



# **London Borough of Bexley**

**Children with Disabilities Service  
Short Break Statement  
2018/2019**

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## **Introduction**

The London Borough of Bexley is committed to delivering a range of Short Breaks for children and young people with SEND, their parents/carers and families. Our aim is to ensure that children and young people with disabilities and their families are supported well and have their needs met.

To do this we ensure that:

***We listen to all disabled children, act on their views, and provide them with choices.***

- *We regularly seek feedback about the activities and services that children and young people access through the use of feedback forms and through Parental Engagement meetings. Professionals who know the children and young people well observe them through home visits and visits to services in order to see first-hand how well the short breaks being accessed meet identified needs.*
- *Staff use a range of communication aids including Makaton and picture exchange communication (PECS), talking Mats, to ensure they understand the views of a wide range of children and young people who access short breaks.*

***All children known to the children with disabilities service and their families are supported to take part in and enjoy local community life wherever possible.***

- *We sign post families to local childcare, leisure and recreational activities.*
- *We work with families and our parent carer group Bexley Voice to better understand local needs and gaps in service.*
- *We involve families as equal partners in making decisions about service development and priorities*
- *We are informed of the services that families need through feedback on the Bexley Local Offer.*

## **What do we mean by Disability?**

The London Borough of Bexley applies The Equality Act 2010 definition of a Disability: “A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities.” A link to the Equality Act 2010 and accompanying explanatory notes can be found in the useful links section (page 14) of this document

## **What is a short break?**

Short Breaks (previously referred to as ‘shared care’ or ‘respite’) are activities for children and young people with SEND that enable them to have fun, spend time with friends and build their confidence and skills, in a safe environment. Many Short Breaks take place outside of a child’s or young person’s home, for example in local leisure centres and community spaces.

Some Short Breaks can take place in a child's home, with specialist support, depending upon the needs of the child or young person with SEND and their family. Some of our Short Breaks are provided in one of our specialist Resource Centre's or from the home of an approved carer, depending upon the needs of the child or young person with SEND and their family. Short Breaks take place outside of the school day. This means that activities could happen in an evening, at a weekend or during school holidays. Short Breaks can also include overnight stays, depending upon the need of the child or young person with SEND, and their family, and the type of activity. Some Short Breaks can be for a child or young person with SEND to attend independently of their families, giving parents and carers the opportunity to have a break from their caring role. Some Short Breaks give siblings and/or families the opportunity to take part in activities together.

### **Who are short breaks for?**

Bexley's Short Breaks are available to ALL children and young people who:

- Have a special educational need and/or disability
- Are aged 0 – 18 years old
- Ordinarily reside in Bexley

### **What does the law say about short breaks and the information that Local Authorities must make available?**

The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations came into effect on 1st April 2011 and established in law the duty for each Local Authority to provide a range of Short Breaks for 'disabled' children and young people, from birth up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, and their parents and carers.

As part of the duty, each Local Authority must produce a Short Breaks Statement, in order to provide parents and carers with the following information:

- The range of Short Breaks available;
- How to access the range of Short Breaks available;
- How Bexley's Short Breaks have been designed to meet local needs.

More recently the Children and Families Act 2014 introduced significant changes to the way that Education, Health and Social Care work to support children and young people with SEND. Some of the key changes include:

- Introduction of a single Graduated SEN Response Pathway and integrated Education, Health and Care Plans.
- Publication of a clear and transparent 'Local Offer' detailing up to date services and support available (visit [www.bexleylocaloffer.uk](http://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk))
- Giving young people with SEND in further education and training aged 16-25 rights and protections comparable to those in school;
- Ensuring that the voice of children, young people, parents and carers (and their families) is at the heart of what we do, including shaping local services.

For more information about the special educational needs and disability reforms please see the useful links section of this document on page 14 of this document.

## **What types of short break are available in Bexley and how are they accessed?**

Short breaks can be described in the following three categories;

- Universal short breaks
- Targeted short breaks
- Specialist short breaks

The information below describes what is available within each of these categories and how different types of short breaks can be accessed.

### **Universal services**

Universal Services offer short breaks opportunities that are open to all children and young people in Bexley who choose to use them whether or not they have a special educational need or disability. These may include libraries, youth clubs, children's centres leisure centres, Scouts, Brownies, after school clubs, sport's groups etc.

Children's Centres act as a hub for the local community. The key focus of their work is high quality, inclusive, early learning and childcare within the local area, Information and activities for families; adult learning and employment support; integrated child and family health services. The majority of services provided at Children's Centres are for children aged 0-6 years and their parents/carers.

Universal Services offer activities that enable ALL children and young people to have fun and make friends. We want these services to be as inclusive as possible for disabled children. All universal services are expected to make reasonable adjustments so that children with disabilities and special educational needs can be included.

For most children, these short breaks meet their needs and they do not require targeted or specialist services.

### **How do I access a universal service?**

Many Universal Services advertise their activities within libraries, schools, children's centres, leisure centres and community centres. You can access universal services by contacting organisations directly to discuss the activities they offer.

Though we recognise that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities may have specialist support requirements we encourage parents and carers to access Universal Services and discuss with providers the support that their child needs. This

will help providers to increase their knowledge and skills in regards to supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

### **Targeted services**

Targeted services provide short break opportunities specifically aimed at children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Some targeted services are funded by the London Borough of Bexley while others are provided by voluntary groups and charities. Examples of targeted services would include horse riding for the disabled, disability sports clubs, targeted youth groups etc.

### **How do I access a targeted short break?**

Families can use targeted services without needing to be assessed by the London Borough of Bexley. Families can directly contact the service they are interested in and arrange for the child or young person to attend.

### **Specialist short breaks**

These are services for disabled children with the most complex needs. Specialist short breaks support for children, young people and their families where the child/young person's disability has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

The underlying principles of specialist short breaks are:

- To supplement the universal provision available locally
- To be preventative and provide targeted support– not just a crisis intervention
- To improve outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families
- To meet the individual needs identified through assessment.

### **How do I access a specialist short break?**

In order to access specialist short breaks the child or young person will require an assessment from the London Borough of Bexley. The assessment is usually carried out by a social worker from Bexley's Children with Disabilities Service.

Eligibility decisions are based on individual need including to what extent a child or young person's disability or impairment affects their lives and the lives of those who live with and care for them. However, it is likely that if a child/young person is eligible for short break support their disability and/or special educational needs could be described in one or more of the following ways;

- A significant, permanent and enduring physical disability
- A significant global learning disability
- A severe and enduring communication disorder

- Autism with a significant global development delay and/or challenging behaviour
- A significant sensory impairment

**To request a child and family assessment in order to access specialist short breaks parents/carers should contact Screeners Team on 020 3045 5440.** This team takes calls from parents, carers and professionals who are requesting support from Children Social Care. Screeners will ask a few questions about the child's needs and family circumstances. They will share this information with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) whose job it is to refer families to the right service.

### **What happens when a child and family assessment is carried out?**

If a child has been referred to the Children with Disabilities Service the family will be contacted by a children with disabilities social worker. The social worker will discuss with the family the key information that has been provided through the referral and establish if the child/young person and their family may be eligible for specialist short breaks. The social worker will then make arrangements to visit the family and begin a Child and Family Assessment. This is an assessment that looks in detail at the needs of the child or young person with a disability and those caring for them. The assessment also takes account of all aspects of family life that may be impacting on the needs of the disabled child, siblings, anyone living in the family home and parents/ carer's ability to care. This assessment considers the following information;

- The severity of a child's needs and how this impacts on family life
- If there is more than one disabled child in the family
- Other caring responsibilities within the family
- Parental health / disability impacting on ability to carry out caring role
- Isolation and lack of extended social networks
- Adopted children with additional needs
- Children who are looked after by the Local Authority
- Concerns about a child or young person's safety

The Children with Disabilities Service works closely with families to ensure that assessments are thorough and reflect the views of all involved. Assessments can take up to a maximum of 45 days but social workers aim to complete assessments without any unnecessary delay whilst still ensuring that they capture the necessary level of detail.

Once the assessment is complete the Short Breaks Multi-disciplinary Panel who meet fortnightly to consider information and evidence that has been gathered alongside the views of the children and their families. The panel consists of the Service Manager for Children with Disabilities, a representative from Bexley SNAP, Aspens, a nurse from the Community Children's Nursing Team, and a representative from Charlton Community Trust. The Panel then agree the exact level and type of support to be provided and if a direct payment is appropriate. Once the panel has made its decision a letter is sent to the family with details of the level and type of support that has been agreed.

Decisions made by the panel regarding the services and funding to be provided will be reviewed regularly, at least once a year, to determine if needs have changed and if the

package still meets the identified needs and outcomes. It also recognises that children may move between levels of service at different stages in their life or when circumstances change. If required a review assessment can be carried out by a social worker to establish if the level or type of support needs to be changed.

### **Will my child be assessed by an Occupational Therapist?**

The Occupational Therapy Service sits within the Children with Disabilities Service and provides assessment of disabled children/young people's homes for adaptations and the provision of equipment. Not all children will require an assessment by an occupational therapist as part of a Child and Family Assessment. The social worker carrying out the assessment can make a referral to the occupational therapy service if it is felt that this is necessary. Parents are still able to make a self-referral to the occupational therapy service by contacting the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH Team).

### **What is a direct payment?**

A Direct Payment is a sum of money paid to a parent/carer on behalf of a child or young person with a disability. Direct payments can be used to purchase support and short breaks and are an alternative to receiving a commissioned service owned or arranged by the London Borough of Bexley.

Families of a child or young person with a disability who have been assessed as eligible for specialist short breaks may be offered the opportunity to have a Direct Payment in place of a commissioned service. Direct payments can be used flexibly to purchase short breaks from an inclusive setting, or by employing a support worker or personal assistant as agreed in the child or young person's care plan.

Inspire Community Trust acts as the Local Authority's broker for Direct Payments and supports families with information and advice about using direct payments to purchase short breaks and about employing personal assistants. For more information about the Inspire Community Trust please see the useful contacts [information on page 13 of this document.](#)

### **What is the disabled children's register?**

All Local Authorities hold a database of children and young people with disabilities living in the borough. This is often referred to as the 'disabled children's register'. The purpose of recording information about children and young people with disabilities and the short breaks that they access is to ensure that Local Authorities are able to forward plan and predict what services it needs to commission and make available in the future.

When children and young people with disabilities are assessed as eligible for specialist short breaks families will be asked if they are happy for their child's details to be added to the disabled children's register. Adding a child or young person's name to the disabled children's register is voluntary and families will always be asked for their consent before a child's name is added.

### **What happens if a child/young person is assessed and as not being eligible for specialist short breaks?**

Children/young people and their families who, despite their disability, are assessed as not being eligible for specialist short breaks will be signposted to universal and targeted services accepting self-referrals and any other useful local, regional or national information.

### **Do you provide assistance travelling to and from short breaks services?**

We are unable to provide transport to access short breaks. Your child may be eligible for a Freedom Pass which is for people with disabilities and gives concessionary travel on most public transport in London. Eligibility is for people with disabilities, such as a physical impairment or learning difficulty, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

For further details visit <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/services/freedom-pass/disabled-persons-freedom-pass>

Alternatively, if your child is severely disabled and cannot travel on public transport, you may be eligible for Dial-A-Ride, Taxicard or Capital Call subsidised travel: for more information visit <http://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/content/1208>

If your child currently receives transport to school organised by the local authority but would prefer to travel independently, they may be eligible for Independent Travel Training. This will also support their access to short breaks.

For more information please visit <http://www.bexleyct.co.uk/traveltraining.php>

### **What happens when a child turns 18 and transitions into adult services?**

We want transition from children's to adults' services to be a seamless and well-coordinated experience for young people and their families. Preparing young people for Adulthood starts at 14 years old and a social worker from the Preparation for Adulthood Team attends the year nine annual education review with a social worker in the Children with Disabilities Service. Children are referred to the Preparation for Adulthood Team at the age of 16 when they are allocated a social worker. A social worker in the Preparation for Adulthood Team will carry out a Needs led assessment to establish if the young person meets the criteria for continued support and access to specialist adult services. If you need to speak with someone in the Preparation for Adulthood Team please contact 02083037777 or email [preparationforadulthoodteam@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:preparationforadulthoodteam@bexley.gov.uk)

### **How does the London Borough of Bexley review short breaks services?**

This statement continues to be informed by consultation and feedback from disabled children and young people, their families and professionals from social care, health, education and the voluntary sector.

Disabled children and their families have told us their child enjoys accessing the overnight respite at Falconwood.

Some children and young people enjoy being supported to access community activities, others like one-to-one support, while some prefer to do things as a group. They like

socialising with other children and young people and having choice and control over the activities that they access.

Some parents have reported the following:

You have helped me and my family

Social worker brings herself to our level, respects our children and engages with them

Short break support gives them a break whilst their child is having an enjoyable experience in the community

Social Services and Education have always been supportive through child in need meetings. I may not have always agreed with them at times but have trusted their advice.

We have parental engagement meeting once every three months and we meet with parents to get their views about short breaks and this helps us to plan what we can do better to support them and their children.

We use feedback forms across the short breaks service to enable us to better understand the views of those who attend the activities we offer.

We will continue to regularly monitor services to ensure that all the short breaks we provide make a positive difference to our young people and their families. Our commissioned services have been getting regular feedback from parents and young people who use their services.

### **How can families give their feedback about short breaks and get involved in developing the Bexley short breaks offer?**

If you would like to tell us what you think about the short breaks and activities available in Bexley, or get involved in helping us improve them [please contact the children with disabilities on DisabledChildrenServiceUnit@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:DisabledChildrenServiceUnit@bexley.gov.uk)

Any comments you share will be kept anonymous and will be used to help review the short breaks service. This short breaks statement will be reviewed at least once a year with our parent carer forum.

### **What short breaks services are currently available in Bexley?**

Many children will access a mixture of services, some of these will be specialist services provided through an assessment, and some will be accessed through targeted activities commissioned from voluntary or independent providers. Some children will be able to access universal short break services with or without support.

### **Universal short breaks available in Bexley**

There are many activities that children living in the London borough of Bexley can access without additional support from the Local Authority. Universal short breaks are opportunities that are open to all children and young people in Bexley who choose to use them whether or not they have a special educational need or disability. These may include libraries, youth clubs, children's centres leisure centres, Scouts, Brownies, after school clubs, sport's groups etc. Each summer Bexley council publishes a 'Summer Sizzler' booklet which

details events and activities happening across the borough throughout the summer holidays. Information about universal services can be found on the Bexley council website and on the Bexley Local Offer [www.bexleylocaloffer.uk](http://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk).

### **Targeted short breaks available in Bexley**

Targeted service provide short break opportunities specifically aimed at children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Some targeted services are funded by the London Borough of Bexley while others are provided by voluntary groups and charities. Please note that those services that are not commissioned by the Local Authority may carry a charge. We advise that parents and carers contact providers for more information. Examples of targeted services would include horse riding for the disabled, disability sports clubs, targeted youth groups etc.

<b>Targeted short breaks</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
<p><b>Bexley SNAP</b></p> <p><b>Half term and holiday playschemes</b> (Age range 5-17)</p> <p><b>Saturday Fun Club</b> (Age range 2-10)</p> <p><b>Thursday Youth Club</b> (age range 11-25)</p> <p><b>Saturday Youth Club</b> (Age range 11-17)</p>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.bexleysnap.org.uk">www.bexleysnap.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:admin@bexleysnap.org.uk">admin@bexleysnap.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> 020 8320 1488</p>
<p><b>Bexley SNAP</b></p> <p><b>Little Stars school for parents</b> - Little Stars School for Parents is one of a national network of about 30 groups. These were set up to introduce the principles of conductive education to parents of young children with physical disabilities or delayed motor development.</p> <p><b>Early Years:</b> This group is for 0-5 years and it is based in Barnehurst. The focus is on different areas of development in partnership with health professionals to enhance progress. This groups meets on Monday 12:30-2:30pm, Wednesday (10.00am-12:00), Thursdays 12:30-2:30pm and Friday from 10:00-12:00</p> <p><b>Creator Club:</b> This is for children with Social Communicational difficulties/Autism, who love creative crafts and play 7-11. This takes place on Wednesdays from 4pm-5:45pm.</p>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.bexleysnap.org.uk">www.bexleysnap.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:littlestars@bexleysnap.org.uk">littlestars@bexleysnap.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> 07926 375 887</p>
<p><b>Aspens</b> - Saturday fun club and after school clubs (Age range 4-17)</p>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.aspens.org.uk">www.aspens.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Email:</b> Mandy Kennedy <a href="mailto:Mandy.Kennedy@aspens.org.uk">Mandy.Kennedy@aspens.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> 020 8303 7995 - x122</p>

<p><b>Horse riding for the disabled –</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.saddlesridingcentre.co.uk/">http://www.saddlesridingcentre.co.uk/</a> 01322525219</p> <p>Children with physical disabilities can use ARROW RDA in Dartford: <a href="http://www.arrowridingcentre.com/contact-us">http://www.arrowridingcentre.com/contact-us</a> 01322294390</p>
<p><b>Bexley Moorings –</b> Blocks of activity sessions for young people with autism (Age range 8-17)</p>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.bexleymoorings.co.uk">www.bexleymoorings.co.uk</a> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@bexleymoorings.co.uk">info@bexleymoorings.co.uk</a> <b>Telephone:</b> 020 8304 9609</p>
<p><b>Sidcup Youth Club</b> Monday night Special Needs sessions (Age range 11-25)</p>	<p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:Karen.turner@bexley.gov.uk">Karen.turner@bexley.gov.uk</a> <b>Telephone:</b> 020 3045 3286</p>
<p><b>Childminding short breaks</b></p> <p>Bexley has a Childminding Network of approved and registered childminders who can offer short breaks for children with learning disabilities and additional needs up to the age of 16. There is a growing availability for childminders who have had training to support children with more severe disabilities for a few hours or overnight. Ages 0-16</p>	<p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:fis@bexley.gov.uk">fis@bexley.gov.uk</a> <b>Telephone:</b> 020 8303 7777</p>

**More information about targeted activities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities such as targeted sports clubs can be found on the Bexley Local Offer [www.bexleylocaloffer.uk](http://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk)**

### **Specialist short breaks available in Bexley**

These are services for disabled children with the most complex needs. Specialist short breaks support for children, young people and their families where the child/young person's disability has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. In order to access specialist short breaks the child or young person will require an assessment from the London Borough of Bexley. The assessment is usually carried out by a social worker from Bexley's Children with Disabilities Service.

<b>Specialist short breaks</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
<p><b>Bexley SNAP</b></p> <p><b>Half term and holiday play schemes (Age range 5-17)</b></p>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.bexleysnap.org.uk">www.bexleysnap.org.uk</a> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:admin@bexleysnap.org.uk">admin@bexleysnap.org.uk</a> <b>Telephone:</b> 020 8320 1488</p>

<p><b>Saturday Fun Club Little Explorers</b> (Age range 2-10) This takes place from 9:45am to 12:45pm. Children are encouraged to join in and try new activities.</p> <p><b>Thursday Youth Club</b> (age range 11-25)</p> <p><b>Saturday Youth Club</b> (Age range 11-18) My time Offer a range of activities including park visits, cooking, sensory and soft toys for the age group. This takes place in Crayford from 10:30am-3:30pm</p>	
<p><b>Aspens</b></p> <p>Saturday fun club, after school clubs (Age range 4-17)</p>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.aspens.org.uk">www.aspens.org.uk</a>  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:Mandy.Kennedy@aspens.org.uk">Mandy.Kennedy@aspens.org.uk</a>  <b>Telephone:</b>  020 8303 7995 - x122</p>
<p><b>Falconwood</b></p> <p>An overnight residential centre funded by the London Borough of Bexley providing short breaks to children and young people with profound and multiple disabilities or autism and/or learning disability with challenging behaviour.</p>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.aspens.org.uk">www.aspens.org.uk</a>  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:Mandy.Kennedy@aspens.org.uk">Mandy.Kennedy@aspens.org.uk</a>  <b>Telephone:</b>  020 8303 7995 - x122</p>
<p><b>Crossroads Care</b></p> <p>Provides a range of services to carers for Children and Adults with support needs. They have carers who take young people out in the community to access a range of activities and also provide personal care at home.</p>	<p><b>Website:</b>  <a href="http://www.crossroadscareseastlondon.org.uk">www.crossroadscareseastlondon.org.uk</a>  <b>Telephone:</b>01322336086</p>
<p><b>Demelza</b> Hospice Care for children and young people</p> <p>Demelza is a children's hospice charity in the south east of the UK, providing vital care to families across East Sussex, Kent and South East London.</p>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.demelza.org.uk">www.demelza.org.uk</a>  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:infor@demelza.org.uk">infor@demelza.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Ellenor</b> Hospice care for children and young people</p> <p>Providing children's hospice-at-home services and short breaks for children and young people with life limiting or life threatening medical conditions.</p>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.ellenor.org.uk">www.ellenor.org.uk</a></p>

Family based respite. This is when a child or a young person with a disabilities is cared for in a family setting to give parents a break. The people caring for the young person will be approved foster carers.	
Personal Assistants/specialist agency staff commissioned and non-commissioned services. This consists of Focused Health care, Ravens Nursing, Help Handz and Prestige. These agencies provide 1:1 support for young people with disabilities.	<a href="http://www.ravennursing.co.uk">http://www.ravennursing.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.prestige-nursing.co.uk/">http://www.prestige-nursing.co.uk/</a> <a href="http://www.helphandz.com/about-us">http://www.helphandz.com/about-us</a>

### **Who can families contact for more information?**

Children with Disabilities Service

**Address:** Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7AT

**Telephone:** 020 3045 3600

**Email:** [disabledchildrenserviceunit@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:disabledchildrenserviceunit@bexley.gov.uk)

The Disabled Children's Service provides specialist services to disabled children and their families. These include:

- Assessment to access complex needs support packages
- Emotional and practical support
- Advice and signposting
- Case management
- Occupational therapy
- Equipment and adaptations
- Services to looked after disabled children
- Child protection services for disabled children

### **Inspire Community Trust**

**Website:** [www.inspirecommunitytrust.org](http://www.inspirecommunitytrust.org)

**Telephone:** 020 3045 5100

Inspire Community Trust is a user led organization committed to promoting independent living. This is achieved by supporting disabled people and those who have sensory impairments to make informed choices which enable them to improve and enhance their lives.

### **Bexley Voice – Parent Carer Forum**

**Website:** [www.bexleyvoice.org.uk](http://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 07512 409936.

**Email:** [bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk)

Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children is a group of voluntary parents/ carers of children with a wide range of disabilities and special needs who live in Bexley. Their main aims are to:

- Represent parents and gather views based on personal experience and canvassed opinion, so that all parents have a voice.
- Attend meetings with the Council and other service providers to develop provision for Children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Raise awareness of the impact of a wide range of special needs on family life.
- Provide a central consultation point for those seeking input from this group.
- Proactively provide on-going feedback to service providers on their performance.
- Ensure SEND parents/carers in Bexley are well informed regarding Local and National issues of relevance to them

They welcome new members at any time.

### **Other useful contacts**

Bexley Preparation for Adulthood Team on 02083037777 or email them on the following [preparationforadulthoodteam@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:preparationforadulthoodteam@bexley.gov.uk)

### **Statutory Assessment Service**

**Address:** Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7AT

**Email:** [specialneeds.els@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:specialneeds.els@bexley.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** 0208 303 7777

The SEND Statutory Assessment Team oversee the statutory assessment process and work with parents, carers, professionals and educational setting to develop Education, Health and Care Plans.

### **Information Advice and Support Service – IASS**

**Telephone:** 0203-045-5976

**Email Address:** [bexleyIASS@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:bexleyIASS@bexley.gov.uk)

The Information and Advice Support Service (formally known as the Parent Partnership) This service offers advice about SEN, statutory assessment, Education, Health and Care Plans, health and legal advice. This service is independent of the Local Authority.

### **Bexley's Family Information Service**

**Website:** [www.bexley.gov.uk/fis](http://www.bexley.gov.uk/fis)

**Telephone:** 020 8303 7777

**Email:** [fis@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:fis@bexley.gov.uk)

The Family Information Service provides information, advice and guidance on childcare and support services for families. FIS give childcare support to a range of providers from the private, voluntary and independent sectors and a childcare brokerage service to parents and

carers. By accessing the FIS website at [www.bexley.gov.uk/fis](http://www.bexley.gov.uk/fis) you will find details about local and national organisations, support services, fun things to do such as clubs and leisure activities, details on Children's Centre's as well as information on Ofsted registered childcare providers across Bexley.

## **Bexley National Autistic Society**

**Website:** [www.autism.org.uk/directory](http://www.autism.org.uk/directory)

**Telephone:** 07826 950496

**Email:** [bexley@nas.org.uk](mailto:bexley@nas.org.uk)

Offers a variety of social and leisure activities for children on the autism spectrum and their families living within Bexley Borough. The Bexley National Autistic Society (NAS) branch benefits from having its own cinema screenings once a month, where older films suitable for children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and those with a learning disability are shown. Members can enjoy exclusive inflatable swimming and flumes sessions suitable for the whole family to have fun. Other activities include soft play sessions, family fun days, and family discos, and "Make and Bake" sessions, etc. The branch also has monthly coffee mornings during term time – an opportunity for parents/carers to get together, share experiences/difficulties and hear from the speaker.

## **Taxicard/Capital Call/Dial-a-Ride**

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround>

## **Useful Links**

### **Short breaks care – How local authorities should provide it**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/short-breaks-for-carers-of-disabled-children>

### **Children and Families Act 2014**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

### **SEND code of practice – 0-25years**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

### **How can families appeal a decision or complain about a service?**

If you are unhappy a decision that has been made regarding access to short breaks or wish to make a complaint about the service you have received the first step is to discuss your concerns with a member of the children with disabilities team. If your concern isn't resolved you can put your complaint in writing. The London Borough of Bexley's complaints procedure can be found by visiting [www.bexley.gov.uk/feedback](http://www.bexley.gov.uk/feedback)

If a family feels that the assessment carried out by the children with disabilities social worker did not adequately cover their family's individual circumstances or if their circumstances have changed they can request a re-assessment at any time.

If you would like this document in a different format, please contact the Children with Disabilities Service on 020 3045 3600

We hope the information contained within the brochure will help you identify support and short break opportunities available to you in the London Borough of Bexley.