



North Yorkshire
County Council



Family Based Overnight Short Breaks Scheme

A guide for parents



What are Family Based Overnight Short Breaks?

This is overnight care provided in a short break carer's home for a disabled child referred by the Disabled Children's Service (DCS).

It increases the disabled child or young person's opportunities, by making new friends outside of the family circle, getting involved in activities they enjoy and growing in independence.

It also gives parents a break from caring or a chance to do something with another child in the family that the disabled child might not enjoy or may struggle with.

How to access Overnight Short Breaks

Families first need to be referred to the Disabled Children's Service.

You can find out more about this on our website:

www.northyorks.gov.uk/dcs

or you can phone us on 01609 780780.

If your child is accepted for Disabled Children's Services then a social worker will assess you and your child's needs.



Families then work with a social worker to draw up a Support Plan. Families can only include Family Based Short Breaks in their Support Plan if overnight short breaks are part of your child's assessed needs and if this service is able to meet your child's needs.

Support plans have to be approved by Disabled Children's Service locality team leaders before services can start.

Likely timescales for this process will be discussed with you at this stage.

About our team of Shared Carers

- All of our overnight short breaks carers are FNY approved foster carers. This means they will have undergone a series of checks including DBS and other NYCC checks.
- They have to give a variety of references: personal references, work references and undergo medical checks.
- Short breaks carers are often people who have experience of caring for disabled children.
- They attend a training course and have to be approved by a panel. If a child has specific needs we would want a carer to be trained in that area. Their training and development is ongoing.
- They also undergo a detailed assessment by a social worker, prior to approval. They are given regular supervision and support and training and occasional unannounced visits to ensure good standards of care is being provided.
- Short breaks carers all undergo an annual review and parents and children are consulted for this review.

When a Shared Carer is identified

You will be given information about the carers and the opportunity to see a family file with details about them before being invited to come and meet them, without your child. This is a chance for you to find out more about the carers and see their home. This is usually done with the child's social worker and the fostering social worker.

You will be given time to go away and think about it. If you and the prospective carers are happy and want to go ahead then we would arrange for them to come and meet your child in your home.

Introductory Period

If all parties are happy to continue, then we would arrange a series of short visits for the child to the carers' home. This will include parents at first and then move on to short stays for the child without parents, building this up at the child's pace.

Details of this would be clarified in a meeting with parents and a three month agreement made.

This introductory period can go on for three months if needed (or longer) to give everyone a chance to get to know each other and make sure the child is feeling comfortable with the arrangements.

If all is going well

Usually at the end of three months we would come together and complete a Placement Agreement form signed by all parties. This outlines the basic responsibilities of each person. Parents maintain parental rights at all times and are required to sign medical consent forms for emergency medical treatment and ongoing medication.

This would be done every six months, or sooner if someone asks for this.



And if there are problems...

At any time in the introductory process (or even after that) if you are unhappy about something, talk to the carer, to the Fostering Team, or to the child's social worker. If it is something that can be sorted out, then we would aim to do that. We will endeavour to resolve any issues that arise.

Some frequently asked questions....

How often can my child have access to Family Based Overnight Short Breaks?

The length and frequency of stays for each child will be agreed individually to meet their needs and these will be set out in the support plan.

What about transport needs and my blue badge – should this be handed over?

In most cases families will transport their child to the short break carers, but if transport is a problem this can be discussed and then included in the support plan. Usually we would ask that the blue badge is handed over unless it is needed for another family member.

Should I keep in contact while my child is in a Family Based Overnight Short Break?

Most families enjoy a break while their child is with carers, but families can say what contact they would like. For example if their child is unwell or distressed families may want to be contacted – the carers will have your emergency telephone numbers and contacts.

Could I have unplanned or emergency access to a Family Based Overnight Short Break for my child?

Arrangements are normally planned in advance to an agreed pattern, however in an emergency situation we would do our best to help, but this can't be guaranteed.

If I am not happy with my child's allocated carer can I ask for a different carer?

Your wishes are important to us and we want to ensure you and your child benefit from the overnight short breaks scheme, therefore we will attempt to identify an alternative family where possible.

What about medication or special foods?

All medication, special foods and health needs would be included in the signed medication agreement set up before your child goes to stay. Prescribed medication and special foods should be sent with your child. A medicine sheet will be provided to SB carers for them to keep a record of all medicine administered.

Will the carers know how to look after my child?

We will ensure ongoing and bespoke training is provided to all carers in order to ensure your child's needs are safely met.

If you have any questions not addressed here or would like to discuss anything in this leaflet please get in touch with either the Disabled Children's Service on 01609 780780 or

Fostering North Yorkshire

Central: 01609 533799

West: 01609 535216

East: 01609 535216

Contact us

**North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall,
Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD**

Our Customer Service Centre is open Monday to Friday
8.00am - 5.30pm (closed weekends and bank holidays).

Tel: **01609 780 780**

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web: **www.northyorks.gov.uk**

If you would like this information in another language or format
please ask us.