

LOGO

Aiming High for Disabled Children Short Breaks Pathfinder Programme

Dear parents, friends and colleagues,

We are delighted to send to you our first newsletter letting you know how we are getting on with the Aiming High Short Breaks Pathfinder Programme.

Just to remind you of the background.

Kent County Council, the Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust and the West Kent Primary Care Trust were successful in their bid to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) - to become one of 21 pathfinder authorities across England and Wales. For the first time we have a substantial amount of money to spend on developing short break services over the next three years.

We had to submit a Delivery Plan to the DCSF providing details as to how we want to spend this money over the first year. This plan was based on the many consultations that have taken place with parents over the past few years, BUT we still want your views so we will ensure that you will be given many opportunities to express them. We have two multi-agency forums covering West and East Kent and they have a number of parent representatives on each group. The remit of both forums is to oversee the delivery of the programme within their area.

The programme includes increasing the quantity of existing services and also developing new ones. Parents and children will have more choice and more families will be able to access short breaks. Targets have had to be set and the authorities will be held to account if these are not achieved. We still have a great deal to do and we look forward to your support.

Over the next few pages are some more details of the main services which are proposed for West Kent (Sevenoaks/ Swanley, Dartford/Gravesham, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge/ Malling and Maidstone).

There will be a separate newsletter for the East Kent area which covers Ashford, Shepway, Dover, Canterbury, Swale and Thanet.

Both newsletters can be viewed on the Children's Disability Register website, Clusterweb and the East Coast Kent and West Kent PCT websites.

Summary of the main service developments which are proposed for West Kent, ie Sevenoaks/Swanley, Dartford/Gravesham, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge/Malling, Maidstone

Services in family's own home - including both overnight, day care, and sitting services

- Sunrise Children's Centre is to set up an "outreach" service which will involve increasing the current staffing to provide this additional service
- A Homecare service for children with complex health needs is to be established

Day, evening, weekend and holiday activities

- Expand the role of Barnardo's in contracting with smaller local voluntary bodies to provide more activities during evenings, weekends and holidays.
- Activities available across West Kent is as a whole to be enhanced with a range of new provision including more weekend fun clubs



Foster care provision for short breaks – both overnight and day care

- A respite fostering officer for West Kent to be appointed
- More respite foster carers to be recruited
- Adaptations to a number of foster carers' homes to be undertaken so that they can care for children who have physical disabilities
- An additional Occupational Therapist post to provide the necessary advice and support

Provision of overnight residential care for children with complex needs

- Sunrise Children's Centre: a nursing team to be established to work from The Den
- Court Drive: waking night staff to be appointed and some upgrading of the building to be undertaken
- Rainbow Lodge: some upgrading of the building to take place

Children requiring palliative care

- Provision within children's hospices to be enhanced
- Outreach care from hospice settings to be extended
- A comprehensive review of children's requirements to be undertaken



Provision for 14+ age group

- Links with mainstream services to be enhanced through the development of befriending schemes
- A range of new initiatives linked with the County Youth Service to be set up
- A facility to assist with the development of independence skills to be established – there are various options including the potential to provide additional overnight care

Provision for the under 5s

- Specialist group facilities to be established within the Portage scheme

Making fuller use of school facilities

- This will apply to mainstream, special and independent non-maintained schools
- To include provision for children with sensory impairments and Autism Spectrum Disorder

Expand the use of direct payments

- To establish a bank of Personal Assistants whom parents and young people (16+) can employ to assist with providing personalised short breaks
- Two additional support workers to be recruited by the Children & Families Direct Payments Support Scheme

Forging closer links with communities

- To ensure local mainstream services can include children with less complex needs, e.g. after school clubs, youth clubs, sports centres etc

Enhancement of transport provision

- For use for day activities
- For foster carers who are providing for children needing specialist transport



When will these new services come into being?

They will not happen overnight.

Several of the schemes are only part funded for the current financial year. It is important that new services are planned carefully so that money is not wasted so it is likely that many schemes will not become operative until January 2009 at the earliest. However, you will be kept up to date on their progress.

What can you do now?

You will see at the beginning of the newsletter we don't have a picture to represent the project, so we are holding a competition for children to design a logo that supports the *Aiming High* project and what it means to them.

Look at the Children's Disability Register website where you will find an application form and further details.

www.kent.gov.uk/cdr



- **How can you find out more and/or feed back your views?**
- **Do you know someone who would like this newsletter in another format?**

A Programme Manager is to be appointed but at this point in time please contact the Children's Disability Co-ordinators
cdr@kent.gov.uk

