

Short Breaks update

January 2018

Worcestershire County Council commission short break services to give respite to carers of children with disabilities. These short breaks range from community-based groups (including holiday and term-term playschemes) to specialist services including residential and family-based overnight and weekend care. We are now in the process of re-commissioning our short breaks services to ensure we can offer a range of provision to meet the needs of families.

Overnight unit-based short breaks

We have just launched a **consultation around overnight unit-based short breaks**. The purpose of this is to determine how we can redesign services within the funding available to ensure that we still meet the needs of families. In brief, the future redesign proposals are:

- Review of the needs of all families currently accessing overnight unit-based short breaks to ensure that the needs of families are being met in the most appropriate way
- Cease the delivery of overnight provision at Ludlow Road, Kidderminster at the end of the summer term 2018 and provide suitable and alternative provision for existing users
- Increase the capacity at Providence Road, Bromsgrove by the flexible use of one or two additional bedrooms as required
- Review the use of Osborne Court unit in Malvern to ensure that the current capacity (including the use of the two bed emergency and assessment bungalow) is used effectively.

Families currently accessing provision at all four of the overnight short break units will be consulted on an individual basis. More information, including a link to the online survey, Cabinet paper and full consultation document, is available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/SENDupdates

1:1 support, community/schools based and family based

We have held some market engagement sessions with current and potential providers of 1:1 support and community/schools based groups to get feedback and ideas on how we can commission these services to meet the changing needs of families. We have decided to use a '**Dynamic Purchasing System**' (DPS) which is similar to an approved provider list. This allows new providers to join at any time and for us to run mini 'competitions' to commission groups/playschemes or 1:1 support for specific individuals. The DPS for 1:1 support went on the portal at the end of December and providers will be approved on 7th February. We will then be working with our current 1:1 provider to transition families to new providers by 1st April 2018. The DPS for community/schools based groups will be going on the portal at the end of February with the view for new providers to start delivering groups in September 2018.

We are extending current contracts for family based support so that service will continue as usual.

More information

More information and updates about the re-commissioning of short breaks, as well as other services for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (including our SEND strategy), can be found on our website www.worcestershire.gov.uk/SENDupdates or by emailing shortbreaks@worcestershire.gov.uk