

**London Borough of Bexley – Short Breaks Services
April 2020**

Current service operation:

- Since 27th March 2020, group-based short breaks activities (after school clubs and Saturday clubs) are currently suspended.
- Short breaks providers are continuing to check in with families and are developing virtual short breaks activities, with providers starting to conduct group and one to one calls online.
- Short breaks providers are working with the Bexley CWD practitioners to identify the appropriate level of support for each child.
- The short breaks panel will take place every Friday and is virtual.

Interim service model:

On the basis of individual risk assessments, we are proposing to deliver a core short breaks offer to children with specialist short breaks packages. This will consist of the following:

Support Band	Short Breaks Offer
High Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One to one outreach support: using guidance of public health with appropriate risk assessment in advance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children offered outreach visits to short breaks setting with support workers – one child at a time, or one child with members of their household (siblings, parents). - If a family declines an outreach visit, the alternative is a home visit subject to full risk assessment. • Virtual short breaks: direct work delivered over the telephone and web calls • Twice weekly check in calls with parents
Medium Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual short breaks: direct work delivered over the telephone and web calls • Twice weekly check in calls with parents
Low Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing resources (videos, links to games, activity packs that can be completed at home etc) • Weekly check in calls with parents
Direct payments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families can use direct payments for purchasing items for children that would support the children at home with their disability and/or education. • Any changes to or new requests for direct payments need to be presented at the short breaks panel. • Families who are subject to income losses due to restricted work resulting from COVID 19, can use their direct payments to make rent, utility or food purchases. <p align="center">The family should discuss their use of direct payments with the CWD practitioner to ensure transparency and clear accountability. This flexible use of DP will be reviewed end of June 2020.</p>	

If a child is assessed as requiring 'High support', this means that there are concerns about the child being in the home environment without any direct support. This may include Children In Need (CIN) or Child Protection (CP) issues and situations where the child has challenging behaviour that is likely to escalate by not being able to go to external activities.

We appreciate that each family's circumstances may change in coming weeks and months. Any change to support needs to be considered with the CWD practitioner, taking into account all aspects of the child and family's needs alongside their EHC plan and risk assessment. This will be presented to the virtual short breaks panel.

Please refer to guidance on [safeguarding considerations for online activity](#), to inform planning for virtual short breaks session delivery.

DRAFT