

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA**SCRUTINY MEETING – 26th JUNE 2012****REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF FAMILY SERVICES****SERVICES FOR DISABLED CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES**

This report outlines the range of social care services available to disabled children and their families, the philosophy behind these services, and how they can be accessed.

FOR INFORMATION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Children Act 1989 defines disabled children as children in need and requires local authorities to provide short break services designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children.
- 1.2 This duty together with the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 which came into force on 1 April 2011 place a duty on local authorities to produce a short breaks services statement so families can know:
 - What services are available in the area
 - The criteria in place to access these services
 - How the range of services is designed to meet the needs of families with disabled children in their area.
- 1.3 In response to this duty The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea provides a range of different services to support disabled children and their families. These include advice and sign posting, help with behaviour problems, family and social work support, drop-ins, day care (after school, Saturdays, holidays) and overnight care.
- 1.4 Wherever possible, we try to enable disabled children and young people to access mainstream services, such as After School Clubs, Local Play Schemes, Local Youth Service and Local Leisure facilities. We have good links with these services and can use our experience, skills and expertise to work with parents / carers and children to enable this to happen.
- 1.5 The philosophy behind our services is that they should help normalise families' lives and contribute to the health, wellbeing,

growth, development, enjoyment, and achievement of the children and young people they serve.

- 1.6 We seek to provide choice and make our services easy to access. Any assessment should be proportionate to the level of service required. We work closely with other agencies to provide a co-ordinated service.

2. Service Overview

2.1 The Services for Disabled Children and their Families consist of:

- St Quintin Centre for Disabled Children
- Children with Disabilities Social Work Team
- Behaviour and Family Support Team
- The Key Worker Service
- Healthlink Team
- The Haven
- Short Breaks

2.2 The services have been developed over the past eight years in consultation with parents, carers and users and are designed to support families to care for their disabled child in their own homes and where possible access mainstream services and do all the things which families with non disabled children are able to do.

2.3 The services are designed to work together to support disabled children and their families, each providing their particular input. Some services provide practical advice and signposting, some provide expert guidance and emotional support, and some provide short breaks including help in emergencies.

2.4 It is intended that the short break services provide disabled children with the range of experiences open to non disabled children and their families with the level of support that matches their needs and enables them and their families to experience the best that family life has to offer.

3. Eligibility

3.1 All services are available to residents of RBKC and are for Children and Young People up to the age of 18 years with a disability who are substantially and adversely affected in their ability to carry out normal day to day activities by a physical or mental impairment: This may include one or more of the following:

- Global developmental delay
- Physical impairment
- A profound sensory impairment

- A significantly disabling chronic ill health condition
- Severe communication or language disorder
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder with communication disorder and developmental delay
- Learning disability
- A serious life limiting or terminal illness.

4. The Services :

4.1 St Quintin Centre for Disabled Children Service

St Quintin provides a range of activities and clubs for disabled children and young people and their families.

This includes:

- Daytime stay and play for Under 5s
- After School Activity Clubs
- Sunday Drop In
- Holiday Trips out
- Advice and Signposting
- Parents training and workshops
- Centre Hire
- Support in accessing mainstream play youth and leisure services
- After school, Saturday and Holiday Care for children receiving Assessed Care Packages.

4.2 The Children with Disabilities Social Work Team

The child with disabilities team provides specialist services to disabled children and their families.

This includes:

- Assessment to access complex needs support packages.
- Emotional and practical support
- Advice and signposting
- Case management
- Occupational Therapy including equipment and adaptations
- Child Protection Services
- Services to Looked After Disabled Children

4.3 The Behaviour and Family Support Team

The team consists mainly of psychologist and provides support, practical advice and behavioural management advice and strategies to support families who have a disabled child who presents with;

- Challenging behaviours (e.g. aggression, self injurious behaviour, tantrums, non-compliance).
- Emotional problems (e.g. anxiety, depression, phobias and anger).

- Language and communication issues that cause behaviour problems or affect emotional wellbeing.
- Sensory processing needs.
- Difficulties with sleep, toileting and eating issues.
- Issues relating to adolescence.

The team also provide training and consultation to staff, carers and professionals in relation to the above issues.

5. The Key Worker Service

5.1 The key worker service is funded by the PCT but is managed (and currently largely staffed) by the Local Authority through St Quintin. The service is for families with children under 6 years and it:

- Helps families find out about services which support a disabled child
- Provides emotional support to the family
- Makes appropriate referrals to other professionals
- Helps with benefit and other applications
- Liaises with other professionals and co-ordinate services

6. The Haven

6.1 The Council currently buys 400 nights at the Haven which is a Hammersmith and Fulham resource and provides overnight care for children over 8 years of age with the most complex needs. It particularly provides a break for parents whose child has sleeping difficulties or for families living in overcrowded conditions

7. Short Breaks (previously known as respite care)

7.1 Short Break support packages are there to support families in their everyday lives, and to provide disabled children with the opportunities and experiences available to non disabled children. Short breaks include:

Under the Core offer:

- After school, Saturday and Holiday activities
- Stay and play opportunities
- Family days out
- Subsidised holiday opportunities

Under an Assessed package:

- Holiday play provision
- Help with Transport
- Homecare or Home Sitting
- Direct payments
- After school Care
- Regular Saturday care

- Residential short breaks (The Haven/ Linden Lodge school/Oak Lodge school)
- 7.2 The “Core Offer” provided from St Quintin can be accessed on proof of disability without a detailed assessment.
- 7.3 For children with higher needs, more comprehensive packages of care known as ‘Additional or Complex Needs’ packages will require a social work assessment to be completed by the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team. The assessment will cover the level of the child’s disability, any relevant social or environmental issues such as finance, ill health and housing and any parenting issues such as relationship difficulties.
- 7.4 Following assessment a panel of key people who provide services for disabled children meet to agree a care package aimed at meeting the needs which have been assessed. Parents are invited to attend with their social worker. Care packages are reviewed on an annual basis. On these occasions the panel is usually very much about re-jigging the package to suit any change in the child’s needs or interests or in the family routine.

8. Additional Needs (Assessed Support Packages)

- 8.1 Assessed Support packages are intended for those children with medium to high level needs and are available following an assessment by St Quintin Staff or by the CWD Social Work Team. The additional services available are:
- Holiday care/play (up to 3 days a week)
 - Transport
 - Homecare and home sitting (up to 8 hours)
 - Direct Payments (up to 8 hours)
 - After school care
 - Regular Saturday care

9. Complex Needs (Panel approved Support Packages)

- 9.1 Complex Needs Support packages are intended for those children with very high level needs and are available following an assessment by the CWD Social Work Team and agreement from the Complex Needs Panel. The additional Services available are:
- More than 3 days a week 1:1 supported holiday care
 - Overnight care (The Haven, School Based)
 - Residential Care (fostering & special residential)
 - Additional support to children in boarding school placements
 - More than 8 hours a week Homecare or direct payments

10. Transition to Adult Services

10.1 Services are expected to work together to achieve a smooth transition into Adult Services. Transition planning starts at 16 years of age; to facilitate this a children and families' worker works in the adult transitions team and an adult transition worker works in the children with disabilities social work team. The adult transitions team provides services up to the age of 25 years.

11. Finance

11.1 Including the cost of running St Quintin, the Haven contract and contracts with voluntary organisations the council spends approximately £1.2m on short breaks for disabled children during the course of a year. There are 296 disabled children registered in the borough, the service as a whole supports in the region of 250 children each year with approximately 200 receiving some form of short break.

12. Consultation, Involvement and Review

12.1 The current range of services for disabled children and their families has been developed over time with Parents, Carers and Users and reflects this history.

12.2 The service will continue to consult with our users and involve them to help improve services. This is currently done through: regular meetings with users and the Full of Life user group, meetings of the St Quintin user group, annual consultation meetings, involvement in working groups and in commissioning decisions, the production of an annual report, and regular news updates. The next consultation meetings are planned for 28th June and the 6th July.

12.3 There is scope for users to input into the agenda of these consultation meetings but through our daily contact with users we anticipate the key topics to be: services in the south of the borough, fair access to services in high demand, and making the money go further.

12.4 The meetings are open to all users of the service and will be independently facilitated. Users are encouraged to attend by having both morning and evening sessions, the provision of childcare, lunch on the morning session and music and a BBQ for the evening session.

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