

SUBSIDY CHARGING ARRANGMENTS FOR SHORT BREAKS PROVISION

Key Principles

Charging should operate consistently with the Council's overall social care objectives of promoting independence and social inclusion of service users.

It should not result in parents being charged more than they can reasonably be expected to pay. Monies collected will be subsidy charges in acknowledgement of the relationship between low income and disability.

Monies collected via charges should be used to sustain and further improve the service provision.

Application of charges

Subsidy charges will apply to :

- all disabled children living in the Borough of Telford & Wrekin with the DDA Definition of Disability unless they are in under the parental responsibility of another local authority in which case full cost recovery charges can apply;

Charges will not be levied to children in the care of our Local Authority either in foster care or residential care.

The following short breaks specialist activities/support services for disabled children will be subject to charging:

- Sports & Leisure (Excludes mainstream services)
- Arts & Culture
- Group outings and residential holidays
- Dance

The following short breaks provision will not be included at this time:

- Residential overnights
- Support Workers
- Outreach support
- Shared Care

The rationale behind this decision is that the children receiving these services have been subject to a social work assessment which was deemed as necessary to meet their needs and prevent potential family breakdown/perverse family impact i.e. children taken into care.

It is recommended that charges will not apply to play schemes provided as part of the special schools' holiday provision as those schemes existed prior to short breaks grant funding allocations. Children attending the Bridge School play scheme are the cohort of children with

complex needs.

Levels of charges

The following levels of charging were considered by the Council prior to agreeing this arrangement:

- Full cost charge
- Subsidised rate
- Free places

Full Cost Charges

It was agreed that recovery of full costs for services through charges could be economically challenging for many families. It is acknowledged nationally that there is a strong relationship between low income and social exclusion among families who have a disabled child and that families with disabled children remain disproportionately likely to be in poverty. Therefore we conclude that no family with a disabled child should pay the full cost of any service delivered.

Subsidised Charges

In consideration of the benchmarking work undertaken to inform this charging procedure the following subsidised charges will be applied.

- £4.00 each session - Specialist activity including (skiing, multi sports, Kreative Kids)
- £2.00 each session - Non specialist activities including (other leisure sessions)
- £1.00 each session – New activities to encourage access.

A2A run a number of term time after school clubs and two weekly Club 17 sessions currently free of charge, and holiday activities including day trips at a subsidised cost.

Free places

The following cohort of children should be able to access short breaks services free of charge

- Disabled Children in Care
- Disabled Children at risk of care as assessed by the Integrated Disabled Children Social Work team and agreed by the Support Enablement Panel.

If a family considers that they have extenuating circumstances that may prohibit the payment of subsidy charges then they should contact the Short Breaks Co-ordinator for a review of their circumstances.

Collection of Charges

Collection of charges for all sports and leisure services will be collected via the TLC Card system.

Dated: May 2012

Review Date: October 2013