

Children with a Disability— Carers Scheme.

Fee Paid.


Short Breaks Team.





Mission Statement

“To provide safe, high quality, responsive support services to children with disabilities and their families.”



If you wish to proceed with your interest in the, Children with a Disability— Carers Scheme(Fee Paid) , please contact the Short Breaks team on;

028 37 564350 or

Short Breaks Team, Hill Building, St. Luke's Hospital, Loughgall Road

Armagh, BT61 7NQ



Short Breaks Team
Children's Disability Service

I have children of my own, Can I join the Children with a Disability—Carers Scheme?

Yes, however it must be remembered that the children receiving care on the scheme have complex needs and require a higher level of care, often on a one to one basis. If your children are young, it would be necessary for you to make childminding arrangements for your own children during your contracted hours on the scheme in a similar way to going out to work.

I own pets, Can I join the scheme?

Most pets are considered to be a valuable addition to a household. However we will need to be satisfied that your pets do not pose a threat to the health and safety of a child / young person in your care.

Do I need to own a car?

A car is an advantage but is not essential.

What now?

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The Children with a Disability - Carers Scheme(Fee Paid) is a new service designed to provide respite to parents of children with complex disabilities.

This can range from day respite to overnight stays , provided in a family setting in the Carers own home .

Carers on the scheme work on a full-time or part-time basis.

Part- time is on a half—time basis.

I am currently working, Can I join the scheme?

If providing care on the scheme on a full– time basis , a person cannot have another job and also work full time on the scheme . If providing care on a part/half time basis on the scheme ,a person during their contracted hours with the scheme, cannot have another job during these hours .

I do not own my own home, Can I join the scheme?

Yes. You should advise your landlord of your intention to ensure there is no restriction in your tenancy agreement to prevent you from having additional children in your home.

What is the difference between fostering and the Children with a Disability—Carers Scheme ?

Carers on the scheme go through the same assessment process and are approved at a fostering panel to provide short term/ shared care family based breaks for children with disabilities only.



Frequently Asked Questions

I am a younger person/ older person, Can I join the Children with a Disability—Carers Scheme?

Yes. If you are 21 years or over you can be considered . If you are an older person, we would discuss your health and vitality to care for a child/ young person with disabilities. Older carers often have the experience of bringing up their own children, which can be useful.

I am currently unemployed, Can I join the scheme?

Yes, being at home can offer flexibility as some of the children and young people with a disability may need a short break at short notice.

Pen Picture of Child suitable for the Scheme .

Hi my name is James and I am 10 years old . I live with my parents and I have three younger sisters .I like school and my teacher says I'm a hard worker . I enjoy playing with my friends ,drawing , listening to music and I really like One Direction . I like watching football and snooker on TV . I have lots of friends , but sometimes I like quiet time and prefer to play on my own .

I would like to go on visits to the carers , because it would be fun to have different toys to play with . Also my Mum & Dad are always busy with my sisters , so this would be just for me . I think this would help Mum & Dad and give them a rest as well . My Mum says I have a lovely smile .

I have a chromosomal condition—it is a rare condition , and so very little is known about how it may affect me in the future . I also have global development delay which means I am behind my peers in areas of physical and emotional development . I can present with challenging behaviours such as uncontrolled movements , shouting out and sleep difficulties .

I attend a Special School and I have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

The Trust is seeking Carers for me who could provide me with one overnight visit each week plus one weekly day visit .

How does a break help a child and their family?



- ♦ It provides new opportunities and experiences for children with disabilities.
- ♦ Regular contact with a Carer can be an enjoyable and positive experience for the child, boosting self-esteem, providing new friendships and encouraging independence.

One parent says:

“My daughter enjoys her time away from the family.

She is able to go out and do physical games, go

swimming and go to the park.

These are activities which are difficult at home.

She looks forward to each visit with great

enthusiasm, especially as she grows older.

I get more time with my eldest child.

For me it is a welcome break to restore my energy

and relieve some of the stress.

The scheme is very welcome by all the family.

Respite care is totally and equally beneficial to all of

us as a family.”

“There was the usual vetting process, inspection and training but once I was approved, the settling in period with each child has been straightforward .”

“One of the interesting parts of the process was writing a profile on myself. This was something I hadn’t really thought about before but the social worker from the Short Breaks Team, was very helpful. She also came to my house to assess its suitability and I’ve been in contact with her frequently since. ”

The Children With a Disability—Carers Scheme allows children with complex disabilities to enjoy a ‘home from home’ experience . The carers provide a lifeline to many parents of disabled children across the Southern Trust. They give parents a break from caring full time and the children benefit from meeting new people and gaining independence.



- ◆ The break provided enables parents/ carers to recharge their batteries, spend time with other family members and to do things which are not always possible when their child with a disability is at home.
- ◆ A regular break can be a lifeline to parents, sustaining them and helping them to continue to care for their child with a disability at home.



Children with a Disability—Carers Scheme.

You may apply:

Whatever your marital status.

Whatever your sexual orientation.

Whatever your religious / cultural or ethnic background.

If you have a disability or medical condition - provided it is stable and does not affect your ability to care for a child / young person.

If you are retired—provided you are healthy and have plenty of energy to help children/ young people for a reasonable period .

If your own childhood was difficult—provided you have been able to reflect on the experience and can now use this in a positive

By providing this care to a child, Mr. & Mrs. H are supporting the parents while providing the child with new experiences in a home setting.

“ We can see the child progressing , they all run through the door , this is their time , “

“We are just giving their Mummy and Daddy a break,”

“Parent’s need respite ,it refreshes parents ,”

“ We have flexible arrangements so that if the usual afternoon or overnight break doesn’t suit then our link social worker will try to arrange an alternative time. I enjoy being with the children and they enjoy being at my house. We do everyday activities like playing games and going to the park, cinema and indoor play areas.”

Children with a Disability— Carers, their experience...

Mr. & Mrs. H became Short Break Carers to children with disabilities in 2014 and provide parents with a much needed break. After three years they decided they wanted to do more .

Mr. & Mrs. H wished to continue caring for the Short Break Children and also to join the Children with a Disability—Carers Scheme. The scheme is designed for children with complex disabilities , or who require a higher level of care .Mr. & Mrs. H were then assessed and were approved to join the scheme by the SHSCT Fostering Panel . Mr. & Mrs. H now work as part-time carers on the Children with a Disability—Carers Scheme.

“ We just wanted to have the children more . ”

“You need to give 100%”

“Everyday something different , we learn something new about them everyday . “

“It all depends on the child’s mood , if he/she is tired , 20



way to help children / young people.

It is essential that...

You have experience of working with and or caring for children /young people/ or vulnerable adults with disabilities or a high level of need (minimum two years experience).

Ability to work in an empathetic manner with the child.

You do not have a police record for violence or sexual offences.

Open to continuous professional development and training as specific needs arise.

What skills and abilities do you need ?

You must be able to provide a good standard of care to a child with a disability and promote their health, education and leisure interests.

Ability to listen and communicate with children and young people with disabilities in a way that is appropriate for their age and understanding.

Be willing to learn new skills.

Be able to put boundaries in place in order to manage behaviour in an effective and positive way (link worker and child's social worker will assist with this).

Have energy and motivation to remain committed to a child/ young person.

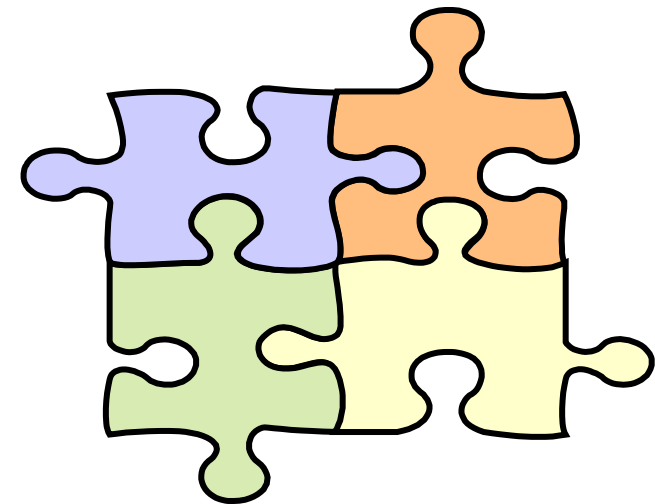
Ability to work with and understand the role of all the professionals and the family of the child/ young person.

The completed assessment is brought to a Fostering Panel for approval. In most instances you will have the opportunity to attend the Panel.

The Panel is made up of mostly Senior Social Work staff and an experienced carer.

The Panel considers your assessment and makes the decision whether to approve you as a Children with a Disability—Carer (Fee Paid) for the SHSCT.

Your approval as a carer is reviewed every year.





Assessment

During the assessment the link social worker will also spend some time talking to your children to ensure that they understand how providing this service may affect them and to answer any questions.

You are free to withdraw from the process at any time.

There may also be things arising from your assessment that the link social worker feels need to be discussed with their line manager.

Sometimes the link social worker and line manager will bring concerns to the Fostering Panel for discussion and advice.

You will be kept fully informed throughout the process.

What Support is available ?

You will receive support from the child/young person's social worker, health visitor and other professionals involved.

The main source of support is the link social worker allocated to you from the Short Break service.

There is a Regional out of hours Social Work Service that provides support and advice during evening, weekend and public holiday periods.

Parents are very supportive and appreciative of the break.

Fostering Network is a voluntary organisation who provide advice, information, training and support to foster carers.

TRAINING

PRE-APPROVAL

During the initial phase of assessment you will be invited to complete Pre-Approval Training. This will give you the opportunity to explore whether the Children with a Disability—Carers Scheme is right for you and your family.

You will also get to meet and hear from carers who are providing this service and gain some awareness of the support and training which will be offered to you .

POST-APPROVAL

Once you are approved by the SHSCT's Fostering Panel, any identified learning needs will have been highlighted by the panel. This will form part of your initial support and development package.



Assessment

A link social worker from the Short Break team will complete a detailed assessment on you and your family. You will work closely alongside the link social worker in completing this assessment.

It is important that you talk openly and honestly to the link social worker about your life and family during this assessment process, which is usually completed within three to six months depending on complexity.

You will then have the opportunity to read the report and add your own comments. During this time you will be able to consider how providing care will affect you and your family and friends, and reflect on topics raised with you by the link social worker.



There are some other checks that we will ask for if they apply to you:

- ◆ In the event you are not the home owner you will need to inform the owner of the property of your intention to foster. It will also be necessary to reflect this in your home insurance documentation if you become a Carer.
- ◆ If you are a parent and have school age children we will ask your health visitor for a report.
- ◆ If you have adult children they will also be interviewed as part of the assessment.
- ◆ If you have been in a previous relationship and there are children to that relationship we will wish to speak to your ex partner.
- ◆ If you have had involvement with social services the link social worker will explore the circumstances surrounding this and the implications for you in your role as a carer.




ANNUAL REVIEW

The Annual Review will usually take place in your own home with your link social worker and

the child's social worker and will explore the current placements which are being provided.

As part of this review an assessment of your learning / training needs will be undertaken.



Application and Assessment

Once you have completed and returned an application form, your suitability to care for children / young people with a disability will be assessed.

It is a thorough process and is necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of any child / young person in your care.

Many applicants find the assessment experience very helpful in understanding their strengths and skills.



Initial visit

A link social worker from the Short Breaks Team will visit you in your home to discuss the application process and answer any questions you may have.

Training

If you and the link social worker from the short breaks team both agree to continue your application you will be invited to complete the pre-approval training course.

Application

Once an application form has been received the following checks will commence:

- *Full medical completed by your own GP*
- *ACCESS NI checks (known as police checks)*
- *References*
- *Health and Safety checklist*