

MY GUIDE TO...

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND OR DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES

Information for parents and carers

If your child has a disability or long-term health condition, you might be entitled to financial support (such as the Disability Living Allowance) to help meet their needs and cover any costs that arise as a result of your child's needs. This page explains more about the disability benefits and entitlements you and your child might qualify for and how to claim them. **Details of all organisations and referral routes mentioned can be found at the end of this guide.**

Q1. What is Disability Living Allowance (DLA)?

Disability Living Allowance is paid to parents/carer of children with a disability or long term health condition. It is paid to parents/carers while their child (up to age 16) needs help looking after themselves and/or help to move around. The amount a parent/carer receives is based on the help that their child needs as a result of their disability or condition. A parent/carer will only receive the DLA if their child needs much more day-to-day help than other children of the same age who don't have a disability. DLA is not means tested and is awarded by the Department of Works & Pensions

Q2. I have received application forms to apply for DLA/PIP, where can I get help to complete them?

Bexley Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) is an independent charity who are able to support parents and carers of children and young people who require support with DLA and PIP applications and appeals. Contact A Family (National support charity for age 0-25 with SEND) offer a confidential free helpline service for parents and carers needing support in applying for DLA and PIP or making an appeal.

Q3. I am receiving DLA for my child but what happens when they turn 16?

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is the new name for the benefit paid to young people and adults aged 16 to 64 with a disability or long term health condition. Like DLA the PIP it is not means-tested and consists of two elements known as a mobility component and a daily living component. The rate paid is depends on how a person's disability or condition affects them in their daily life not solely on the condition itself. An assessment is carried out to establish what type and level of support is required and what rate of PIP should be paid. If you are the parent or guardian of a child who is approaching 16 and who currently receives DLA, the DWP will write to you and explain how and when your child can apply for PIP.

Q4. Is there financial help available for education materials and/or travel for a FE/College course or higher education?

Young people aged 16 to 19 who are studying at a publicly funded school or college in England can apply for a bursary to help with education-related costs (including travel). There are two types of bursary – a discretionary bursary, for which any young person can apply and a vulnerable student bursary which is open to disabled students who receive DLA/PIP, ESA or universal credit. . The 16 -19 Student Bursary Fund (up to £1,200 per year) can be applied for via the FE/College that the young person attends. Higher education student living in England, can apply for a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) if they have a disability, including a long-term health condition, mental health condition or a specific learning difficulty. The DSA is not means tested and eligibility is dependent on students meeting the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010.

Q5. Is there extra financial help for young people who would like to work part time?

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is a benefit for people over 16 whose capacity for work is limited by their health or disability. There are two types of ESA: Contributory ESA and Income-related

ESA. Some people will receive both types of payment; others may only get one or the other. If your young person claims ESA, any tax credits or benefits you get for them (other than DLA or PIP) will stop. Job centre plus provide information and a helpline for anyone with questions about ESA.

Q6. What are direct payments and short breaks?

A direct payment (DP) is an amount of money that the local council/trust can pay a family to meet the needs of a disabled child/young person. Direct payments enable families to purchase services that will meet the needs of their child. The local authority will assess a child needs and families who meet the criteria will be offered the opportunity to have DP in place of a service. Families are able to use their DP flexibly to “buy” the support that their child needs.

Short Breaks (previously referred to as ‘shared care’ or ‘respite’) are activities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities that enable them to have fun, spend time with friends and build their confidence and skills, in a safe environment. Bexley’s Short Breaks are available to all children and young people up to age 18, who have a special educational need and/or disability and ordinarily reside in Bexley. 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. Some families will receive a service provided by the local authority and some families will be able to use their direct payments to purchase short breaks.

Q7. Can I apply for free or concessionary travel for my child/young person?

A child/young person may be eligible for a Disabled Persons Freedom Pass which provides concessionary travel on most public transport in London and is available to people with a disability (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. The Disabled Persons Freedom Pass scheme is managed by the London Councils and is issued in Bexley by Inspire Community Trust. They also offer a wide range of other services including the Blue Badge Scheme, wheelchair scheme and equipment/mobility aids on a ‘try before you buy’ system.

Alternatively, if a disabled child/young person cannot travel on public transport they may be eligible for Dial-A-Ride, Taxicard or Capital Call subsidised travel. Families can also apply for vehicle tax exemption, vehicle tax reduction, the motability scheme and community/public transport including the disabled persons railcard.

Q8. As a carer am I entitled to any financial support or benefits?

Carer’s Allowance is a benefit for people age 16 or over who can’t work full-time because they are caring for a person who is disabled or who has special/additional needs. You could qualify for Carers Allowance if you care for someone at least 35 hours a week who receives certain benefits. You don’t have to be related to or live with the person you care for. If a carer is caring for someone at least 20 hours a week they can also apply for Carer’s Credit (a National Insurance credit that helps with gaps in a carers National Insurance record)

Q9. My child/young person is receiving benefits how can I support them?

Someone who is supporting a person who is receiving benefits can apply to becoming a financial appointee. A financial appointee has the right to deal with the benefits of someone who can’t manage their own affairs because they’re mentally incapable or severely disabled.

Q10. Are there any on-line Benefit calculators I could use to find out what financial support I/my child/family are entitled to?

You can use an independent benefits calculator to find out what benefits you, your child/young person and family could access and how you can apply. Benefits calculators are free to use, anonymous, and have replaced the Benefits Adviser service.

Q9. Are there any grants to help with items such as a computer or a family holiday?

Family Fund are the UK's largest provider of grants to low-income families raising disabled and seriously ill children and young people aged 17 or under. They help ease the additional pressures families face. They can help with essential items such as washing machines, fridges and clothing but also consider grants for sensory toys, computers and much needed family breaks together.

CONTACT DETAILS

TYPE OF SUPPORT/ORGANISATION	CONTACT DETAILS
Disability Living Allowance (DLA)	Financial help if you're disabled GOV.UK Website: https://www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled
Personal Independence Payment (PIP)	Financial help if you're disabled GOV.UK Website: https://www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled Telephone: 0800 917 2222
Bexley Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	Website: www.bexleycab.org.uk Telephone: 01322 517150
Contact A Family A national support charity for children and young people with SEND. They offer a confidential free helpline service on all aspects of benefits.	Website: www.cafamily.org.uk Money Matters – A general guide to disabled money matters produced by contact a family, including information about disability and sickness benefits, benefits for working, money and vouchers, benefits for carers, help with rent, mortgage and council tax, transport, grants and loans. Website: www.cafamily.org.uk/media/975536/money_matters.pdf
Employment Support Allowance	Financial help if you're disabled GOV.UK Website: https://www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled
16-19 Student Bursary	Financial help if you're disabled GOV.UK Website: https://www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled
Disabled Students Allowance	Financial help if you're disabled GOV.UK Website: https://www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled
Direct Payments & Short Breaks	Disabled Children's Service To request a child and family assessment in order to access specialist short breaks parents/carers should contact the Bexley Screeners Team on 020 3045 5440. For more information on Short Breaks in Bexley: please refer to the Bexley Short Break Statement on the Local Offer or contact: Children with disabilities service Telephone: 020 3045 3600 Email: disabledchildrenserviceunit@bexley.gov.uk
Concessionary Travel	Website: www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround Website: www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk Website: www.motability.co.uk Website: www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled/vehicles-and-transport
Inspire Community Trust	Inspire Community Trust acts as Bexley's Local Authority's broker for Direct Payments and supports families with information and advice in setting up their service. The Trust operates a help line and monitoring service. If you are interested in Direct Payments, there is a factsheet and handbook available. Website: www.inspirecommunitytrust.org Telephone: 020 3045 5100

Carers Allowance & Carers Credit	Financial help if you're disabled GOV.UK Website: https://www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled
Financial Appointee	Website: www.gov.uk/become-appointee-for-someone-claiming-benefits
Benefits Calculator	<p>Entitledto for information on income-related benefits, tax credits, contribution-based benefits, Council Tax Reduction, Carer's Allowance, Universal Credit and other grants. Website: http://www.entitledto.co.uk/benefitscalculator/startcalc.aspx</p> <p>Turn2us for information on income-related benefits, tax credits, Council Tax Reduction, Carer's Allowance, Universal Credit and how your benefits will be affected if you start work or change your working hours. Website: https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Find-Benefits-Grants</p>
Family Fund	Website: www.familyfund.org.uk