

Children's Disability

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Who do we help?

We currently work with disabled children and their families aged 0-18 years of age.

Children likely to be eligible for an assessment:

- Children/Young People who have severe and profound permanent and substantial impairments
 - Children/Young People who have a substantial learning impairments
 - Children/Young People who have long term or life limiting illness.
 - Children/Young people with significant physical impairments
 - Children /young people with a substantial sensory impairment
 - Children /young people with moderate learning difficulties, disabilities who have additional impairments
 - Children / Young people who have a diagnosis of Autism and whose functioning in daily life is substantially affected

Children who are unlikely to be eligible for assessment by the Disabled Children's Team include:

- Children/young people with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or children with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) in the absence of any additional impairments
- Children/young people with behavioural difficulties in the absence of additional impairments
- Children/young people with mild/moderate learning disability in the absence of additional impairments

As a general principle, where children and families can receive mainstream services, these should be provided as a way of minimising the impact of disability with an emphasis on improving life chances and opportunities for inclusion.

What we do?

The team are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of disabled children and their families with an emphasis on reducing risks and improving quality of life chances.

We offer advice, information and assessments and as far as possible we will signpost families to their local communities and family support. The aim of the team is to support families, enabling parents to continue to care for their disabled child in the community

Where the assessment identifies that specialist services are required, these may be provided by health or voluntary agencies as well as the local authority. The assessment will make recommendations as to the kind of services or equipment that are required to meet the child's needs.

Types of services that could be provided include short breaks eg day care/overnights, assistance in the home with personal care, specific time limited work with parents and children.

An Occupational Therapist can assist with advice on providing aids, adaptations and equipment, where appropriate within the home, community.

Advice is also available on the safe moving and handling of disabled children.

Local Authorities have the power to charge for services they provide to disabled children under The Children's Act. However Bath & North East Somerset Social Services do not charge at present for their services to disabled children

There is an appeals process available to you if you do not agree that the level of service identified is appropriate to meet the needs of your child. There is also a Complaints Procedure, which can be accessed by visiting the website on the right or phoning [01225 477931](tel:01225477931)

How old are the children that you work with?

We work with disabled children and their families aged 0-18 years of age.

How can I contact you?

The Team is based at the RUH where it operates a daily duty system covering the Children's Wards in the Royal United Hospital and also the Head Injury Unit at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases.

How can I find out about direct payments for disabled children?

You may be entitled to receive a Direct Payment to buy services yourself from an independent organisation or employ a carer, instead of these services being provided by the Local Authority. A Direct Payment can only be made following an assessment of your child's needs.

To find out more information about direct payments follow the link

What other services or agencies do you work with?

We work with health and education services and with other services within the children and families service.

We also have close links with other agencies within the community such as Hop, Skip and jump, Time 2 Share, Bath Area Project schemes Crossroads, Beaumont's, family centres, day nurseries, Connexions, the Mentoring Plus Project, the 117 Project and CAMHS.

Parents & Carers:

I care for a disabled child, what sort of support is available?

Types of services that could be provided include short breaks eg day care/overnights, assistance in the home with personal care, specific time limited work with parents and children. You may also be entitled to receive a Direct Payment to buy services yourself from an independent organisation or employ a carer, instead of these services being provided by the Local Authority. A Direct Payment can only be made following an assessment of your child's needs.

Will I be charged for services?

Local Authorities have the power to charge for services they provide to disabled children under The Children's Act. However Bath & North East Somerset Social Services do not charge at present for their services to disabled children.

I have a disabled child, what learning support is available?

A child who has a disability will normally have their special educational needs met in a mainstream school as far as possible, with appropriate provision of support to meet their needs. The child should be offered full access to a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum. Some children's needs may be better met at a Special School. In practice, the support at school will be dependent on the level of need, with some children receiving learning support through an appropriately differentiated curriculum planned and delivered by teachers, through to others who may need an additional adult, or Learning Support Assistant, to help them further. Some children will require additional equipment at school, as advised by appropriate therapists, such as an Occupational Therapist. Although most needs can be met at the school, through funding for Special Needs, much of which is now delegated, some children with more needs may require a Statement of Special Educational Needs, and some additional funding too.

First of all, a parent should make contact with the school of their choice, to discuss the needs of their child and how they could be met. There Officers are also Case Officers and Education in the SEN Team who can be contacted to discuss what may be required, and to offer advice and guidance (telephone the SEN Team on 01225 394306).

What about my child's other needs, such as education, socialising, mental and physical health?

To find out information about your child's other developmental needs, such as their education, socialising, mental and physical health, contact the Development Worker for Disabled Children and Their Families (DWDCF) at The Family Information Service on 0800 073 1214. They will provide signposting to the relevant service, group or organisation who might be able to help.

I have a disabled child, is there anywhere I can take him/her to play, or for leisure activities?

To find out information about where you can take your child to play, or for leisure activities contact the Development Worker for Disabled Children and Their Families (DWDCF) at The Family Information Service on 0800 073 1214. They will be able to provide you with an up-to-date leisure pack.

I have a disabled child and I would like him/her to see other disabled children, Is this possible?

To find out where you can take your child to meet other disabled children contact the Development Worker for Disabled Children and Their Families (DWDCF) at The Family Information Service on 0800 073 1214. They will provide you with information about play-schemes and social activities that might be available locally.

I have just found out that my child is disabled, what happens now?

An Initial Assessment will be carried out by the duty worker to determine level of need and identify the appropriate services if appropriate. A social worker will meet with you and your child/young person to discuss his/her needs and your needs as a family. The Social Worker will provide you with an information pack, which will include the Rainbow Guide (a comprehensive guide for disabled children and their families). Some services such as summer play schemes, Youth Clubs v Time 2 Share can be accessed without an assessment of need. For further details please contact Family Information Service.

I have a disabled child and don't feel I can cope with looking after him/her, can you help?

Before we can offer you any help with looking after your child, your needs will be assessed using the eligibility criteria outlined in '[Who do we help?](#)'. Having been assessed as being eligible for help there are various options that may be available to you. These may include short break care e.g. day care/overnight, assistance in the home with personal care and specific time limited work with parents and children. For more information about short break care visit the [Family Information Service](#) website.

You may also be entitled to receive a Direct Payment to buy services yourself from an independent organisation or employ a carer, instead of these services being provided by the Local Authority. A Direct Payment can only be made following an assessment of your child's needs.

Can I get help with adaptations in my home?

An Occupational Therapist will complete an assessment and can advise or assist with the provision of aids, adaptations and equipment in your home, where appropriate. Advice is also available on the safe moving and handling of disabled children.

Can you help me with transport ?

Before we can offer you any help your needs will be assessed using the eligibility criteria outlined in '[Who do we help?](#)'. Having been assessed as being eligible for help there are various options that may be available to you. For information visit the [Family Information Service](#) website, or call them on 0800 073 1214.

I have a disabled child and I need help with money, can you help?

For information about what financial support may be available to you contact [The Development Worker for Disabled children and Their Families](#) for signposting to the relevant services and organisations that can provide grants for families with disabled children.

What are direct payments? ([link to the direct payments page](#))

If you are the parent of a disabled child under the age of 18 and you and your family have been assessed by Bath and North East Somerset social services as needing a service, you could receive cash payments to arrange and purchase your own support. This is known as a direct payment. For more information about direct payments visit our [Direct Payments](#) webpage.

It is school holidays; can you help with services to look after my disabled child?

For information about help during the school holidays contact the Family Information Service on 0800 073 1214. They provide parents/carers with accurate up-to-date information on registered day care. They also hold information on non-registered organisations and clubs, and can signpost parents/carers to a range of support services.

My child is severely disabled and is 14-18, what happens now?

Transition planning begins to take place as part of a young person's Special Educational Needs, at their Annual Review in Year 9, when a young person reaches 13/14 years. This is to ensure that a young disabled person is identified and receives the necessary support to help them plan for their future and to improve their life chances in adulthood. This is a joint plan and would include Connexions and other agencies.

Adult Services are made aware of all the young disabled people at age 14 years, who are likely to require services at age 18 years and beyond.

I have a disabled child and I need a break, can you help?

Before we can offer you any help your needs will be assessed using the eligibility criteria outlined in 'Who do we help?' Having been assessed as being eligible for help there are various options that may be available to you. These may include short break care e.g. day care/overnight, assistance in the home with personal care and specific time limited work with parents and children. For more information about short break care visit the Family Information Service website.

You may also be entitled to receive a Direct Payment to buy services yourself from an independent organisation or employ a carer, instead of these services being provided by the Local Authority. A Direct Payment can only be made following an assessment of your child's needs.

What is short-break care?

This is sometimes known as 'respite'. It's a service by which disabled children, who are normally looked after by their own families, can get regular breaks.

Short Care Breaks are provided for disabled children following an assessment.

If the Child is assessed as needing an overnight break, this may be provided either in our specialist residential care home, or be provided by a family supplied by family link. .

Other forms of Short Break Care include care for a child in their own home or activities outside the home, provided by Crossroads. We also offer a befriending service provided by Time 2 Share, and can organise specialist child-minders

What Short Break Services are available?

Family Link Overnight: Child stays overnight away from home in an approved Family Link Carer's home. This can be for one or more successive nights, regular patterns each week/month, weekends/ holiday periods etc. It is a Social Services service, arranged by the social worker following social work assessment of the child's needs.

Family Link Day Care: Child stays for the day or for a few hours during the day (tea time etc) in the Family Link Carer's own home as above. Family Link carer may take child out to activities etc. Arranged as above.

Beaumonts: Residential respite care home for disabled children in Englishcombe in Bath. Offers overnight stay in varying patterns.

Currently funded by Social Services, managed by Voluntary agency. (Quarriers). Arranged by social worker following social work assessment.

Crossroads: Voluntary agency funded by Social Services which uses paid workers to either help in the family home or taking disabled children out to activities etc.

Time2Share: Voluntary agency funded by Social Services which uses volunteers offer a befriender / role model service, taking disabled children out to activities etc.

- Child minder: Carers registered to care for children up to 8 years old in the childminder's own home. They can also care for older children and some childminders work in the child's home.
- Nursery: Under 5's day care facility, both local authority and independent sector.
- Holiday's: In exceptional circumstances Social Services can sometimes offer help by referring families to agencies that arrange holidays or may offer subsidised holidays etc for families of disabled children
- Holiday Play-scheme: There are schemes for all children and special schemes for disabled children, usually run by voluntary groups during school holidays. Disabled children can be supported to participate in mainstream schemes
- After-school: As above, activity groups for after school during term time.
- Access to leisure: Either disabled child being able, or helped, to participate in mainstream leisure activities such as sport clubs etc. or participating in targeted schemes/clubs for disabled children e.g. Gateway clubs, Teenage rampage, specialist afterschool and holiday Saturday schemes
- Direct Payments: Scheme enabling parents of disabled children or disabled young people (16+) to choose to receive a payment from Social Services, rather than services, so that they can arrange their own support services by either employing somebody or purchasing services from voluntary/private agency etc. You only get a direct payment following a social work assessment and only to purchase services you have been directly assessed as needing.

Can I hire my own help to care for my disabled child?

If you are the parent of a disabled child under the age of 18 and you and your family have been assessed by Bath & North East Somerset social services as needing a service, you could receive cash payments to arrange and purchase your own support. This is known as a direct payment. For more information about direct payments visit our [Direct Payments](#) webpage.

What happens if I do not qualify for any services?

If we are unable to meet your needs because you are not eligible for our help we will offer you advice and information on what to do. We will also signpost you to other services that may be able to help you.

Children & Young People:

Are there any places, like youth clubs, that I can go to?

For information about registered youth clubs contact the Family Information Service on 0800 073 1214. They also hold information on non-registered organisations and clubs, and can signpost you to a range of support services.

I am disabled, where can I go to hang around with other disabled young people?

For information about where you might be able to go to socialise with other disabled young people contact the Development worker for Disabled children and Their Families. They will signpost you to the relevant groups and organisations that can help.

I have a life-threatening illness and want to talk to some other children/young people who are in the same situation, can you help?

LIFETIME SERVICE

The Lifetime Service provides community nursing services to children with life-limiting illnesses and may be able to put you in contact with somebody who is in the same situation or who has the same condition. They can be contacted on 01225 731624.

FACE 2 FACE

Face to Face is a one to one parent befriending service developed and run by parents for parents to help where a child has been newly diagnosed. They can be contacted on 01225 719272 and at times may also be able to link young people with someone who is in the same situation or who has the same condition.

I am a disabled child, is there anybody who can take me out?

Following an assessment, we may be able to organise someone from an organisation like Crossroads or Time2Share to take you out.

I am 16, what happens now?

Your transition planning, moving into adulthood, should have taken place as part of your Special Educational Needs, at your Annual Review in Year 9 (aged 13/14). This is to ensure that you receive the necessary support to help you plan for your future and to improve your life chances in adulthood. This is a joint plan and should include Connexions and other agencies.

Adult Services are made aware of all the young disabled people at age 14 years, who are likely to require services at age 18 years and beyond, and they will take over from the Disabled Children's team and provide you with support and advice.

I am a disabled young person aged 16/17, what are direct payments and am I entitled to them?

A direct payment is money that Bath and North East Somerset Council can give you or your parent/carer to help you buy support. You can use the money to:

- Pay for support to help you at home
- Pay for support to help you get out and about

To find out if you are entitled to them you should contact your social worker. For more information on direct payments visit our Direct Payment webpage.

I have a disabled brother/sister, what about me?

For information and advice for siblings of disabled children we recommend you look at '[siblings of children with disabilities](#)' on the Council for Exceptional Children's website.

I help to look after my disabled brother/sister, is there any support for me?

The Young Carers' Group at [Off the Record](#) offers advice and support for children and young people who help to take care of their disabled brother/sister.

What about confidentiality?

- When working with adults (parents), we would respect any request for confidentiality, unless the situation placed a legal responsibility on us to share information.
- When working with children, we would try to respect all requests for confidentiality. However if this involves placing you or others at risk, we have a legal responsibility to share that information.

Where can I get help to put over my point of view?

"Shout Out" ([link to Off The Record Website](#)) is an independent advocacy service for young disabled people. It provides a service and a voice for disabled young people.

Our policy if you are aggressive towards us?

If you are aggressive to staff our policy is:

We seek at all times to treat people with respect and listen sympathetically to your problems.

We are not able to assist people who are abusive or threatening, or who make us afraid of them.

If abuse is on the telephone, we will advise you that the call cannot continue unless the verbal aggression stops. If it does not, we will hang up and then try to re-contact you.

If the aggression or violence is in a face to face situation, we will seek to leave you and return to finish our work with whatever assistance is necessary.

If you assault a member of staff we will contact the police.

If we regard you as a risk in any way to ourselves, or professional colleagues, we will write to you explaining the risk we believe you to present and the steps we propose in order to overcome that risk.