028. The tender reference is DN 315665. Providers can apply at any time although rounds operate on a quarterly basis when applications will be scored.

When a service user is allocated or chooses a direct payment, they will use this to purchase their own short breaks service. People will be directed to the Nottinghamshire SEND Local Offer website to find out about the services who can offer short breaks services and provision within Nottinghamshire. The contracting arrangements for services provided through a direct payment are between the individual service user and the provider. There is no contract arrangement with the Council.

Key objectives and intentions:

- ➔ The Council is committed to working with partner organisations to secure high-quality provision for disabled children and young people to exercise its legal duty to provide Short Breaks where this is assessed as necessary to meet needs.
- ➔ To establish a list of approved quality assured providers to enable the Council to continue to offer disabled children and young people and their family's choice in how they wish to access their Short Breaks.
- ➔ Children and Young People with disabilities in Nottinghamshire have access to a range of high-quality Short Breaks that is responsive to their individual needs and at the time the support is needed.
- ➔ Children and young people with disabilities have the opportunity to spend time away from their primary care givers and are able to participate in activities that enable the development of their confidence and independence as they move towards adulthood.
- ➔ Parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities are supported to continue to care by providing them with a rest from caring.
- ➔ To enable a person-centred approach in providing children and young people more control and flexibility around the provision they access through the offer of direct payments.



10 Summary

Nottinghamshire County Council works with both existing and potential providers to develop Short Breaks provision across the whole of the County to meet the current identified areas of need and gaps in provision:

- There is an ongoing need to increase provision in the more rural areas of the County (Bassetlaw, Newark, and Rushcliffe). However, more recent trends indicate there is a need to increase provision to meet demand in the areas of Ashfield and Gedling, which have little or no provision.
 - We need to increase the number of providers who can offer support to children and young people with personal care and complex health care needs as the demand for this type of support currently exceeds supply.
 - We welcome providers who are proactive at planning low cost, fun and appropriate activities that meet the needs of children/young people and with experience in supporting children/young people on the Autistic Spectrum and/or with challenging behaviours.
 - Develop provision that enhances the life skills of children and young people and supports independence and transition to adulthood.
- Meet the needs of local families accessing Short Breaks provision. Families would like more opportunities for their child to have days/trips out, holiday club provision and one to one befriending. The best time for their Short Breaks is on weekends and during school holidays. In terms of specific activities, families would like more SEND groups and clubs, sports and leisure activities, and adventure activities.
 - We need providers on the Short Breaks framework to be proactive in responding to mini tenders and to work with the Children's Commissioning Team to develop their provision to meet the needs of children, young people, and their families.

The development of a market that meets local needs is essential. We want to have access to a range of providers including Short Breaks for our most complex children and young people. We acknowledge that we need to work closely with all our partners to achieve our ambition of: **Right placement; right location; right time, right price.**



Further information

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