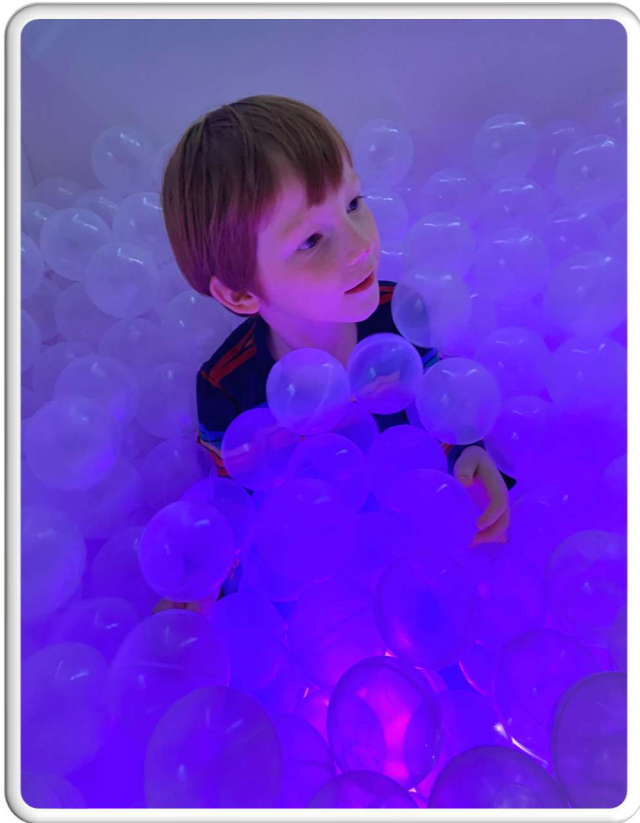
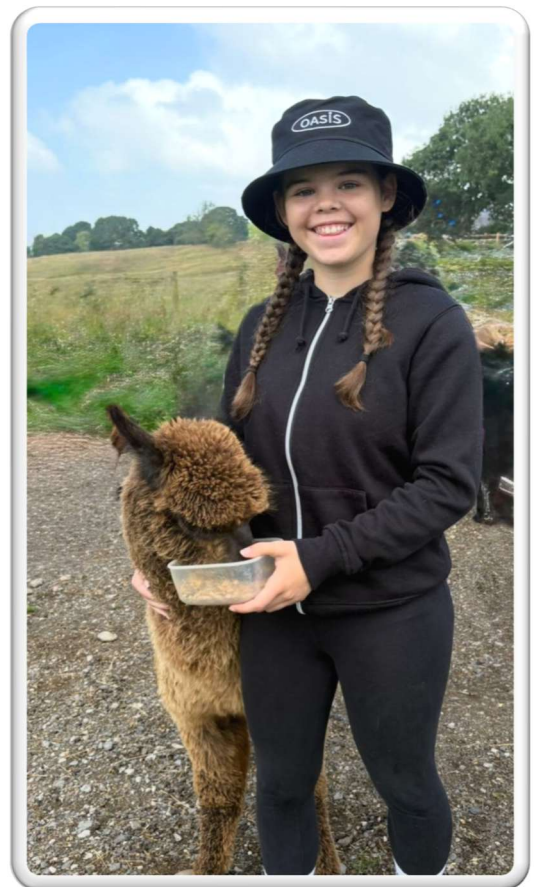




Bury
Short Breaks
Duty Statement
July 2026 /27

Bury
Council



Short Breaks Duty Statement

2026 /27

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Short Breaks Duty Statement

Introduction

At Bury Council, we are committed to supporting disabled children and young people and their families.

Our Short Breaks Offer provides opportunities for children and young people to enjoy new experiences, develop independence, and have fun — while giving parents and carers valuable time to rest, recharge, and manage other family needs.

This updated Short Breaks Duty Statement reflects current law, best practice across Greater Manchester, and what families, young people, and partners told us during our co-production engagement sessions.

What Are Short Breaks?

Short breaks are activities, sessions, or services that:

Offer enjoyable and meaningful experiences for disabled children and young people.

Provide parents and carers with a break from caring responsibilities. Support family wellbeing and help prevent stress or crisis.

Short breaks can take place in the community, at home, or in specialist settings depending on the level of need.

What the Law Says

Local authorities must provide short breaks under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, which helps ensure children's needs are met, and families are supported to stay strong and stable.

In Bury, we aim to:

- Offer support early.
- Prevent crisis or family breakdown.
- Ensure our information is clear, accessible, and easy to understand.
- Provide examples that help families recognise how their child's needs may relate to various levels of support.



The Three Levels of Short Breaks in Bury

Bury's Short Breaks Offer is arranged across three levels:



1. Universal Services

Activities available to all families without an assessment.

These may include leisure centres, clubs, parks, libraries, youth groups, and community activities that are accessible or offer reasonable adjustments.



2. Targeted Services

Support for children and young people who need more help to access activities.

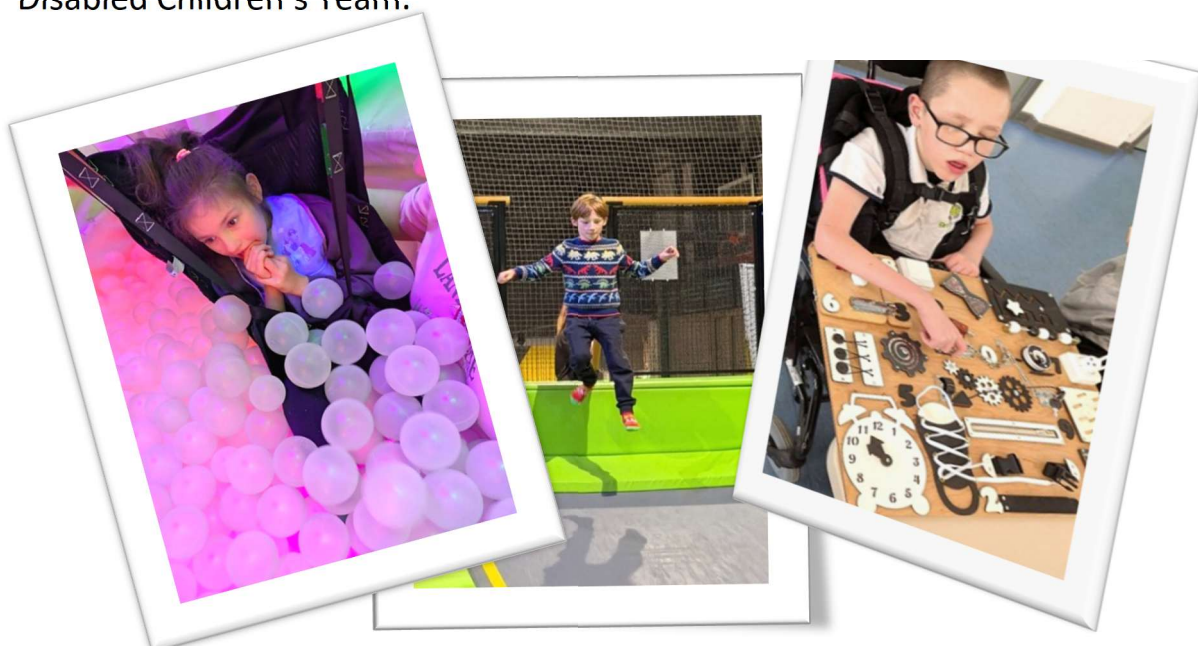
These may include specialist youth groups, activity sessions, holiday programmes, or services where staff are trained in supporting additional needs.



3. Specialist / Complex Short Breaks

For children and young people with the most complex needs.

These breaks require a statutory assessment and may include 1:1 or 2:1 support, overnight short breaks, or highly personalised packages arranged through the Disabled Children's Team.



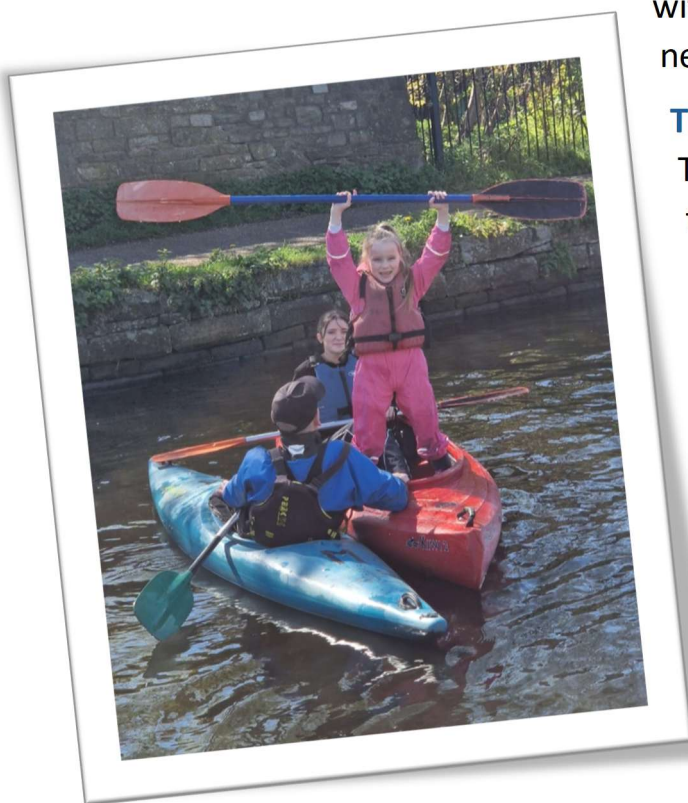
Understanding The Three Levels of The Short Breaks Offer

Universal and Targeted services

These include a broad range of activities, groups, and community-based opportunities that children and young people can access without a statutory assessment. Many of these services offer reasonable adjustments or additional support to make participation easier and more inclusive.

Local community groups

Community organisations, charities, youth groups, sports clubs, and volunteer-led projects often provide accessible, low-cost opportunities for social interaction, skill-building, and recreation. Families will be supported to identify local groups that align with their child's interests and needs.



The Local Offer website

The Bury Local Offer brings together clear, up-to-date information about services, activities, and support available for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities. Families can explore guidance, service directories, and practical resources to help them understand what is available in their area.

Early Help services

Early Help support focuses on strengthening families by identifying needs early and providing coordinated assistance. This may include parenting support, emotional wellbeing services, and help to access local activities. Early Help aims to reduce pressure on families and prevent difficulties from escalating.

Parent/carer forums such as Bury2Gether

These groups provide a supportive community where families can connect with others who share similar experiences. They offer peer support, information sessions, workshops, and opportunities to influence local services through co-production. Our commitment is to ensure that all families feel supported, informed, and connected to the right services for their situation. Even when specialist short breaks are not required, we want every family to have access to meaningful opportunities that promote wellbeing, inclusion, and empowerment.

Targeted Short Breaks

Targeted short breaks offer extra support for children and young people who need more help than universal services can provide, but who do not require a specialist or complex short break package of support. These services are designed to be flexible, inclusive, and accessible to families at an earlier stage, helping prevent needs from becoming more intensive over time.

Targeted short breaks may be suitable for children and young people who:

- Have an additional need or disability that makes it difficult to take part in activities without some extra support.
- Need a more structured or supported environment to join in safely.
- Would benefit from skilled staff who understand SEND, sensory needs, communication differences, or routines.
- Struggle with busy or unstructured social settings
- Need support to build confidence, independence, and social skills.



Extra support for children and young people who need more help than universal services can provide



Specialist activity groups, clubs, and holiday programmes



Designed to reduce pressure on families and provide enjoyable activities



Helps prevent needs from escalating

Targeted short breaks sit between universal and specialist support, offering families a helpful middle option. They aim to widen opportunities, reduce isolation, and help young people enjoy positive experiences outside the home.

What Targeted Short Breaks Can Include:

- Specialist activity groups supported by staff with training in SEND.
- After-school or weekend clubs with smaller group sizes.
- Holiday programmes designed for children who need extra support.
- Sports, arts, or youth activities that offer reasonable adjustments
- Inclusive community sessions run by local organisations, charities, or clubs.
- Short, structured sessions that build routine, confidence, and skills.

These services are usually free or low-cost and are designed to be easier to access, helping families get support without requiring a statutory social care needs assessment.

How Targeted Short Breaks Help Families

Targeted short breaks are developed to support both children and parents by:

- Providing safe, enjoyable activities for children and young people.
- Reducing pressure on families, particularly those who might need a regular break.
- Helping maintain children's wellbeing, social development, and independence.
- Preventing needs from escalating and reducing the likelihood of requiring specialist services.
- Offering early support which helps families cope and thrive.
- For many families, targeted short breaks are an important step in understanding what support works well for their child and what additional help, if any, might be needed later.



How to Access Targeted Short Breaks

Families can find information about targeted short breaks through:

- Bury SEND Local Offer (service directory, activity listings, and guidance)
- Local community groups and charities offering SEND-friendly sessions
- Early Help services, which can support families to identify suitable activities
- Parent/carer forums such as Bury2Gether, who can share experiences and recommendations.

No social care needs assessment is required to access these services, although some providers may have their own referral or booking process.

Specialist Short Breaks

Who Can Access Specialist Short Breaks?

Specialist short breaks are for children and young people whose disabilities have a **big impact on everyday life** and who need a **higher level of support** than most services can offer.

Your child may need this support if their disability makes it much harder for them to:

- Move around or manage physical tasks
- Communicate, understand information, or express their needs.
- Stay safe or understand dangers.
- Manage behaviour, especially if this is linked to their disability.

These difficulties might be caused by conditions such as:

- A severe or profound learning disability
- A significant physical disability
- A substantial visual impairment
- Moderate or severe hearing loss
- A complex autistic spectrum condition with learning difficulties
- A complex or long-term medical condition that requires frequent or specialised care



What is a Specialist Short Break?

Specialist short breaks give families extra support when everyday services (like clubs, activities, or community groups) are not enough to meet their child's needs.

A specialist short break can:

- Help your child enjoy safe, meaningful activities
- Give parents/carers time to rest or focus on other family needs
- Support your child's wellbeing, independence, and confidence

How Specialist Short Breaks Are Assessed



Specialist or complex short breaks are designed for children and young people who have very high levels of need because of a disability, health condition, or combination of difficulties.

These breaks offer intensive, personalised support for families who require more help than universal or targeted services can provide.

Families may benefit from specialist short breaks when a child's needs:

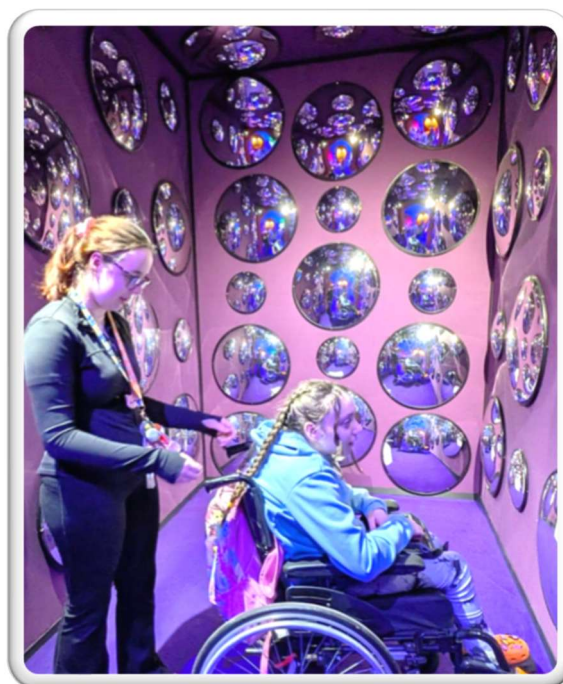
- Have a major impact on daily life, safety, and independence.
- Mean they require constant supervision, specialist care, or highly structured activities.
- Cannot be supported safely or effectively in mainstream or community settings, even with reasonable adjustments.
- Create significant pressure on the family's wellbeing, routines, and ability to manage daily care.

These short breaks give children safe, meaningful opportunities to enjoy activities suited to their abilities while providing parents with essential time to rest, recharge, and manage other family responsibilities.

Who can benefit from a Specialist Short Breaks?

Specialist short breaks are usually for children and young people who have one or more of the following:

- Have a severe or profound learning disability
- Have a significant physical disability and require specialist equipment or care
- Have a complex autistic spectrum condition with high levels of supervision needed
- Have a substantial vision or hearing impairment
- Have a complex medical or health condition requiring regular intervention, equipment, or monitoring
- Display behaviours that are hard to manage, particularly if linked to their disability or sensory needs



These needs often require staff with specialist skills, training, or experience to ensure the child is safe, supported, and able to participate fully.

How Families Access Specialist Short Breaks

To access specialist short breaks, a social care assessment of need, is required. This helps us understand:

- Your child's needs
- Your family circumstances
- The type and amount of support that would be most helpful.
- Decisions are made using a fair and consistent process to assess individual needs and are discussed openly with families.
- If a child is not eligible, families will still receive clear information about other support options available through universal and targeted services.

How to Request a Specialist Short Break Assessment

If the support available through the **SEND Local Offer** isn't meeting your child's needs, you may want to explore specialist short breaks.

If you would like your child's needs to be assessed, we will explain the process clearly, including:

- Each step of the assessment
- Expected timescales
- The role of Early Help and the Disabled Children's Team
- How decisions are made
- How to access support while waiting
- Links to the Local Offer and Bury2Gether (B2G) parent and carer forum will also be provided.

Here's how the process works, step by step:

1. Your lead professional, for example a teacher, health visitor, or any worker already supporting your family, completes an online referral form and sends it to Bury's Integrated Front Door.
2. A team member will contact you from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASH) and they will:
 - Listen to your concerns
 - Offer advice and guidance
 - Talk through the support options available
3. An Assessment of need will be completed as required, to help us understand:
 - What support your child needs
 - How short breaks could help
 - The type and amount of support that may be suitable

Our goal is to make this process **simple, supportive, and easy to follow**, especially for families who may be new to SEND and are unsure where to start.

How to Request a Specialist Short Breaks Assessment



What Happens After the Assessment?

Once your assessment is complete, your social worker will explain:

- What level of support your child may receive
- What short break options are available
- How often support may be offered
- How the plan will be reviewed

We will always aim to make sure the support offered is **clear, fair, and tailored to your child's needs**.

Eligibility for Specialist Short Breaks

Eligibility criteria for specialist short breaks will be clear and transparent, developed in line with best practice and co-produced with parents and carers to ensure the process is fair, consistent, and easy to understand.

Criteria will include:

- Children and Young People must be under 18 years of age and residing in Bury.
- The level of care a child needs, how their disability impacts daily life
- They require support outside school hours that cannot be met by universal or targeted services.
- Support is not intended to replace standard childcare provision for working parents.

A simple visual process guide will accompany the criteria



If you are eligible for Short Breaks

Measuring the Outcomes and Impact of Short Break Services

The council will measure the impact of short break services by regularly gathering feedback from disabled children, families, and providers to ensure services meet their needs and support continual improvement.

Providers must supply data on who uses short breaks, their outcomes achieved, and quality of provision, helping the council understand demand and plan future services.

The aim is always to help the child enjoy positive inclusive experiences while ensuring safety, and dignity.

Why Specialist Short Breaks Matter

These breaks play an important role in supporting family life by:

- Providing children with enjoyable, purposeful activities
- Reducing pressure and stress within the family
- Helping families maintain routines, employment, and relationships
- Supporting children to develop skills, independence, and confidence
- Preventing crisis, breakdown, or the need for more intensive services

Commissioned services will aim to:

Reduce family stress and improve wellbeing.

Decrease requests for residential or out-of-borough provision.

Increase opportunities for inclusive community activities.

Improve physical health, independence, and social skills.

Support young people to express their views and take part in decisions.

Promotes stronger family wellbeing.

Enhance parenting skills and recognise parents as experts in their child's care.

What's included in Specialist Short Breaks

Support is personalised and may involve:

- Increased levels of bespoke support from trained staff
- Highly structured or specialist activity sessions
- Home-based support delivered by skilled workers
- Short breaks in specialist settings, including overnight stays as required
- Community-based activities, only where it is safe and appropriate
- Specialised care tailored to meet medical or behavioural needs.



Transition

As children grow older, their needs, interests, and levels of independence naturally change. Bury Council is committed to supporting young people and their families through this journey, especially as they begin to prepare for adulthood. This period is known as **transition**.

The transition process usually begins from around school **Year 9 (age 14)** and continues into early adulthood. During this time, we work closely with families to understand what is important to the young person, what support they may need as they grow, and how short breaks can continue to help them develop confidence, independence, and life skills.

Short breaks during transition can support young people to:

- Try new activities that build independence
- Develop social skills and friendships
- Practise everyday skills, such as travelling, cooking, or managing routines
- Increase confidence in different environments
- Prepare for future goals, including education, employment, and community life

The Transition Process



Our **Transition Team** works alongside the Children with Disabilities Team, education settings, health professionals, and families to ensure support is joined-up and forward-looking. Together, we help plan for adulthood in a way that reflects each young person's aspirations, strengths, and needs.

We aim to make the transition into adulthood **clear, supported, and personalised**, ensuring families understand the options available and feel confident about the next steps. Short breaks will continue to be reviewed as part of this planning, so support remains appropriate and meaningful as the young person moves towards adulthood.

Direct Payments and Specialist Short Breaks

A **personal budget** is the total amount allocated for social care support, once a need has been identified within the child / Young person's social care needs assessment.

Direct payments allow parents / carers to receive the budget to manage and spend directly on support that best meets the child's needs, interests, and daily routines, leading to more choice and control over how short breaks support is arranged.

All support purchased must meet the child's assessed needs and form part of their agreed short break plan.

This approach helps make short breaks more flexible, personalised, and responsive to what works best for each child and family.

Families may request a Direct Payment as part of their short break support once an assessed need has been identified.

The preferred payment method for a making a Direct Payment is via a prepayment card. There is an option to use a Managed Account company where the parent / carer is unable to manage the child's Direct Payment and there is no suitable Authorised Person.

Further information will be provided if your child is eligible for specialist short breaks including information about Personal Assistants for children. .

Personal Health Budgets

A **Personal Health Budget** is money provided by the NHS to help meet the child or young person's complex health needs as identified within the assessment. It gives families more choice, flexibility, and control over how health support is arranged.

A personal health budget can be used for health-related equipment, therapies, or activities that improve wellbeing and independence, if these are agreed with the involved NHS professionals.

Families can choose how the budget is managed, and support plans are developed to make sure the child's health needs are met safely.

Note: Personal Health Budgets cannot be used for social care short breaks unless specifically related to improved health outcomes. However, health-related activity supported by a personal health budget can often also help the child's social wellbeing, and it may take place in a setting that feels like a short break, for example, therapeutic activity sessions often also give families time to recharge.

Please note that the purpose of the personal health budget must focus on meeting health needs, and not to provide a social care short break.

Parent / Carer Assessment

As a parent or Carer, you have the right to ask for your child's needs to be assessed. You also have the right to request a [Carer's Assessment](#) for yourself under the Care Act 2014.

The Parent Carer Needs Assessment could be undertaken by the Children with Disabilities team or a member of the locality team or an agency located within the Early Help approach.

You can contact the [MASH team](#) on 0161 253 5678 to request a parent carer needs assessment or you can download our Parent Carer Assessment and fill it in. You can then email it to childwellbeing@bury.gov.uk. You can also return it by post to:

Bury Children Services
Children with Disabilities Team
3, Knowsley Place
Bury Council
BL9 0EJ

Telephone: 0161 253 5678

If you need support urgently, please contact the MASH team on:

Telephone: 0161 253 5678

Telephone (out of hours): 0161 253 6066

Email: childwellbeing@bury.gov.uk



Promoting Choice and Empowerment

Bury Council is committed to ensuring that children, young people, and their families have meaningful choice and control over the support they receive. We believe that short breaks should be flexible, personalised, and designed around what matters most to each child and family.

We will provide clear information about all types of short breaks, including how decisions are made and what options are available. Families will be supported to understand different services, explore alternatives, and choose arrangements that best fit their needs, routines, and preference.

If You Are Not Eligible for Specialist Short Breaks

If an assessment identifies that a child or young person does not require specialist short breaks, the family will still be offered guidance, information, and access to a wide range of support. Our aim is to ensure that every family receives help that is appropriate to their needs, even when specialist provision is not the most suitable option.

Families will be signposted to:

Clear options you can use right now



Universal & targeted services

- What you'll find: clubs, leisure centres, libraries, parks, youth groups and inclusive community activities.
- No assessment needed: open to all, with reasonable adjustments and extra support where available.
- How to use: check times, access needs, and any booking requirements in advance.

Local community groups

- Opportunities: low-cost social, recreational and skill-building activities run by charities, sports clubs and volunteers.
- Finding a good fit: choose groups that match your child's interests, strengths and sensory needs.

The Local Offer website

- What it is: one place for up-to-date services, activities and support for SEND in Bury.
- Use it to browse the directory, read guidance, and see what's on now and during holidays.

Early Help services

- What Early Help does: supports families early with parenting, emotional wellbeing and coordination across services.
- Why it helps: reduces pressure on families and prevents difficulties from escalating.



How to find out More

Need help choosing options or taking next steps?

- Visit the SEND Local Offer: [Bury SEND Local Offer - Bury Council](#)
- Contact Early Help: [Early Help - Bury Council](#)
- Speak to Parent/Carer forums (e.g., Bury2Gether):
[BURY2GETHER a forum for Parents/Carers who have children with SEND](#)

If you prefer to talk to someone

Families will also be directed to:

- You can contact the [MASH team](#) on 0161 253 5678
- Parent/carers forums including Bury2Gether on
- The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) for crisis situations 0161 1253 6606

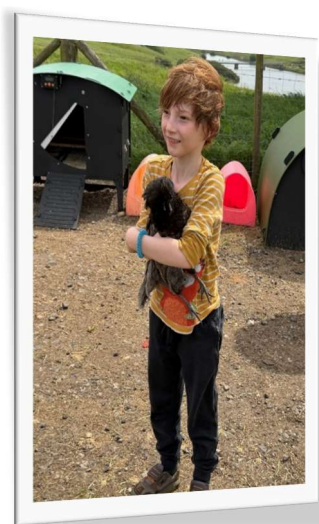


Useful links and Contacts

[What is the SEND Local offer - Bury Council](#)

<https://www.bury.gov.uk/asset-library/send-local-offer-contracts-2025.pdf>

How this Duty Statement was Co-Produced



This Short Breaks Duty Statement has been co-produced by a multi-agency co-production project team led by Bury's Children's Director for Social Care and Early Help, working in partnership with children and young people with disabilities, parents, carers and key stakeholders across Bury.

The statement reflects the views, experiences and priorities shared through ongoing engagement and shared decision-making with the

Bury2Gether Parent/Carer Forum, families, the Children with Disabilities Commissioning Team, the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team and Bury Council Children's Senior Leadership team.

The statement will be reviewed annually and updates published.

Bury's Short breaks Duty Statement is available in accessible formats.

